

ROTHERHAM: THE PERFECT STORM

An investigation in to Muslim grooming gangs

Introduction

I did not intend to publish this, as I could not complete the work I had set out to do, but I have decided instead to write a personal account of an attempt I made to find out how many girls have been groomed, gang-raped, and prostituted by organised gangs in England over the last five years. I do it obviously not to provide ground-breaking statistics – but to contribute to the national discussion on the phenomenon of so-called “Asian” grooming gangs that has been taking place since the publication of the Jay Report in to widespread sexual abuse, gang-rape, and torture of at least 1,400 young girls in the town of Rotherham in Yorkshire.

The first thing to report is that this figure is simply not obtainable by a member of the public, at least not if you hope to be in any way close to accurate. I am not the first to undertake this effort. A similar attempt was made by the office of the Children’s Commissioner in 2012. That investigation also concluded that an accurate figure could not be obtained.

However, in investigating the matter myself, I found widespread and continuing (despite the Jay Report) lack of any coherent recording of or response to organised gang-rape. What stands out particularly is the lack of data held by local authorities, who in almost all cases, kept no numeric data on children under their care who have reported sexual assault or rape. In almost all cases, I was informed that this information could not be provided as it would take authority staff outside of the 18 hour working time they are obliged to perform on freedom of information requests. The reason it would take longer than 18 hours to provide the data, is that it would entail reading separately through the individual files of all children in their care. In other words, even post-Rotherham, most councils are not attempting to separately record sexual assaults on children under their care, or to paint a broader picture of the problem.

Police records present the same problems. Recording of ethnicity or nationality is widely inconsistent; in many cases the ethnicity of the alleged offender is not recorded, and it is not recorded for victims at all. It is impossible therefore to know just how often this happens, or how many times it has happened. What we do know is that some police officers and public sector workers have publicly stated that this child grooming by Muslim men has been occurring for decades, and with almost complete impunity. The reasons for this I intend to explore.

My guess is that some justification for the fact that the ethnic identity of alleged offenders is not recorded is that many in the public sector believe it to be irrelevant. Religion of offenders is not recorded, again I suspect because of an underlying and cultural view within the public sector that religion is irrelevant as well. The question I ask here is: what if it isn’t? What if religion has played a part in fostering attitudes to women, white women in particular, that increase the likelihood of pre-meditated, repeated, and organised gang-rape? This question has not been asked, and is not being asked, in the public domain. I think this is a mistake. 2

What has been widely discussed however, by the media and others in public life, is the culture of fear that pervades public services and has almost certainly prevented thorough investigation and prevention of these crimes – the fear of racism or “Islamophobia” accusations. In the course of this investigation, I found that fear to be palpable. People simply do not want to discuss this issue. They most certainly don’t want to discuss any ethnic or religious element. This, it seems, has not changed since the Jay Report. Britain is not the only country to suffer this phenomenon. Scandinavian countries have seen large increases in rape figures in recent decades. Sweden is now the rape capital of the Western world, and Norway has seen a disturbing rise in violent rape. In very many cases, the perpetrators have been migrants from Muslim-majority countries. Despite a clear pattern involving Muslim men, Western countries are failing to ask why. By contrast in fact, media and political leaders place much emphasis on ignoring the religious identity of the men altogether, and instead have taken to labelling them “Asian”. This, I would submit, is yet another mistake. It deliberately prevents us from forming a complete picture of the problem, and thus how to prevent it recurring.

I discovered that little has changed in this regard. Despite testimony from public sector workers and police that fear of racism or “Islamophobia” accusations actively prevented people from confronting this issue, the same fear is rife today. Even formal reports in to the matter, including Parliamentary inquiries, often only mention the issue of ethnicity in order to discount it as insignificant. Religion is scarcely mentioned at all.

The horrific crime that took place in Rotherham and elsewhere occurred, and is still occurring according to women I have spoken to, for a number of reasons. The most significant I believe to be these:

- A crippling fear of racism accusations and the racialising and politicising of policing and law enforcement
- A disorganised social service with little accountability
- A bloated bureaucracy which appears to believe that the solution to issues of all kind is discussion rather than action
- A disregard for individual and personal responsibility and a distaste for criminal punishment – simple enforcement of rape laws was not widely viewed as the most appropriate course of action
- Insular Muslim communities which regard the law of the land as none of their concern, and regard themselves as self-policing
- An appalling attitude towards women, especially white women, that is extensive throughout minority communities in Britain. This attitude towards women is enforced and legitimised by clerics and so-called “community leaders”
- An insidious multiculturalism and pervading anti-white racism which separates racial groups and applies the law without consistency – often with white people suffering more severe punishment
- The policing of language via so-called “hate speech” laws. These laws can be vague and therefore inevitably cause confusion among police and public sector workers as to what is or is not permitted

The combination of all of the above created the perfect storm in Rotherham, and was the soil from which mass rape would grow. It is a soil that is been spread all over England. 3

I will begin with my freedom of information requests.

Police

I sent the following Freedom of Information request to every police force in England:

1. Please send me the number of allegations, arrests, and charges with regard to the following offences, recorded by you, from December 2009 – December 2014:

• Sections 1 – 4 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (inclusive) I would also be grateful if you could provide statistics relating to cases involving male perpetrators (alleged) and female victims (alleged) only.

Please also provide recorded information on: • The ethnicity and nationality of the alleged perpetrator

2. Have any/all officers in your service/constabulary received training in equality and diversity (or similar) during the time period mentioned above, and which group/organisation has provided this training?

Sections 1- 4 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 includes:

1.Rape 2.Assault by penetration 3.Sexual assault 4.Causing a person to engage in sexual activity without consent The same question was asked with regard to sections 5 – 15 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, which are: 5.Rape of a child under 13 6.Assault of a child under 13 by penetration 7.Sexual assault of a child under 13 8.Causing or inciting a child under 13 to engage in sexual activity 9.Sexual activity with a child 10.Causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity 11.Engaging in sexual activity in the presence of a child 12.Causing a child to watch a sexual act 13.Child sex offences committed by children or young persons 14.Arranging or facilitating commission of a child sex offence 15.Meeting a child following sexual grooming etc. The same question was asked with reference to Section 58 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003: 58.Trafficking within the UK for sexual exploitation

Not all of England's 32 police forces replied to this request. The responses that were received revealed that the one consistency was a complete lack of consistency. Police forces throughout England keep records in varying ways and for various crimes. Ethnicity of offenders, for example, was not always recorded and when it was, there were inconsistencies as to how it was recorded. For example, both "Asian" and "Pakistani" appear as ethnic options making it impossible to know how many were actually Pakistani, because we cannot know exactly which groups are covered by "Asian". "Oriental" also appears, making it even more difficult to distinguish between sections of Asia. The ethnicity of the victim is not recorded in most cases. 4

Convictions

Police records do not reveal the number of people convicted of sexual offences, but only those charged, cautioned etc.

Therefore, the following Freedom of Information request was sent to the Ministry of Justice:

Please send me the number of convictions with regard to the following offences, recorded by you, from December 2009 – December 2014:

• Sections 1 – 15 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (inclusive) • Section 58 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 I would also be grateful if you could provide statistics relating to cases involving male perpetrators (alleged) and female victims (alleged) only.

Please also provide recorded information on: • The ethnicity and nationality of the alleged perpetrator

The Ministry of Justice replied stating that the information could not be obtained within the 18 hour limit afforded by the Freedom of Information Act.

I was advised to contact the Home Office (crime statistics) for further assistance. I duly wrote to the relevant department but did not receive a reply. Therefore, as with arrests, cautions, allegations and reports, an accurate picture cannot be drawn using the publicly available statistics on convictions.

Police Training

Given the failure of police, across England, to pursue obvious cases of (at least) statutory rape, and given that some police officers said that they feared accusations of racism if they were to intervene, it is important to understand what formal training police officers receive in England on how to deal with these crimes. This information, again, was difficult to obtain.

The following Freedom of Information Request was sent to every police force in England:

1. Please inform me, in as much detail as possible, what training officers in your service receive regarding child sexual exploitation, and by whom this training is provided. 2. Has this training changed or been updated since the publication of the Jay report in to child sexual exploitation in the town of Rotherham, and what changes to training have been made (if any)?

Though police forces do provide detail on training courses etc, they do not, on the whole, supply information as to what is included in the training.

I sent the following email to the College of Policing:

I am currently engaged in some research regarding child sex exploitation and would appreciate your assistance on the matter of police training in this area. 5

I recently wrote to every police force in England in the form of freedom of information requests, asking that instruction and guidance is given to police on the investigation and detection of so-called “grooming gangs”, and whether training/instruction was altered or updated in the wake of the Jay report in to child sex exploitation in Rotherham. To my surprise, none of the police forces that responded had updated or altered the training given.

I have tried in vain to obtain full details on exactly what guidance/training is provided to police in England around child sex exploitation, and I wonder if you may be able to supply this. Are there any plans to update or review police training in this area in the future, given the extent of this crime and its obvious continuation – indicating that perhaps current training may not be sufficient?

This was the reply:

The College provide guidance to all forces via our Authorised Professional Practice (APP). Please see the following link: <https://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/child-sexual-exploitation/> The National Crime Agency (NCA) CEOP Command also provide guidance: <http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/child-exploitation-online-protection-ceop> <http://www.ceop.police.uk/> The College of Policing’s guidance can be read on this link: <https://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/child-sexual-exploitation/>

Overall, the guidance fails to address some of the most pertinent factors in recent child sex abuse cases across England. It appears to place the police in a role of ‘carer’ rather than law-enforcer; the idea that the law should be enforced, and offenders punished, is not seen to be of the utmost importance. For example, ‘warning signs’ and ‘risk factors’ are listed comprehensively, but is it the role of the police to spot signs of, or intervene on matters of “social exclusion”?

For example, the guidance states: “*At a force level, officers should be using the warning signs to work proactively with other agencies. This will help to profile local risk and identify children who are exhibiting the warning signs, indicating that they are already being sexually exploited. Appropriate assessment and action can then take place.*” As has been noted in the Jay Report, police found underage girls being raped but took no action, so there appears to be little point in profiling local risk, when little is done to girls the police know are being raped.

On the characteristics of offenders, the guidance states: “*In comparison with what is known about types of CSE, far less is known about the characteristics of CSE offenders.*” There is therefore simply no acknowledgement as to the kind of “grooming gang” rape that has been happening across England or the racial/religious element of this.

Discussion of offenders takes up a mere few paragraphs in an otherwise lengthy document. The law on sexual abuse also features little. The emotional impact of CSE on children and families, as well as the emotional and social position of victims, enjoys far greater attention. There has thus been an alteration as to the role of police in British society. Emotional issues are obviously important, the social position of young people is also hugely significant generally, but arguably 6

they should not be the concern of police. The notion that the role of police is to investigate crime and gather evidence for the purpose of prosecution is not prioritised.

The National Crime Agency CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre), to whom the College of Policing response also refers, describes itself as working “*with child protection partners across the UK and overseas to identify the main threats to children and coordinates activity against these threats to bring offenders to account.*” “*Our approach is holistic*” it adds, and “*we pursue those who sexually exploit and abuse children, prevent people becoming involved in child sexual exploitation, protect children from becoming victims of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, and prepare interventions to reduce the impact of child sexual exploitation and abuse through safeguarding and child protection work.*” This doesn’t appear to be working in many cases, and again, robust enforcement of the law, as well as punishment of offenders, as a method of child protection, are not mentioned in its guidance.

Local Councils

Local councils (or local authorities) in England consist of Borough Councils, Metropolitan Borough Councils, County Councils, and District Councils. Not all kinds of council have responsibility for children in care, this report will focus on those who do. Councils have a legal obligation to actively prevent abuse of all children in their constituency, whether that child is under their care or not. Several children however, including many who suffered child sex exploitation, had been placed in to the care of the local authority, meaning the authority exercised parental rights and obligations over the child. The reasons a child might be placed in to the care of a local council are beyond the scope of this document, but put simply when a child is placed in to the care of a local council, the council takes on what is known as parental responsibility – a legal term which in practice means that the council takes on the obligations usually borne by parents or other legal carers.

At the end of 2014, there were over 68,000 children in the care of local councils in England.

The following Freedom of Information request was sent to all such councils:

Please send me the following details: · How many children have been in your care between December 2009 and December 2014 · How many children in your care have made allegations of sexual abuse (any offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003) to your services, during this period · How many of these allegations were reported to the police

Please also provide recorded information on: · The ethnicity/nationality of the alleged perpetrator(s)

At the time of writing, not all councils have replied. However, of those that did, a common and rather worrying pattern emerged. The vast majority of councils with duty of care to children were unable to report how many of those children had informed the council that they had been, or were being, sexually abused; to provide such information, council officers would have been forced to read through each child’s record individually.

What this tells us is that no separate record is kept in most of England’s councils as to how many of the children in their care are being, or have been, sexually abused. One might assume 7

that such abuse, and the prevention of such abuse, would be a top priority for persons or bodies in the legal position of guardian to many children. This does not appear to be the case however.

The vast majority stated that they could not provide the required information as to search through each individual record would take officers above the time required by the Freedom of Information Act.

Therefore, an offer of payment was made to cover the cost of the extra administration work. This offer was made to the following councils: Blackburn and Darwen, Bury, Oldham, Barnsley, Bradford, Sheffield, Wakefield, Derby, Leicester, Leicestershire, Nottingham, Coventry, Dudley, Solihull, Stoke-on-Trent, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Brighton and Hove, Wolverhampton, and East Riding. Of those that replied, none of them were willing to accept the offer of payment, utilising their discretion under the Freedom of Information Act to refuse to do so.

In conclusion, it is not possible for a member of the public to know how many children, in the care of local authorities, have reported rape or sexual abuse. This data is not readily available, and therefore not being collated, even in the wake of the Rotherham report and various other criminal prosecutions.

Interviews

One of the most remarkable parts of conducting research of this kind was the reluctance of people to talk to me. Most of the people I approached either did not respond, or would not agree to meet with me. Some agreed but would not fix a date or time. There were meetings and phone-calls arranged, only to be cancelled or “re-arranged” to a time that did not come. Some would speak but only on condition of anonymity, others would speak but provided clearly ‘scripted’ responses.

Several people I spoke to, who had previously tried to carry out similar research, agreed on the difficulty of this. I heard anecdotes of victims being too frightened to speak out because they had experienced little police action or support. I was told a story of one victim who had made complaints to police and a Muslim police officer was assigned to the case, meaning the victim no longer wished to go ahead. I heard of families whose daughters were brought in to drug abuse and prostitution and who have not been seen for many years.

Few police officers would respond to my requests, even though I promised anonymity. The same applies to council officers. Despite many attempts to obtain an interview with a representative of Rotherham council, no interview was granted: several questions were submitted via email but no reply received. A response to a Freedom of Information request to Rotherham council read as follows:

There have been a total of 1109 children looked after at any point between 1st December 2009 and 31st December 2014.

The Children and Young People’s Service could provide figures of all Looked After Children who have been subject to a Child Protection Investigation in line with Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 during a given period. However, this would not distinguish those which relate to sexual abuse nor those which were specifically reported as a crime. 8

To provide the specific detail requested a manual interrogation of relevant case files would be required and such an exercise would exceed the maximum cost as detailed in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004.

I was told: Rotherham MBC does not hold the information to provide a response to this question. This referred to the ethnicity of alleged offenders in cases of children reporting sexual abuse to the authority. The reply continued: Case files are held in the name of individual children, while names of any alleged perpetrator may be contained within such files no aggregated data is produced of the nature requested. Any manual interrogation of relevant case files would exceed the maximum cost as detailed in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. In any event it is unlikely to yield accurate data as it would be based on perception of ethnicity/nationality as reported by the child (age- post verbal to 18) making such allegations and will be dependent on their age and understanding of ethnic identity. Data in relation to ethnicity/nationality of convicted offenders may be held by crime agencies but is not held by the Local Authority.

Therefore, Rotherham MBC was unable to provide a response to the questions contained in the FOI request.

An attempt to secure an interview with a representative of Rochdale council was also unsuccessful.

Their reply to a freedom of information request was similar to that of Rotherham – a full response could not be supplied as to obtain the information would take longer than the statutory 18 hour limit.

During the investigation, I spoke to some child abuse experts, journalists, and former whistle-blowers; most attempts to obtain interviews however were unsuccessful.

Of the interviews that were obtained – mostly on condition of anonymity – certain things were agreed by interviewees who had investigated or known of child abuse, and these were:

- There was widespread failure across the public sector
- Political issues and community tensions play a part
- Cultural and racial attitudes played a significant part, including attitudes towards women
- Whistle-blowing is something that people are unlikely to undertake given the possible risks to themselves

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All-Party Parliamentary Select Committee

Following the Jay Report in to sexual abuse in Rotherham, an All-Party Parliamentary Select Committee was established. It published its report in June 2013. The report refers to multi-agency failures, and the increasing sophistication of grooming methods.

On the issue of race, the report notes:

The vast majority of convicted child-sex offenders in the UK are single White men. However, with this specific model of offending, there is a widespread perception that the majority of perpetrators are of Asian, British Asian or Muslim origin. This would certainly seem to be the case from the major grooming prosecutions which have gone to court so far, but in fact both 9

CEOP and the Office of the Children's Commissioner have found serious inconsistencies with recording of ethnicities and gender of both victims and perpetrators across UK forces.

Given the number of child sexual exploitation cases which have so far failed to make it to court, for the reasons discussed, this highly unsatisfactory situation means that it is extremely difficult to form an evidence based opinion on the true nature of what is still a largely hidden crime. Nevertheless, the perception, that grooming perpetrators are largely of Asian, British Asian or Muslim origin colours the attitudes of those working in the field, as well as the media and the wider public. Ann Cryer, the former MP for Keighley, who raised concerns about localised grooming in her constituency as long ago as 2003, faced a backlash when she described the offenders as Asian and pointed to the fact that most of them came from the Mirpur district of Kashmir (a description which she still stands by). She suggested that underlying cultural attitudes might be a factor in the offending. As Andrew Norfolk told us:

"The far right leapt on the story, predictably, and [Ann Cryer] was accused of demonising all Muslims. I think that it almost acted as a brake for several years on anybody seriously looking at whether there was any truth in what she was saying but, as the years passed, I noticed cases cropping up from time to time across Yorkshire and Lancashire with a very similar pattern."

Kris Hopkins MP, the current Member for Keighley, also spoke of the reaction that Ann Cryer received and supported her view that a fear of being labelled 'racist' had hindered the ability of official agencies to combat the grooming and sexual exploitation. Lots of the people in that community dismissed Ann's comments and saw them as inflammatory rather than as challenging and helpful. Many people believed another injustice was being done to the community by the fact that Ann kept raising the issue. The victimhood that ran through the community gave an excuse for not facing up to the problem. I went to lots of public events to discuss the issue, but all I heard was that Ann's constant comments undermined the community. The community failed to face up to the core issues that Ann was putting out there. The reality is that the problem has not gone away. Ann Cryer was right. Since that time, many more children have been abused because of the failures of the agencies and of the communities to address what was happening.

The All-Party Parliamentary Select Committee report goes on to state:

Witnesses have given us a number of reasons why they think there appears to be an association with the British Pakistani community. Kris Hopkins MP who had previously spoken in the House on the sexist behaviour of some Muslim men which went unchallenged by their peers or community elders,²⁴⁸ talked to us about the importance of the empowerment of women in these communities.

"I think the most powerful voices within there—or they need to be the most powerful voices—will be women in those communities, so the mums, grandmas, future mums, the girls in those families need to be empowered."

Andrew Norfolk suggested that issues around the age of consent may play a role, pointing out that: "If you come from a rural Mirpuri, Kashmiri community, where, whatever state law says, village tradition and sharia says that puberty is the green light for marriage—as it does—and if you recognise that most girls in this country are hitting puberty at 11 or 12, perhaps one begins to understand why it is not just lone offenders. There has to be something, given that so 10

often this is a normalised group activity—not among a major criminal gang, but among friends, work colleagues and relatives—that does not have the same sense of shame attached to it as would be the case for your typical White offender, who works alone because if he told too many people, somebody would report him.”

During this investigation, I spoke to a child abuse expert who had interviewed young men with regard to rape and attitudes to women. Although she stated that attitudes to women were problematic generally, she added *“in some communities, white girls are viewed differently”* and can be seen as having lower *“moral standards”*. Also causing some difficulty she said was the internal nature of closed communities, and their reluctance to approach mainstream services. For example, wrong-doing may be dealt with by *“community leaders”* rather than police and social services. Andrew Norfolk has also referred to this, and said *“I have spoken to young men in some of the towns where this has been going on. Universally, they decry what happens. They say they are disgusted with the men who have been doing this but, equally, that they would never have dreamt of going to the police about it, because you do not turn on your own community.”*

The child abuse expert interviewed for this report also argued that attitudes towards young women by police and public services are themselves problematic. Young girls are often seen as *“troublesome”* rather than victims of exploitation. She acknowledged that *“political correctness”* was an issue, but one of many.

The All-Party Parliamentary Select Committee report discusses race at some length. However, religion again escapes criticism or scrutiny. Indeed, a Muslim voice called upon to give evidence was Sheikh Ibrahim Mogra, of the Muslim Council of Britain – a controversial group which advocates sharia law. Mogra said *“If the perpetrator is a Muslim, treat that perpetrator and that criminal as you would treat any other criminal. They should not get any preferential treatment or anywhere to hide behind the name of Islam or of Muslim.”* Whilst on the surface, this may appear an admirable approach, it also prevents any scrutiny of Islamic teaching and the impact this may have on attitudes towards women, sex, and the age of consent.

As is now very clear, accurate information on the issue of child sex abuse by “Asian” gangs is impossible to obtain – certainly by members of the public. Let us therefore examine what we do know about the most notorious cases involving this crime in recent years. A thorough examination of the Jay Report is an essential starting point.

Rotherham

The Jay Report, released in August 2014, was the most shocking child sex abuse scandal in Britain for a generation. The report claimed that around 1,400 children had been sexually abused in that town over a period of 16 years – and that this abuse had been effectively ignored by the authorities there. There were several reasons for the failure of Rotherham authorities in these cases. They undoubtedly include an ill-advised *“political correctness”* that created fear that authorities might be accused of racism if they took action to prevent the rape – this was because the majority of the perpetrators were of “Asian” descent. A culture of excessive bureaucracy and ‘blamelessness’ also played a part – the reluctance of authority to place blame 11

for criminal activity on a minority group is common under so-called 'left-wing' governance. Something of a misogynistic culture within local police forces also contributed – that is, the blaming of rape victims themselves and the notion that their behaviour was at fault. Class-related prejudice and snobbery played a part, along with apparent corruption and incompetence.

The conditions in Rotherham provided the 'perfect storm' for child sex abuse to take place. Few effective processes were in place and simple law enforcement was overlooked as an option for the prevention of this abuse. Instead, numerous 'committees' which had little to no effect, were established and seen as an appropriate response. This, combined with dismissal of the complaints of victims, and a culture of appeasement with regard to ethnic minority groups, created a town where a serious crime was committed, over and over again, with effective impunity.

The Scale

The figure of the number of children subjected to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) identified in the Jay Report was 1,400 – the period of time being 1997 to 2013. The report noted that this was likely to be an underestimate. As has been noted, the investigation undertaken for this report, it is impossible for an accurate number to be reached. The reasons for this, noted in the Jay Report, are as follows:

- Children are often reluctant to come forward as they "would feel ashamed or afraid"
- Child Sex Exploitation was not recognised as a cause for referral (i.e. to come under the case of social services) until 2001
- Police did not have a separate category for CSE until 2013
- Neither police nor the local authority compiled reliable data on CSE
- Of 988 children known either to police or social services in Rotherham, a random sample of 19 current and 19 past cases was examined; 95% of these showed "clear evidence" that the child has suffered CSE
- A further 28 cases were examined; 22 of which were taken from historic police operations. All 28 were victims of CSE.
- In 2013, South Yorkshire Police received 157 reports concerning CSE in Rotherham
- In the 1990s, the Risky Business project was established in Rotherham (see below), several workers within the project reported knowledge of CSE in Rotherham early-mid 1990s
- At the time of the Jay Inquiry, there was "no standardised reporting of child sexual exploitation"
- In over a third of cases, children affected by CSE had been previously known to services

The Abuse

The details of the abuse suffered by children in Rotherham is difficult to read. The cruelty and brutality of these crimes make the failure of Rotherham authorities all the more outrageous.

Details include:

- Victims raped by multiple perpetrators and trafficked to other towns across the north of England
- Victims were "beaten, abducted, intimidated"
- Children were forced to witness "brutally violent rapes", one child was doused in petrol and threatened with being set alight, some children were threatened with guns

- Children were stalked by abusers
- Children were threatened and assaulted, and in some cases, their families were threatened or subject to actual assault
- Families were “terrorised by groups of perpetrators”; sitting outside of family homes in cars, making abusive phone-calls, smashing windows. Some victims returned to perpetrators believing this to be the only way to keep their families safe
- Abusers “targeted children’s residential units”
- Victims were picked up outside school in cars and taxis
- Children were isolated from their families and friends
- Some schools reported “girls being picked up at lunchtime at the school gates and being taken away to provide oral sex to men during in the lunch break”

Attitudes

One remarkable and recurrent theme throughout the Jay Report is the attitude of some police and social services workers. In some instances, an attitude of victim-blaming is clear. Other cases reveal a refusal to acknowledge or tackle the abuse, others reveal a culture of denial.

- In two cases, fathers who had attempted to remove their daughters from abusers were themselves arrested
- Victims themselves were arrested for being “drunk and disorderly” or for breach of the peace
- Several social workers claim that CSE was known about from the early 1990s, but this was often viewed as “child prostitution”
- Two adults received a caution after admitting to sexual intercourse with a 12 year old girl; a CID representative argued that the child had been “100% consensual in every incident”
- “Police and children’s services were ineffective and seemed to blame the child”
- Referrals regarding one 14 year old girl were made by police to social services, but were never followed up; her rapist was later convicted
- A 12 year old girl, found drunk in the car of a CSE suspect – who had indecent photographs of her on his phone – was referred to authorities. Her father provided information regarding the identity of the perpetrators, as well as details on where and when she had been abused. Months later, she was assessed by social services as not being at risk of child sexual exploitation, and her case closed. She was subsequently found in a derelict house, with another child and a number of adult men, where she was arrested for being drunk and disorderly – the men were not arrested
- Whilst good procedures were in place in terms of policing, these were seen as “widely disregarded”; some police officers displayed a “lack of understanding of CSE and the nature of grooming”
- An interviewee for the inquiry described “how the police refused to intervene when you girls who were thought to victims of CSE were being beaten up and abused”

Bureaucracy and Procedure

A further recurring theme throughout the Jay Report is one of procedural incompetence and excessive bureaucracy. Despite knowledge that rape and sexual exploitation was taking place across Rotherham for over a decade, little was done by police and authorities beyond discussion of the problem. Several committees and sub-committees were established, numerous meetings held, new policies and procedures written – but none had the effect of reducing the sexual

abuse, and application of the criminal law (including on rape) seemed not to be considered an option. Basic failures were common:

- One child was placed in residential care for her own protection and found that the abuse she suffered there was “even worse” than at home
- Key information about some children was not recorded by services
- There was little or no specialist care or mental health intervention offered to victims
- Prior to 2007, children over the age of 11 “were not seen to be the priority for children’s social care, even when they were being sexually abused and exploited”
- Prior to 2012, minutes of Strategy meetings were “held centrally and not recorded on the child’s social care file”
- The Sexual Exploitation Forum, established in 2003, would “discuss” individual children; there was “no record of these discussions or decisions on the child’s file”
- Taxi-drivers in the town were implicated in the abuse. According to the Jay Report; *“Strategy meetings about one specific taxi firm had been held on four occasions in a seven week period. The minutes of one meeting record a total of ten girls and young women, three of whom were involved in alleged attempted abduction by taxi drivers. The seven other girls had alleged that they were being sexually exploited in exchange for free taxi rides and goods. Two of the girls involved were looked after children in the care of the local authority. The Licensing Enforcement Officer took the step of formally writing to the police following the incidents of alleged attempted abduction by drivers, complaining about the police failure to act. In one incident, a driver accosted a 13 year old girl. She refused to do what he asked and reported this to her parents who followed the taxi through the town, where they managed to identify the driver and dialled 999 for assistance. According to the Licensing Enforcement Officer, the police did not attend until later and took no action. In his email to the police he stated that ‘a simple check would have revealed that the driver had been arrested a week previously in Bradford for a successful kidnapping of a lone female’”.*

Although the Jay Report noted some improvements in procedure, and commitment to child protection by many individual workers, it is clear that a problem that could have been prevented by simple law enforcement (and mental health support for victims) was discussed rather than acted upon; whilst such discussion was taking place, and a number of committees established, the rape and sexual assault continued unabated.

In conclusion, the Jay Report noted that there “*were significant weaknesses in risk assessment and risk management*” and “*there was no appropriate management response to the problem of children exposed to exploitation whilst in the care of the Council*”.

‘Political Correctness’ and Alleged Cover-Up

The Jay Report was not the first in to the sexual abuse of young girls taking place in the town of Rotherham; three earlier reports had also been produced. One such report, known as ‘The Home Office Report’ was produced by a Home Office researcher in 2002. This criticised attitudes displayed by services in the town – including “*indifference towards, and ignorance of, child sexual exploitation*”. According to the Jay Report, the Home Office Report “*stated that responsibility was continuously placed on young people’s shoulders, rather than with the suspected abusers*”. 14

The Jay Report continues:

Senior officers in the police and the council were deeply unhappy about the data and evidence that underpinned the report. There was a suggestion that facts had been fabricated or exaggerated. Several sources reported that the researcher was subjected to personalised hostility at the hands of officials. She was unable to complete the last part of the research. The content which senior officers objected to has been shown with hindsight to be largely accurate. Had this report been treated with the seriousness it merited at the time by both the police and the council, the children involved then and later would have been better protected and abusers brought to justice. The events have led to suspicions of collusion and cover-up.

A different report, produced by Dr Angie Heal, presented a “vivid and alarming picture of the links between sexual exploitation, drugs, gangs and violent crime in Rotherham from 2002 to 2006. They were widely distributed to middle and senior managers in all key agencies. There is no record of any formal, specific discussion of these reports in Council papers”.

The Home Office Research

The Home Office Report was highly critical of services in Rotherham and of failures to protect children from sexual exploitation. Concerns were similar to those set out in the Jay Report. The Home Office Report maintained that blame was often placed on the young girl (some had been threatened with arrest for wasting police time, and some were seen as “promiscuous”). These concerns were met with “defensiveness and hostility”. The researcher told the Jay Inquiry of a lack of action to pursue perpetrators and that she had had several meetings with police at which intelligence on the identity of perpetrators was provided.

The Jay Report continues:

[The researcher] described a particular case that was ‘the final straw’. In 2001, a young girl who had been repeatedly raped had tried to escape her perpetrators but was terrified of reprisals. They had allegedly put all the windows in at the parental home and broken both of her brother’s legs ‘to send a message’. At that point, the child agreed to make a complaint to the Police. The researcher took her to the police station office where she would be interviewed in advance in order to familiarise her with the place and the officer who would be conducting the interview. Whilst there, the girl received a text from the main perpetrator. He had with him her 11-year old sister. He said repeatedly to her ‘your choice...’. The girl did not proceed with the complaint. She disengaged from the pilot and project and is quoted by the researcher as saying ‘you can’t protect me’. This incident raised questions about how the perpetrator knew where the young woman was and what she was doing.

Following this, she and some colleagues decided that she should put her concerns in writing to the Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police and the Rotherham District Commander of Police. This letter was “approved by her manager and steering group” and delivered to Rotherham Police Station. This led to a meeting with the District Commander and senior Council officials, at which she was told “never to do such a thing again”. The content of the letter was not discussed.

When the content of her report was seen by senior Council officials and police, she was suspended on the grounds that she had “committed an act of gross misconduct” by including minutes of confidential meetings. She was reinstated however when it was revealed that the 15

minutes had in fact been handed to the Home Office by her manager. She spent the remainder of her employment “working on policies and procedures, in a room on her own, forbidden access to the girls involved and not allowed to attend meetings or have access to further data”.

In her evidence to a Parliamentary Select Committee investigation that followed the Jay Report, she said that she had attended several meetings with local police and informed them of suspected child abusers in Rotherham. These concerns were “disregarded, dismissed or minimised”.

She stated:

“During my final months at Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council I was subjected to intense personal hostility and intimidation, not just from Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, but also South Yorkshire Police. There is no doubt in my mind that I was placed under pressure to change and present my findings in a way that presented services in Rotherham in a better light”.

In a BBC Panorama documentary that followed the publication of the Jay Report, the researcher said that having told Council officials that the majority of the perpetrators came from the town’s Pakistani community, she was told: “You must never refer to that again, you must never refer to Asian men”. She went on: “her other response was to book me on a two-day ethnicity and diversity course to raise my awareness of ethnic issues”.

Furthermore, she claimed that the data she had collected inexplicably went missing: *“they’d gained access to the office and they had taken my data, so out of the number of filing cabinets, there was one drawer emptied and it was emptied of my data. It had to be an employee of the council”.*

Evidence that ethnicity played a part in the alleged Rotherham cover-up was also included in the report of Professor Jay, who wrote: *“Several councillors interviewed believed that by opening up these issues they could be ‘giving oxygen’ to racist perspectives that might in turn attract extremist political groups and threaten community cohesion.”*

Indeed, within the report completed by Dr Angie Heal in 2006: *“it was reported that a number of workers in the town involved with the issue believed that one of the difficulties which prevented CSE being dealt with effectively was the ethnicity of the perpetrators”.*

The Casey Report

In 2015, the Government took control of Rotherham Council. This followed the publication of yet another report – the Casey Report – which concluded that the council was *“not fit for purpose”*. This one had been commissioned by the Communities Secretary Eric Pickles and led to the resignation of the Council Cabinet. Investigations revealed:

- A council in denial about serious and on-going safeguarding failures
- An archaic culture of sexism, bullying and discomfort around race
- Failure to address past weaknesses, in particular in Children’s Social Care
- Weak and ineffective arrangements for taxi licensing which leave the public at risk
- Ineffective leadership and management, including political leadership
- No shared vision, a partial management team and ineffective liaisons with partners

Regarding the ethnicity of CSE perpetrators, Ms Casey wrote:

“The issue of race is contentious, with staff and Members lacking the confidence to tackle difficult issues for fear of being seen as racist or upsetting community cohesion. By failing to take action against the Pakistani heritage male perpetrators of CSE in the borough, the Council has inadvertently fuelled the far right and allowed racial tensions to grow. It has done a great disservice to the Pakistani heritage community and the good people of Rotherham as a result”.

Similar statements would appear again and again as cases of child sexual exploitation in other towns and cities around England emerged.

Rochdale

Allegations of both cover-up and “political correctness” followed the conviction of nine men from Rochdale in Greater Manchester in 2012. Abdul Aziz, Kabeer Hassan, Adil Khan, Abdul Rauf, Mohammed Sajid, Abdul Qayyum, Mohammed Amin, Hamid Safi (an illegal immigrant) and Shadir Ahmed (the apparent ring-leader) were convicted on charges including rape and conspiracy to engage in sexual activity with a child.

The details read as a horror story. Underage girls were plied with alcohol and raped – one girl testified to having been raped by around twenty men in one night. Some victims were “paid” to bring younger girls in to the rape rings, and another girl attested that she was raped by two men while vomiting from alcohol.

The story began in 2008 when a girl told police she had been repeatedly raped. Two men, Defendant X and Kabeer Hassan, were arrested and questioned. The Crown Prosecution Service decided not to proceed with the girl’s complaint however, citing issues with her credibility, and as such, the police ceased their investigations. According to a BBC report, the girl herself had been arrested by police for “being disruptive” at a fast-food takeaway, and then alleged that she was being raped by workers at the outlet.

The Telegraph takes up the story:

Rochdale social services were alerted to her allegations, yet nothing was done to protect her, even though police insist to this day they believed her story.

Yet it took them 11 months to send a file on the case to the Crown Prosecution Service, which decided in July 2009 that Girl A would not be a credible witness in court and did not, therefore, go ahead with a prosecution. The police decided not to contest the decision even though Defendant X had no explanation for how his DNA had been found on Girl A’s underwear.

As a result, the worst of Girl A’s ordeal came after she had told police what was going on. In the four months after she spoke to police, she was driven around a succession of sordid flats and houses where she would be raped by up to five men each night, four or five days each week. Police investigations in to the 2008 allegations had ceased upon the CPS decision not to prosecute, but were re-opened following similar accusations by a second girl in late 2009.

Upon the appointment of Nazir Afzal as chief prosecutor for the North-West of England, the decision not to prosecute in the initial case was overturned. Afzal stated: “I formed the opinion she [the initial complainant] was entirely credible and the two suspects should be charged” . 17

During the police investigation that followed, more than forty further girls were identified as potential victims.

Some of the girls were in the care of the local authority at the time of the abuse, and one wrote a letter to a staff member telling him *“Asians pick me up, they get me drunk, they give me drugs, they have sex with me and pay me not to tell anyone. I want to move.”*

The ring-leader of the gang eventually convicted for the crimes in 2012 was Shabir Ahmed. In extraordinary scenes at Liverpool Crown Court, Ahmed claimed that he was innocent of sex charges, because the victims would have told police about his hairy body if they were telling the truth. He tore off his shirt to show the court. Ahmed claimed his abuse victims were in fact prostitutes who had the business acumen to *“win The Apprentice”*. He also accused them of racism, as well as the court and police. He claimed of one victim: *“She never used to hide the fact that white was superior to any other race.”* He then demanded *“where are the white people? You have only got my kind here. You are looking for scapegoats. Where are the white people?”* He expressed contempt for white women and girls by stating: *“they have trained them in sex. They have trained them in drinking. By the time they are fully trained, they start their own business”*. Of one victim, he said she *“would screw the entire Muslim population”*.

In sentencing, Judge Gerald Clifton told the men *“All of you treated the victims as though they were worthless and beyond any respect – they were not part of your community or religion.”*

The Rochdale case prompted international commentary about race relations in the north of England. Nazir Afzal called it *“the elephant in the room”* and Mohammed Shafiq, of the Ramadhan Foundation, claimed that some in the Muslim community think of white girls as worthless and accused authorities of being *“obsessed with racism”* and thus failed to investigate as they should.

The prominent journalist Melanie Philips wrote at the time that the Rochdale case had been a direct result of the *“witch-hunt against Islamophobia”*. Philips wrote *“the authorities had evidence this was going on as long ago as 1991”*. She went on: *“The police maintain doggedly that this has nothing to do with race. What a red herring. Of course it doesn't! This is about religion and culture – an unwesternised Islamic culture which holds that non-Muslims are trash and women are worthless. And so white girls are worthless trash. Which is itself of course a race issue.”*

Referring to a report in The Times, Philips pointed out that in 1991, nine girls from three homes in Bradford fell victim to pimps who collected them from their home each evening, took them to be used for sex in houses, flats and guest houses, then returned them to the care of residential staff in the early hours of the morning. The local authority ordered an inquiry but did not reveal that the men were all of Pakistani heritage. In 2006, a specialist child protection team was formed in Manchester because the city, according to its former children's services director, had clear evidence of *“targeted sexual exploitation of girls in children's homes”*. It was a stark admission, but again the shared ethnicity of most of the men was not identified.

Former Labour MP Ann Cryer said at the time: *“This is an absolute scandal. They [authorities] were petrified of being called racist and so reverted to the default of political correctness.”* Several police officers agreed with Cryer, including retired Detective Inspector Merial Buglass of Greater Manchester Police, who said *“They didn't want to class the abuse as Asian on white girls. They didn't want to cause a fuss. I took the view that this wasn't about racism, it was 18*

about child abuse – but political correctness and cultural sensitivities were important to management”. Mick Gradwell, a former detective superintendent, said that the targeted abuse of young white girls had been known about for decades, but police feared being labelled “*institutionally racist*”. “*How many young girls have been abused and raped because of the reluctance of the authorities to say exactly what is happening?*” he asked. Mr Gradwell said that he had encountered abuse of white girls by “Asian” men as far back as the 1970s: “*When I joined in 1979 one of my first tasks was to police around a Blackburn nightclub where one of the issues was Asian men cruising around in BMWs and Mercs trying to pick up young drunken girls. The main pressure police have is being called institutionally racist if they highlight a crime trend like this. There’s a fantastic reluctance to be absolutely straight because some people may take such offence*”.

In May 2012, a second sex abuse gang was investigated in Rochdale and nine men of “Asian and Afro-Caribbean backgrounds” were arrested and bailed.

An independent report in to child sexual exploitation in Rochdale was published in 2013. The report recounts several cases of young girls sexually exploited, mostly by “Asian” men. This paper also condemns council processes and culture with regard to abused children and states: “*What may be described as the culture within the organisation also appears to negatively impact on ways of working and good practice; Targeted Services are not experienced as a ‘team’ and feel fragmented to those involved. Differing parts of Targeted Services do not appear to understand each other’s roles and remit and there are interface/communications issues between them which are detrimental to practice.*”

The Council replied that it was “*determined to never repeat the mistakes of the past*”. Somewhat worryingly, it also states that “*we believe raising awareness of child sexual exploitation is as important as tackling the crime itself*”. This establishes once again that simple enforcement of the criminal law is not seen as an entirely effective option. Councils appear to be settling for the easier option of committees and focus groups, rather than face adversity in court and tough questions in public.

Oxford

Dr Taj Hargey is an imam in the English city of Oxford. Following revelations of organised child sex abuse by Muslim gangs there, Dr Hargey wrote a striking article in the Daily Mail in which he argued that “political correctness” had prevented British authorities from facing up to harsh realities regarding the religion of the abusers.

Dr Hargey wrote:

The fact is that the vicious activities of the Oxford ring are bound up with religion and race: religion, because all the perpetrators, though they had different nationalities, were Muslim; and race, because they deliberately targeted vulnerable white girls, whom they appeared to regard as ‘easy meat’, to use one of their revealing, racist phrases.

Indeed, one of the victims who bravely gave evidence in court told a newspaper afterwards that ‘the men exclusively wanted white girls to abuse’. 19

In all these incidents, the abusers were Muslim men, and their targets were under-age white girls. Moreover, reputable studies show that around 26 per cent of those involved in grooming and exploitation rings are Muslims, which is around five times higher than the proportion of Muslims in the adult male population.

To pretend that this is not an issue for the Islamic community is to fall into a state of ideological denial. But then part of the reason this scandal happened at all is precisely because of such politically correct thinking. All the agencies of the state, including the police, the social services and the care system, seemed eager to ignore the sickening exploitation that was happening before their eyes.

Terrified of accusations of racism, desperate not to undermine the official creed of cultural diversity, they took no action against obvious abuse.

In the misguided orthodoxy that now prevails in many mosques, including several of those in Oxford, men are unfortunately taught that women are second-class citizens, little more than chattels or possessions over whom they have absolute authority.

That is why we see this growing, reprehensible fashion for segregation at Islamic events on university campuses, with female Muslim students pushed to the back of lecture halls.

There was a telling incident in the trial when it was revealed that one of the thugs heated up some metal to brand a girl, as if she were a cow. 'Now, if you have sex with someone else, he'll know that you belong to me,' said this criminal, highlighting an attitude where women are seen as nothing more than personal property.

Dr Hargey wrote the article following the conviction of seven men, including two sets of brothers, who were jailed for life for a range of sexual offences against underage girls in Oxford. Details of the case were particularly shocking and included the "sale" of girls as young as 11 to several men.

Abuses included:

- A forced back-street abortion
- Girls covered in burns from stubbed out cigarettes on their bodies
- Girls urinated on
- Torture with knives, meat cleavers, and baseball bats
- Threatened with a gun
- Girls subjected to biting and suffocating

Again, media commentators pointed to the national scale of this problem, and the over-representation of Muslim men in organised child sex gangs. Allison Pearson wrote in the Telegraph that the rapists had learned the lessons of multiculturalism, cultural sensitivity, and the paralysing fear among public authorities of being labelled racist, and were actively using this to distract from their crimes. 20

She wrote:

In a particularly warped twist, the pimp will teach his victim that her parents are racist towards Asians, which is why they disapprove of their relationship – absolutely nothing, of course, to do with him being a violent, controlling thug. Gang members have grown wise to the wimpy ways of Western society. They exploit the fact that police, newly trained in “cultural sensitivity”, are terrified of being accused of racism. So the pimps operate with impunity until, years later, the slave girls find the courage to testify in court against their masters.

We all know what happens next, don't we? Leaders of the Pakistani Muslim community – essentially a Victorian society that has landed like Doctor Who's Tardis on a liberal, permissive planet it despises – are at pains to deny that the grooming gang's behaviour has anything to do with ethnic origin or contemptible attitudes towards women.

Emma, a rape victim from Rotherham, told a reporter in 2015 “*It was always the same. If the perpetrators played the race card, then the police, the social services, they melted away. It meant [the men] grew arrogant. They acted with complete impunity. They believed they were above any law. When I was with them, they openly boasted they would never be arrested, and girls I help now tell me the men who sexually exploit them boast the same thing today.*” She recounted a story where police approached her while she was in the company of her abusers. The police asked her for her name, age, and address, which she provided. Her alleged abuser then told the police to “piss off” or he would make a racial harassment claim against them. They left.

Playing ‘the race card’ is a ploy that has probably been repeated across the country, including, no doubt, in Oxford.

In response to questions for this report, Joanna Simons, Chief Executive of Oxfordshire County Council said: “*Oxfordshire County Council takes the issue of child sexual exploitation extremely seriously and we have taken significant and wide-ranging action to address this in Oxfordshire as part of our work dealing with the Bullfinch trial [the trial described above] in May 2013.*”

Ms Simons provided information as to Oxfordshire County Council's plans to prevent future child sex abuse of the kind highlighted in this report.

They were:

- Establishing the Kingfisher unit with police, social workers and health staff to spot potential warning signs, identify and support young people who may be victims of child sexual exploitation
- Providing child protection training for staff working with children. The training now includes a designated section on spotting the signs of, and responding to, child sexual exploitation. This training has been delivered to more than 7,500 multi-agency staff in Oxfordshire, including all frontline staff working with children.
- Developing a new child sexual exploitation screening tool. This screening tool, which has been developed in line with best practice, is used to assess the likelihood and risk level of a young person being subjected to sexual exploitation.
- Oxfordshire County Council working directly with young people to raise awareness of the risks and warnings signs of sexual exploitation. A drama workshop about sexual exploitation 21

called Chelsea's Choice has been seen by around 24,000 secondary school children in Oxfordshire, accompanied by a letter and leaflet for parents. Two further plays – one for children aged 15+ and one for primary school children – will be rolled out from September 2014. • Allocating an additional £1.4m to fund the recruitment of a further 21 dedicated child protection social workers, plus increasing the budget for children's social care by almost £20m in real terms between 2006/7 and 2013/14. • Lobbying at a national level for changes to improve the process for victims of child sexual exploitation, including better protection for witnesses, and proactively sharing what we have learnt in Oxfordshire. This is very welcome, and indeed admirable work. It is also to Oxfordshire's credit that they have said they are "working with mosques" on this issue; suggesting they are not ignoring the ethnic and religious background of many of the abusers.

Birmingham

The story is similar in the city of Birmingham – as was exposed in late 2014. Dr Jill Jesson was asked by Birmingham City Council to look in to child prostitution in that city in 1990. Dr Jesson reported to the authority that "Asian" cab drivers were heavily involved in the sexual abuse, but was ordered by a steering group to remove all reference to ethnicity. A meeting to discuss her report was cancelled, and all copies of the report were destroyed.

Dr Jesson told the Birmingham Mail *"I was told to reveal what I saw. I did – and some people didn't like it. There was a link between the sexual abuse of the girls and private hire drivers in the city. I thought at the time I did the work that there was an issue with race. Most of the girls were white. I was asked to take this link out, to erase it."*

She continued:

"Every time a news item has come on about sexual grooming of young girls and girls in care, and the link, too, between private hire drivers, I have thought 'I told them about that in 1991 but they didn't want to acknowledge it'. I think the problem has got worse and worse over time."

"It wasn't called grooming then, it was called prostitution," Dr Jesson said. *"The girls were all aged between 13 and 17 and were all under the care of Birmingham City Council social services."*

"When the work was completed and the report was finished, as far as I was concerned my report was going to be discussed by staff in social services in order to do something."

"The report was meant to be presented at a seminar to discuss the council's policy around protecting these girls. It was all about establishing if the policy fitted the problem, so to speak."

"But the report was shelved, buried, it was never made public. I was shocked to be told that copies of the report were to be destroyed and that nothing further was to be said. Clearly, there was something in this report that someone in the department was worried about." 22

Dr Jesson was also critical of recording methods and said she had not been helped by the fact that social services had inadequate recording methods: *“That was a big problem and my report was also critical of the council’s policy around tackling the problem.”*

Peter Hay, Strategic Director for People at Birmingham City Council responded and said: *“This is a matter which was discussed in full and in public over twenty years ago.*

“In 1991 Jill Jesson was asked to undertake a research report on the prostitution of young people in the care system. This was done using government HIV grant money. At the end of the review a decision was made to not pursue further grant funding. More significantly in 1991 the Department decided not to publish the report for reasons which are not clear.

“In December 1995, the Director published the report in full. (Social Services Committee 13/12/95). Jill has confirmed to me that the report we found in the archived minute is the full report.”

Also in 2014, an official West Midlands Police report showed that 75% of on-street sexual abuse offenders were “Asian”, while 82% of the victims were white and aged between 14-16.

Exposed – Groomed for Sex

In December 2011, the BBC broadcasted an extraordinary documentary entitled ‘Exposed – Groomed for Sex’. The programme wasn’t much noticed by the media, but it revealed a stark reality concerning attitudes towards white women that are prevalent in Britain’s “Asian” communities.

Adil Ray was the investigator. Ray is a British-Pakistani who was raised in Birmingham and who sought to understand why there was such a large number of Pakistani men involved in these crimes. Ray referred to comments made by former Home Secretary Jack Straw: *“These young men are in a western society. In any event, they act like any other young men, they are fizzing and popping with testosterone, they want some outlet for that, but Pakistani heritage girls are off-limits”*. Straw caused a media storm with these comments, particularly for his suggestion that many Pakistani men viewed white women and girls as *“easy meat”*. He was immediately accused of “stereotyping” and some in his Blackburn constituency (1/5 of which are “Asian”) were reportedly unhappy about his remarks.

Ray travelled to Blackburn to speak to some local residents about the thoughts of their MP. Some thought Jack Straw should apologise, and he did so. He apologised for causing offence with his remarks, in particular by generalising and painting Pakistani men with a broad brush. One person interviewed by Ray suggested that Straw should have attended a mosque to discuss the matter, rather than speak publicly.

Ray looked at 20 cases of on-street grooming over a 10-year period and found that 4 out of every 5 men convicted were of Pakistani origin. Andrew Norfolk, a Times journalist who has investigated and reported on child sex grooming for several years – including in Rotherham – told Adil Ray: 23

From what I can gather, in the cases I've been looking at, there's a fair sense of contempt for the white girl who is there and available and is worthless in the minds of the men who are doing this to her. Where one gets in to sensitive territory here is; these are lads who have grown up in this country, the values at home belong to a different country, where their sister, their cousin, is an object to be protected at all costs, and her chastity is to be protected at all costs. But they are growing up in a western society where sex is on a plate, every time they open a newspaper, and white lads your [Ray's] age are going out and having sex with anything that moves.

While somewhat crudely put, and rather derogative to white women in itself, Norfolk's comments feature the huge cultural gap that exists between the West and Pakistan on the issue of sexuality. By expressing the opinion that Pakistani girls' "*chastity is to be protected at all costs*", Norfolk also makes reference to the so-called honour system that prevails in Pakistan; the source of this "honour" being bound up in women's sexuality. This widespread concept of "honour" results in severe restrictions on the freedom of women, and severe punishments for any infringement. For example, a woman in Pakistan who has been raped can be considered to have dishonoured her family and this can (by law of the land) end in her suffering the barbaric punishment of death-by-stoning.

Norfolk went on to state that he had faced "*strong criticisms from people who feel we've ventured in to territory we had no right to venture in to, and who would seem to say that we are attempting to make, effectively, a racist point*".

Again, this demonstrates the insularity of some communities in Britain – who effectively exclude themselves from mainstream society and feel that white people have no "right" to interfere. It also tells us that any questioning or criticism of the actions of members of minority communities will be dismissed as "racist" and taken no further.

In Burnley, Ray spoke to a group of young Bangladeshi men who agreed to speak to him about girls. When asked what they did for fun, they mentioned "bitches" (by which they confirmed they meant girls). When one was asked if he had a girlfriend, he answered "*not one, a couple – do you want one?*" He said that he has been accused of grooming when seen in the company of a white girl. He labelled such accusers "*cock-blockers*" who, because they are not having sex, don't want other men to either. Ray also spent time in Preston with a police sexual exploitation team – one of six in Lancashire that monitor areas where young people spend time to try to spot and prevent potential grooming crimes. The police officer featured in the report confirmed that some victims can be as young as 11 years old, and also mentioned fast-food takeaway outlets as being particularly problematic; young girls are offered free fast food to help build "friendship".

One young woman recounted her experience, which began at the age of 12:

I just started going to a local shopping centre and children's arcade, and I got approached by teenage boys who were a couple of years older than me. Then they started to introduce me to older men who had flash cars. They weren't strangers, a 30 year-old didn't pull up at the side of me in a BMW and ask me if I wanted to get in and he'd take me for a McDonalds, cos I would've said no. I'd spent 12 months with these people; they were friends of people I trusted.

The abuse eventually started with this incident: 24

I was on the floor and he was ripping my trousers and all my clothes off and he was on top of me, and there was a gang of men stood watching and laughing, and he started to rape me. Then there was one man holding my arms and pinning me down and trying to put his penis in my mouth, and another one holding my legs down as well, and one holding my friend's eyes open and making her watch. I was a virgin and he raped me quite brutally. I'd got a white coat on and he got the blood and he wiped it all down my white coat. My friend had to take me to the toilet and sort me out. She was trying to scrub the blood off my coat because I couldn't go around like that. I was really upset and I was crying, and she was just saying that, you know, make out as though I had over-reacted. No-one ever around me made out that what had happened was wrong, it was made out as though that was right and was acceptable, and that's right.

They'd isolated me from everything and everyone. My only friends were these people.

The young woman, Emma, stayed in the cycle of abuse because threats were made to her family, including threats that her mother would be raped.

Adil Ray, later in the documentary, tried to get to the bottom of why “Asian” men are so over-represented in the specific crime of on-street grooming when most sex offenders are generally white. He travelled to Derby and spoke to a woman who explained to him that it is common for “Asian” men to approach white women on the street and make sexually suggestive comments to them. One “youth representative” takes Ray for a drive through Derby's streets in the evening and describes one area as “the red light district”. He adds “you don't know who is a prostitute and who is not, who is over the age of 16 and who is not. You can see how easy it is for people, regardless of background, to get involved in these sorts of acts”.

What is significant here is the blurring of prostitution and child rape; Ray suggests that prostitution doesn't “in any way excuse what these men did, but now that I've spent time here at night, I can see how this environment could be a potential breeding ground for sexual exploitation”. Really?

Controversially, Ray later goes on to offer arranged marriage as a possible reason for sexual dysfunction among some communities: “one of the ways British Pakistanis have upheld traditional values is by weddings arranged between families or within the same religious sect, cast, or clan. The often successful practice of cousin marriage is carried out by as many as half of all British Pakistanis. But could it be that this survival technique has now become the very thing pushing some young British Asians in to secretive sex-lives?” Ray asks.

On interviewing young Pakistani and Bangladeshi men in Burnley, Ray is told that some people “marry relatives back home in Pakistan or Bangladesh or India” and that having a girlfriend is “out of the question” because these are “Asian values” and “religion”. He was also told that for a girlfriend, many men “favour a white girl” but for a wife “he'll favour an Asian lass, because the thing is, a lot of white girls, I'm not stereotyping, when they're 17 years old, 18, 19 years old, very few of them will be thinking about marriage – a lot of them just wanna have fun, and get around and stuff”.

These comments yet again reveal a vast cultural gulf between Western and Pakistani/Bangladeshi youth. It is a gulf that we simply cannot ignore any longer. The image of white women as “fun” (and no doubt “up for it”) seems to be common among young “Asian” 25

men and may well help explain the willingness to rape and sexually abuse white girls in large numbers.

Children's Commissioner Report

An inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups (CSEGG) , by the Children's Commissioner, was published in July 2012. Many of the young girls sexually abused by gangs in cities and towns across the north of England had either been in the care of the local authority, or had been known to them. For this reason, the Children's Commissioner report focused partly on evidence of abuse of children under the care of local authorities. The inquiry gathered evidence from the voluntary sector, police, child safeguarding boards, councils, schools, mental health services, sexual health services, and others.

Findings included:

- Group and gang associated child sexual exploitation is taking place across England
- Group and gang associated sexual exploitation is being perpetrated by people of varying ages, ethnicities and social backgrounds
- In some areas agencies have a stronger focus on identifying group-associated child sexual exploitation, and others have a stronger focus on gang-associated child sexual exploitation
- Some services are better able to identify gang-associated child sexual exploitation than others, and as such even within a local area different services provide different intelligence on both victims and perpetrators
- Children are being sexually exploited by groups and gangs made up of people who are of both the same, and different, age, ethnicity, religion and social backgrounds to them
- Children in care and children not in care are being sexually exploited. While the majority of children being sexually exploited are not in care, a disproportionate number are in care.

In criticising approaches to tackling sexual abuse by local authorities, the report noted:

The protection of children in care from exploitation raises a number of issues about the care system and about care planning for individual children. These do not just concern the use of residential care but relate to assessment and planning for the right placement for each child where the child can have stability and high quality care. If residential care is to be used it must be the placement of choice, matched to the child's needs and not a last resort.

Emerging evidence makes repeat references to: inconsistencies in the quality of assessment and risk assessment; instability and lack of choice in placements; lack of support for foster parents; lack of information on child protection plans, and a reduced recognition of child sexual abuse as indicated by child protection plans; an inability to appropriately identify placement by type, specialism and geography.

There is evidence from around the country that some residential children's homes have been targeted by those who want to sexually exploit children. In some cases specialist child sexual exploitation services have developed working relationships with residential children's homes to support staff and children. Given the nature of turnover of placements in residential units, there is a constant flow of vulnerable children for perpetrators to exploit. As a result, some 26

services have reported having worked with the same residential unit over a number of years, as different children arrive and leave the unit over that time period.

These comments are alarming. The complete lack of coherent and effective policies and practices by local authorities in confronting and preventing the sexual abuse of children in care are apparent. From what I have discovered, in most cases, little appears to have changed since 2012 – most local authorities are unaware of how many children in their care are being sexually abused and the scale of this crime remains unknown.

In a report by the University of Bedfordshire, carried out for the Office of the Children's Commissioner, a startling lack of faith in statutory services was expressed by young people interviewed as part of the inquiry. The report notes:

A key issue that has emerged from initial interviewees' commentary on responses to sexual violence and exploitation is the infrequency with which the young people affected by these issues are reporting them or accessing any form of formal support. Initial interviewees indicated that going to the police was not a viable option for most young people who experienced gang-associated sexual violence or exploitation. This was variably noted to be because of resignation to the existence of such incidents amongst the peer group, 'handed down' perceptions of the police, previous experiences of contact with them, a lack of confidence in the ability of statutory services to protect a young person following a disclosure and/or fear of potential retaliation should such a disclosure occur.

What emerged as the central motif in these initial narratives was a sense that there was little anyone could do about sexual violence against young people, particularly young women, and a consequent attitude of these things happen so just 'move on with your life'. Interestingly, and alarmingly, there was little sense amongst the initial set of interviewees that the situation would change. This presents significant challenges in terms of prevention of, and appropriate responses to, gang-related sexual exploitation and sexual violence.

Sue Berlowitz, who led the inquiry, defended it from criticism following its publication. Much of the criticism surrounded the unavailability of accurate statistics regarding the number of children at risk, but as was noted;

Gaps in data on victims and perpetrators; biased data, given that some agencies go looking for CSE and others do not; varying definitions of CSE in groups and gangs; data gaps on specific warning signs of CSE; datasets held by a number of departments and agencies that are not office of the children's commissioner/inquiry into child sexual exploitation in gangs and groups/interim report joined-up; health statistics on abortions and sexually-transmitted diseases not made available to the inquiry. Sometimes information on CSE is buried in records on offending (in relation to gang association) or broader categories of child sexual abuse.

Warning signs linked to CSE, such as a child going missing, are not recorded consistently. Local authorities do not have a common definition to determine what data to record on children missing from care, with some local authorities logging details only of children missing for a period of 24 hours or longer. Police forces have different ways of recording instances where children repeatedly go missing.

Given the experience (as outlined above) and the difficulties encountered in finding reliable data in researching CSE, it appears that Ms Berlowitz and her report may have been unfairly criticised in this regard.

As well as some questioning of the figures used, other criticisms included an alleged lack of recognition of the role of “Asian” abusers. The Guardian reported:

The report identified 1,514 perpetrators, of which 43% were white and 33% were “Asian” (compared to 87% and 7% of the population). But in 68% of submissions in the call for evidence no information at all was provided about perpetrators. The data on the 1,514 perpetrators came from 30 agencies covering 13 police areas. A table on page 99 of the report reveals that one police area submitted details of about 500 perpetrators while others submitted no details at all – a fact that could influence ethnicity figures, said Berelowitz. “It is impossible to guess the ethnic makeup of that 68%. It is a very incomplete picture,” she said. “We thought long and hard about publishing these figures and concluded we had to in the interests of transparency. We are not trying to hide anything. But it would be very irresponsible to make conclusions without 68% of the data.” She added that intense focus on the model of exploitation used in Derby and Rotherham – where men of Pakistani origin were found guilty of grooming white girls for sex – could have led to the proactive recording of Asian males in some areas. “Nowhere do we deny that this is happening. Yes there is an issue for a particular community in a particular area, but even in Rotherham we have seen recent cases of white males using the same modus operandi,” she said. “It is so dangerous not to hold in mind that there are lots of different models that co-exist.”

Political context

The MacPherson Inquiry

The history of policing and race relations in the UK cannot be discussed without reference to the MacPherson Inquiry. Following the racially motivated killing of a young London man Stephen Lawrence, policing in Britain underwent unprecedented scrutiny, culminating in the MacPherson inquiry in 1998, five years after the murder.

The recommendations of the report are summarised thus:

- Government inspectors will have “full and unfettered powers” to inspect police services. An investigation into the Metropolitan Police will begin immediately, with particular emphasis on unsolved murders and the handling of racist incidents.
- The Government will establish performance indicators to monitor the handling of racist incidents, levels of satisfaction with the police service among ethnic minorities, training of family and witness liaison officers, racial awareness training, stop and search procedures, recruitment of ethnic minorities and complaints about racism in police forces.
- Police forces should reflect the cultural and ethnic mix of the communities they serve.
- Race relations legislation should apply to all police officers.
- The definition of a “racist incident” will now include incidents categorised in policing terms both as crimes and non-crimes. It will now encompass “any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person”. A new Code of Practice will record all such crimes.
- The public will be encouraged to report racist incidents by making it possible to report them

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24 hours a day, and not only at police stations. • The Victim's Charter should be reviewed, particularly for racist incidents. Trained victim and witness liaison officers to be available.

Police procedures

- Revised first aid training for police officers.
- Review and revision of racial awareness training in police forces. Local ethnic minorities to be involved in regular training for all police.
- New powers to discipline police officers for at least five years after their retirement.
- All proven "racist words or acts" should lead to disciplinary proceedings, and such behaviour should normally be punishable by dismissal.
- New steps to ensure independent investigations into serious complaints against the police.
- Review of selections and promotion of officers at inspector level and above.

The wider community

- Consideration of a revised national curriculum to prevent racism and value cultural diversity. School governors and local education authorities to create strategies for dealing with racist incidents.
- Consideration of similar initiatives at a local government level.

Whilst some of the above is uncontroversial, and of course the need for genuine racism to be wiped out is an important one, some of the words, and the possible effects, must be analysed. Of utmost significance are the following points:

"Colour-blind" policing must be outlawed. The police must deliver a service which recognises the different experiences, perceptions and needs of a diverse society.

Arguably, had policing been "colour-blind" there would have been no finding of "institutional racism" in the report. Indeed, some would submit that "colour-blind policing" is exactly what was needed to prevent the crimes in Rotherham, Rochdale, and elsewhere, and it is the prohibition of "colour-blind policing", as required by the MacPherson report, that allowed rape of white girls to continue.

Further points to note:

- Race relations legislation should apply to all police officers.
- The definition of a "racist incident" will now include incidents categorised in policing terms both as crimes and non-crimes. It will now encompass "any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person". A new Code of Practice will record all such crimes.
- The public will be encouraged to report racist incidents by making it possible to report them 24 hours a day, and not only at police stations.

Race relations legislation will be discussed in greater detail below, but the definition of a racist incident in the MacPherson report specifies that the offence is a subjective one; although this is judged on a basis of reasonableness. The notion that racism should be subjective (i.e. "any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person") is bound to make 29

police officers feel vulnerable to racism accusations, and even fearful to the point of ‘not interfering’. In other words, such a subjective definition of racism might cause a police officer to fear an accusation to such an extent that they will not involve themselves in crimes involving a suspect of non-white ethnicity.

Finally, the public are “encouraged” to report racist incidents 24 hours a day. This without doubt contributes to the culture of fear that pervades the public sector.

The following points also deserve a mention:

- Review and revision of racial awareness training in police forces. Local ethnic minorities to be involved in regular training for all police.
- New powers to discipline police officers for at least five years after their retirement.
- All proven “racist words or acts” should lead to disciplinary proceedings, and such behaviour should normally be punishable by dismissal.
- New steps to ensure independent investigations into serious complaints against the police. The ideas here are very powerful and specify clearly that police officers will lose their jobs (and can be punished even after retirement) if they are shown to be guilty of “racist words or acts”.
- Consideration of a revised national curriculum to prevent racism and value cultural diversity. School governors and local education authorities to create strategies for dealing with racist incidents.
- Consideration of similar initiatives at a local government level.

These points are important because they place an obligation on local government to prevent racism and value cultural diversity.

The notion of “valuing cultural diversity” is also a problem, given that cultural practices can amount to criminal offences (such as forced marriage or female genital mutilation which, to a great extent, remain unprosecuted and unpunished). There is enormous potential for confusion as to what is expected of police and local government when “culture” clashes with criminal law.

Once again, the temptation not to involve oneself in the investigation and prevention of such cultural crimes is exacerbated. An example of this was seen in December 2013 when Jemima Thackray wrote in the Telegraph of an anti-FGM campaigner who, on her way to a meeting to discuss the criminal practice, asked a policeman for directions – a discussion which led him to offer his view on FGM. He said “*It’s a cultural practice and none of our business. I don’t believe we should take a stance on this.*” This police officer’s astonishing response is indicative of a wider belief that “cultural practice” supersedes serious crime; and indeed this is the message the police and others are receiving from government.

The fear of racism accusations does not stop at public services; criminal cases send a strong message to the broader public that they too should fear such charges.

Keith Hurdle was jailed for 12 weeks for a verbal racist diatribe on a London Underground train; while of course this behaviour is unacceptable, how can it be that a white person is jailed for words only, while rape and violence, involving non-white suspects, remains so widely unpunished? The message to the public is clear; mere words from white people are more serious and important than violence from non-white people. 30

Following a few revolting Tweets about footballer Fabrice Muamba – who had collapsed from a heart attack on the pitch – Welsh student Liam Stacey was jailed for 56 days. Again, his behaviour was uncivilised and wrong, but the fact remains he was sent to prison for using words only, and the message to the public was repeated; mere language from white people is more serious and significant than violence from non-white people.

Jacqueline Woodhouse, from Essex, was jailed for 21 weeks for another racist rant on a train.

Six football fans were jailed for 18 months in late 2013 for apparently chanting songs which glorified the murder of Stephen Lawrence. The prosecutor in the case said that the chanting was “disturbing and upsetting”.

34-year-old Emma West was jailed for shouting on a tram in south London.

Martin Smith was locked in a cell after he downloaded the theme tune of the 1980s comedy ‘Rita, Sue, and Bob Too’ to his phone. The ringtone features an Asian character saying “I can’t help being a Paki” and when a woman heard this in a shop, she made a complaint to the police. Smith was charged with “using racially aggravated threatening or insulting words or behaviour” and eventually fined.

What these cases reveal is how race legislation is being utilised in practice – and the message to white Britons is clear. They prove that indeed “colour-blind policing” has been outlawed, that racism is a one-way street, and it is all really rather unjust.

All Party Parliamentary Group on Islamophobia

Whilst fear of racism allegations has clearly played a part in the failure of both police and local services to investigate and prevent large-scale child sex abuse, there is a further form of apparent prejudice which public services are also encouraged to fear. This is particularly significant given that the majority of reports on organised child-sex abuse have been committed by men of the Muslim faith.

Police and the public sector workers are also required to fear allegations of so-called “Islamophobia”.

An All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Islamophobia was established in 2010. Its stated purpose was:

“To investigate the forms, manifestations and extent of prejudice and discrimination against Muslims in the UK today. To review the effectiveness of all legislation with a view to improving the rate of success in the prosecution of hate crimes. To review existing mechanisms for the recording of anti-Muslim hate crimes both through police forces across the country and through third party reporting sites with a view to improving data quality and comprehensiveness. To investigate and review the role of the media in fostering mutual respect and tolerance and guarding against misrepresentations of Islam and intolerance towards Muslims.” 31

In the final sentence, “*misrepresentation of Islam*” is immediately alarming – particularly from a free speech perspective. Public sector workers now must worry about discussing very real problems involving the ill-treatment of women and girls in the name of Islam, because they may just say the ‘wrong’ thing and ‘misrepresent’ the religion. Silence on the matter is without doubt a more attractive approach.

Initially the APPG included the Conservative MP Kris Hopkins, who won the Yorkshire Parliamentary seat vacated by Ann Cryer (above). Hopkins took the role of Chair of the group. Not long after taking up the post, he resigned; along with Lord Jenner of the Labour Party, the vice-chair. The reason for their departure was the appointment, as secretariat, of a group known as iEngage. This organisation – according to Telegraph journalist Andrew Gilligan – has consistently defended fundamentalist organisations such as the East London Mosque and the Islamic Forum of Europe. It routinely attacks criticism of Islam, or Islamic groups, as “Islamophobic”.

Simon Hughes MP, of the Liberal Democrat Party, issued a press release regarding the subsequent re-launch of the APPG stating: “*Combating prejudice of all kinds should always be at the top of the parliamentary agenda, but unfortunately too often in the past Islamophobia has been a prejudice which has been overlooked. I am delighted that MPs from all major parties have been come together and agreed how the All Party Group on Islamophobia should move forward and work together towards raising the profile of this important issue in parliament, government and in the country.*”

A meeting, which also aimed to confront Islamophobia, was organised in Parliament in 2014. Its guest-list included the high-profile Diane Abbott MP, as well as representatives of Unite Against Fascism and the Muslim Council of Britain (which supports sharia law). Such powerful people and groups, hosting meetings like this in Parliament, strengthens the public view that one must not hold negative opinions of Islam, regardless of objective evidence.

Charges of Islamophobia are frequent in British life, and they come from a variety of people and organisations. The group Tell MAMA (which stands for Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks) frequently reports on alleged hatred against Muslims, and following revelations of child sex abuse in Rotherham, it warned of a backlash, as it did following the slaughter of Drummer Lee Rigby. However, much of the ‘backlash’ consisted of online insults. But of course words deemed to be anti-Muslim are taken extremely seriously:

- Anthony Buck received a four-month jail term in 2012 (he was on probation at the time) for posting anti-Muslim comments on Facebook.
- An 85 year-old woman was arrested for shouting outside a mosque, following the murder of Lee Rigby.
- A former soldier was arrested for tweeting messages, also following the death of Lee Rigby, which the police described as “unacceptable” and which “cause more harm to our community”.

It should be remembered that while some are arrested for words like those above, little action is taken against Muslims who preach hatred of Britain and its people. “UK you will pay, your 9/11 is on its way”, or “butcher those who insult Islam” rarely provoke such a robust response from authorities or commentators. 32

Racial and Religious Hatred

The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006 is an Act of Parliament which creates an offence in England and Wales of inciting hatred against a person on the grounds of their religion. The introduction of the law was the third attempt of a Labour government to outlaw religious hatred; previous attempts had been scuppered by the House of Lords. Following initial defeat on the legislation, the Labour Party stated: *“It remains our firm intention to give people of all faiths the same protection against incitement to hatred on the basis of their religion. We will legislate to outlaw it and will continue the dialogue we have started with faith groups from all backgrounds about how best to balance protection, tolerance and free speech”*.

Religious hatred is defined as: hatred against a group of persons defined by reference to religious belief or lack of religious belief.

The offence:

Acts intended to stir up religious hatred

Use of words or behaviour or display of written material (1)A person who uses threatening words or behaviour, or displays any written material which is threatening, is guilty of an offence if he intends thereby to stir up religious hatred. (2)An offence under this section may be committed in a public or a private place, except that no offence is committed where the words or behaviour are used, or the written material is displayed, by a person inside a dwelling and are not heard or seen except by other persons in that or another dwelling. (3)A constable may arrest without warrant anyone he reasonably suspects is committing an offence under this section. (4)In proceedings for an offence under this section it is a defence for the accused to prove that he was inside a dwelling and had no reason to believe that the words or behaviour used, or the written material displayed, would be heard or seen by a person outside that or any other dwelling. (5)This section does not apply to words or behaviour used, or written material displayed, solely for the purpose of being included in a programme service.

Crucially, ‘hatred’ has not been defined, and therein lies the danger. Such legislation, as well as notions of “Islamophobia”, produce a populace which is afraid to speak, afraid to criticise, and afraid particularly to challenge men who happen to be Muslims – even when those Muslims are suspected of rape.

Similarly, the European Union’s Parliament debated, in 2013, the notion of introducing “National Tolerance Monitoring Commissions” which would outlaw, across Europe, “defamatory comments made in public and aimed against a group or members thereof with a view to inciting to violence, slandering the group, holding it to ridicule or subjecting it to false charges”. The notion of “slandering” a group is particularly ominous as it could well be defined as “slanderous” to criticise Islam, and to discuss the impact Islamic doctrine may have on its adherents. “Subjecting to false charges” is an enormous issue – who gets to decide which charges are “false” and which ones are true?

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is a major bloc at the United Nations. It is a bloc of Islamic or Muslim-majority nations from around the world and it too has passed (though 33

this not implemented as of yet) a Resolution to combat “Intolerance, Negative Stereotyping and Stigmatization of, and Discrimination, Incitement to Violence and Violence Against, Persons Based on Religion or Belief”. The Resolution was passed at the UN Human Rights Council with the support of the United States. Again, it is the notion of “negative stereotyping” here that causes the greatest concern; a person cannot be sure what this means or whether criticising Islam, or its potential impact on its adherents, would come under this heading. Arguably it would, and as such, many people will remain silent.

Censorship on the matter of Islam is widespread in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. Fear of criticising or questioning Islam, or even prosecuting crimes committed by Muslims, for fear of causing offence, is extensive and deeply harmful.

Respect for cultural diversity

In the MacPherson report it was recommended that “*police must deliver a service which recognises the different experiences, perceptions and needs of a diverse society*”. These words are of deep significance. To truly understand what might occur if police “*recognise the different experiences, perceptions, and needs of a diverse society*”, one must be clear as to what these perceptions (in particular) might be. It has been noted elsewhere in this report that some young “Asian” men in the UK often have perceptions about white women and girls. Some of these perceptions could arguably convince a number of young men that they have the right to sexually harass, or to an extreme extent rape, white women as a result of this perception.

At his trial, Shabir Ahmed (convicted in Rochdale, see above) expressed his contempt for white women when he described them as “trained in sex”. Evidence has shown that most female victims of child sex abuse by “Asian” men have been white, and many commentators, including Muslims, have agreed that there is a common opinion among young Muslim men that white women and girls are morally inferior, and as such the sexual harassment, or even rape, of these women can be justified.

The real issue here is whether the requirement for police to appreciate different “perceptions” of women influences their reluctance to confront “Asian” rapists. Individual officers may even be more sympathetic to these men as a result of their perception of women: “we should try to understand the way they see women” etc. A case from 2013 illustrates this thinking; an 18 year old Muslim avoided a custodial sentence, despite being convicted of the rape of a 13 year old girl because he argued that he was inexperienced with women due to his Islamic education and had been taught that “*women are no more worthy than a lollipop that has been dropped on the ground.*”

If the perception of a perpetrator is to play a role in policing, not only is this relevant with regard to attitudes towards white women in the UK, but to attitudes towards women more broadly. 34

“Asian” or Muslim?

Since the publication of the Rotherham report, most discussion of the identity of the rapists has involve labelling these men “Asian” (some described the men as “Pakistani” but this was criticised for stereotyping Pakistani men, whereas, oddly, “Asian” was rarely condemned for the same reason). Some have justifiably argued that the use of the descriptive word “Asian” is one which deliberately distracts from any talk of the beliefs of the men in question, and where those beliefs might have stemmed from. “Asian” is also hugely inaccurate. This description covers societies as distinct as Japan and India, or China or Thailand. No significant number of Japanese or Chinese men are involved in these crimes however; the use of “Asian” thus smears an entire continent wholly unfairly. Furthermore, the label of “Asian” prevents us from looking at the motivations of some of the rapists. A person’s attitude towards women for example, or rape, will not be influenced by the fact that they are Asian or of Asian descent, but these attitudes can, and very likely are, heavily influenced by religion. Therefore it is the religion of these men that matters, and it is the influence of this religion that must be looked at if we are to truly understand this crime.

Whilst it of course must be acknowledged that only a minority of Muslim men engage in the behaviour discovered in Rotherham, Rochdale, and elsewhere, it must also be acknowledged that the vast majority of the men who did so, were of Muslim background. It must also be acknowledged that the majority of the victims were non-Muslim, or more specifically, white indigenous Britons. It is therefore imperative to honestly examine what some men learn from Islamic text, Islamic scholars and leaders, and what they are hearing in mosques about women overall, and white women in particular.

The journalist Yasmin Alibhai-Brown wrote in the wake of the Jay Report:

I partly blame their families and communities. Too many Asian mothers spoil their boys, undervalue their girls, and demean their daughters-in-law. Within some British Asian circles, the West is considered degenerate and immoral. So it’s OK to take their girls and ruin them further.

Some of the most fierce rows I have ever had have been with Asian women who hold these disgusting views.

I ask them to think what they would feel if gangs of white men took out their girls, gave them presents, took them places, and then seduced, beat and passed them around. The men might say they were rescuing the girls from oppression, showing them a good time, saving them from a life of forced marriage and all that.

What then, if white Britons tacitly supported and excused the criminals? Well, comes the answer, that’s not the same thing. But it is, it is. I tell them about at least three young Asian girls who have thus been entrapped and exploited. “That is their fault. They have become English, so of course these things happen to them.” What to do in the face of such attitudes?

Whilst many would dispute Alibhai-Brown’s description of the perpetrators as “Asian” (as opposed to “Muslim”), her courage in confronting and addressing the cultural gap between western society and that of some of its minority communities, particularly with regard to 35

women and sexuality, is to be commended. What stands out from the words of Alibhai-Brown is the notion that *“the West is considered degenerate and immoral”*; one must wonder what this means exactly, and how much it relates to the freedoms – particularly the sexual freedoms – of western women.

“If you take out uncovered meat and place it outside on the street, or in the garden or in the park, or in the backyard without a cover, and the cats come and eat it..whose fault is it – the cats or the uncovered meat? The uncovered meat is the problem. “If she was in her room, in her home, in her hijab (veil), no problem would have occurred.” Sheik Taj Din al-Hilal, Sydney

This cleric, the most senior in Australia, was responding to reports of a wave of gang-rape involving white Australian women and rapists of a Muslim background. The sheikh not only condemned women’s choice of clothing in the warm climates of Australia, but the very idea of a woman venturing outside of her house. He implies that a woman who exercises even the most basic freedoms is a woman deserving of sexual assault.

It should also be remembered al-Hilal cannot be described as a fringe extremist – he is an extremely influential Islamic cleric and was, at the time of these comments, the leader of the country’s largest mosque.

“Women are not entitled to respect when they walk around without a Hijab. They are to blame for it when they are attacked. All the crimes that occur against women is because they are not covered. When they are not covered, you have no respect for them. She disobeys her master, there are two places in the Qur’an has ordered her to cover themselves (...) Women make a clean society dirty when they walk around without a Hijab. They are not entitled to respect and are not valuable as those who wear a Hijab.” Imam Shahid Mehdi, Copenhagen

Again, these deeply misogynistic comments from an Islamic cleric demonstrate clearly who he believes is to blame when a woman is subjected to sexual assault; the woman herself. The notion that women should be subject to the will of a “master” (i.e. a male) is also quite clear.

“A victim of rape every minute somewhere in the world. Why? No one to blame but herself. She displayed her beauty to the entire world . . . Strapless, backless, sleeveless, nothing but satanic skirts, slit skirts, translucent blouses, miniskirts, tight jeans: all this to tease man and appeal to his carnal nature.” Sheik Faiz Mohamad, Sydney

Faiz Mohamad reiterates that the dress of a woman makes her responsible if she is sexually assaulted. He made this particular speech to an audience of over 1,000 people in Bankstown, Sydney, in 2005.

The above examples are not aberrations. The words were spoken by influential clerics and the sentiments are widely held across the Islamic world, where they influence the law of the land. The idea that women are to blame for rape, merely by virtue of exercising basic freedoms, is enshrined in the legal systems of some Muslim-majority countries; sometimes to the extent that women suffer execution if they are the victims of rape. 36

In Afghanistan, post the fall of the Taliban, the jailing of rape victims remains widespread. According to Human Rights Watch, *“Four years after the adoption of a law on violence against women and twelve years after Taliban rule, women are still imprisoned for being victims of forced marriage, domestic violence, and rape.”*

In Pakistan, a woman can face death-by-stoning if she is unable to prove rape; something that is near-impossible given that she must be able to produce four male witnesses to that rape, or face charges of adultery. Zafran Bibi, for example, alleged rape in Pakistan in 2001. In 2002, she was sentenced to be stoned to death – by application of Islamic sharia law.

In Saudi Arabia, women can (and do) face sentences of lashing even when rape against her is proved. In 2007, a young woman was sentenced to 200 lashes “because she was in the car of a male who wasn’t a relative when the two were attacked.” The woman had been gang-raped.

In what is often considered a more moderate Muslim-majority country, the United Arab Emirates (with its thriving capital city Dubai), women, including Western women, have faced longer sentences than their convicted rapists. Under Islamic sharia law in that country, an Australian and a Norwegian woman have both received hefty jail terms in recent years, following reports of rape.

It is obvious that there is a vast chasm between Western culture and Islamic culture as regards rape and the freedoms of women. Thus, it is incumbent upon to us to ask what may happen when vast numbers migrate from an Islamic society to a Western one, and bring those attitudes to women and rape along with them.

The attitudes to women which exist in Islamic societies such as Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are not those of a minority or an extreme fringe, but constitute mainstream thinking and enjoy the support of the majority.

A survey published by the respected Pew Research Center in 2013 revealed:

- 88% of Pakistanis believe a woman should always obey her husband; the number is the same for Bangladesh, and higher (at 94%) for Afghanistan
- Only 26% in Pakistan believe a woman should be able to divorce her husband
- 89% of Pakistanis believe that stoning should be the punishment for adultery

These values, many would argue, are simply not compatible with Western notions of gender equality or the freedom and autonomy of women, nor are they compatible with a woman’s right to be free from sexual harassment or rape.

Dr Phyllis Chesler, an American writer who had spent time living in Afghanistan (married to an Afghan man) and who has written about her experiences there, said in 2014:

“When men from these countries, cultures, and ethnicities immigrate to the West, these attitudes and customs do not necessarily change. By now, we know that pre-adolescent and adolescent Caucasian girls were kidnapped, gang-raped and forced into prostitution by Muslim gangs in Britain; the authorities looked the other way. Why? Because they did not want to accuse Muslim men of perpetrating crimes lest they, the authorities, be accused of Islamophobia or racism.” 37

She also stated:

“To be born a woman in certain parts of the world is to be born guilty; being female is a capital offense. Girls and women must keep proving that they will not shame their families by a level of obedience and subordination that Westerners cannot truly comprehend.”

Perhaps it is time we began to try.

Islamic theology

Often, the first and foremost argument that is used to downplay the cruel treatment of women throughout the Islamic world is that this is a manifestation of “culture”, and does not relate to the religion of Islam per se. But surely one must ask what it is that informs cultures that imprison women for rape, or clerics that describe rape victims as deserving of their fate. Firstly, can it really be stated that Islamic culture is in no way influenced by Islamic religious doctrine? It seems an absurd conclusion to reach. It must be the case that in societies where criticism of Islam is often punished with death, and where belief in the ‘truth’ of Islam is the mainstream and the norm, any Islamic rulings on the status of women will have a huge impact on the lives of those women.

“Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves [part] of their outer garments. That is more suitable that they will be known and not be abused.” Koran, surah 33, verse 59

“Those who commit unlawful sexual intercourse of your women – bring against them four [witnesses] from among you. And if they testify, confine the guilty women to houses until death takes them.” Koran, surah 4, verse 15

“Do not compel your slave girls to prostitution, when they desire to keep chaste, in order to seek the frail good of this world’s life; and whoever compels them, then surely after their compulsion Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” Koran, surah 24, verse 33

“And those who no longer expect menstruation among your women – if you doubt, then their period is three months, and [also for] those who have not menstruated. And for those who are pregnant, their term is until they give birth.” Koran, surah 65, verse 4

“Women are your fields: go, then, into your fields whence you please.” Koran, surah 2, verse 223

“Men have authority over women because God has made the one superior to the other, and because they spend their wealth to maintain them. Good women are obedient. They guard their unseen parts because God has guarded them. As for those from whom you fear disobedience, admonish them and forsake them in beds apart, and beat them.” Koran, surah 4, verse 34

“A male shall inherit twice as much as a female.” Koran, surah 4, verse 11

“Women shall with justice have rights similar to those exercised against them, although men have a status above women.” Koran, surah 2, verse 228 38

“If you fear that you cannot treat [orphan girls] with fairness, then you may marry other women who seem good to you: two, three, or four of them. But if you fear that you cannot maintain equality among them, marry one only or any slave-girl you may own.” Koran, surah 4, verse 3

“[Forbidden to you are] married women, except those whom you own as slaves.” Koran, surah 4, verse 24

“Enjoin believing women to turn their eyes away from temptation and to preserve their chastity; not to display their adornments (except such as are normally revealed); to draw their veils over their bosoms and not to display their finery except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands’ fathers, their sons, their step-sons, their brothers, their brothers’ sons, their sisters’ sons, their women-servants, and their slave-girls; male attendants lacking in natural vigour, and children who have no carnal knowledge of women. And let them not stamp their feet when walking so as to reveal their hidden trinkets.” Koran, surah 24, verse 31

“Wives of the Prophet, you are not like other women. If you fear God, do not be too complaisant in your speech, lest the lecherous-hearted should lust after you. Show discretion in what you say. Stay in your homes and do not display your finery as women used to in the days of ignorance.” Koran, surah 33, verses 32-3

The above verses from the Koran unequivocally provide theological sanction for the control of women by men, and place women in a state of inferiority. “Stay in your homes and do not display your finery” is identical to the view expressed by clerics above that women should be imprisoned so as to protect their modesty, and women who do not submit are opening themselves to sexual assault.

One of the most significant verses on the relationship between men and women in the Koran is surah 4.34. This verse commands women’s obedience to men (immediately assigning a position of inferiority), and provides permission for men to use violence against women who refuse to accept such a status.

Many will argue that such verses are open to interpretation but this presents three major problems:

- If one is to stick to the language actually used, one can only come to the conclusion that women are inferior and must obey – to suggest otherwise (or to come to an opposing conclusion) one must alter the meaning of the language altogether.
- If one pits one interpretation against another – which interpretation should reign supreme? Arguably, the one which matches the actual wording used.
- Some will insist that these verses can only be understood by those who have studied Islamic scripture and are experts in this field. One must ask then why countries that are often governed (at least partly) by Islamic scholars and experts in scripture, are among the countries where women can be subject to death-by-stoning for being victims of rape, or subject to violence and forced marriage.

The importance of language cannot be overstated. If one reads the words “beat her” but determines to argue that it does not mean “beat her”, one must alter the meaning of the word “beat”. Given that the law itself depends on objective language definition, clarity and 39

objectivity is absolutely non-negotiable; law simply cannot exist without an objective language. Language can be manipulated however in order to obfuscate the intent of the speaker – this is happening with regularity upon discussion of Islam and its rules regarding women. For example, Haitham al-Haddad, a senior figure in the Islamic Sharia Council (the largest body of sharia councils in the UK, which often deals with cases of domestic violence), told a Channel 4 reporter that the word “beat” has many interpretations. But in fact, it does not – any interpretation but “beat” constitutes a redefinition rather than a re-interpretation.

In summary, it is clear that the language used by many Islamic clerics, who preach that women should obey and those who don’t should be punished, must influence young Muslim men’s attitudes towards women in general. Clerics who state that women should stay inside their homes in order to maintain chastity, or that women are sexual beings only and should be covered if they are to remain sexually moral, can justify their words by reference to Islamic scripture. The idea that this has no influence on cultural attitudes towards women and rape, that such attitudes are now widespread in the West thanks to migration, is simply not sustainable.

Scandinavia

Sweden

In what may come as something of a shock to many readers, Sweden has the second highest rates of rape in the world; and the highest in the western world. According to a Swedish journalist (who sources her figures from the country’s National Council for Crime Prevention), in 1975 421 rapes were reported in Sweden. In 2014, it was 6,620 - an increase of 1,472%.

Swedish authorities are quick to put this down to an increase in the reporting of rape, but publications by the authorities do not touch upon (according to the above article) the background of the perpetrator. Ingrid Carlqvist: *Over the past 10-15 years, immigrants have mainly come from Muslim countries such as Iraq, Syria and Somalia. Might this mass influx explain Sweden’s rape explosion? It is difficult to give a precise answer, because Swedish law forbids registration based on people’s ancestry or religion. One possible explanation is that, on average, people from the Middle East have a vastly different view of women and sex than Scandinavians have. And despite the attempts by the Swedish establishment to convince the population that everyone setting foot on Swedish soil becomes exactly like those who have lived here for dozens of generations, facts point in an altogether different direction.*

Whilst Swedish authorities appear to recognise that most violent crime is committed by either first or second generation immigrants, statistics on rape do not seem to exist in the public realm.

However, what has been reported in Sweden is a dramatic rise in gang-rape in that country. Carlqvist again takes up the story:

In cases of gang rape, culprits and victims are most often young and in almost every case, the perpetrators are of immigrant background, mostly from Muslim countries. In an astounding number of cases, the Swedish courts have demonstrated sympathy for the rapists. Several times 40

the courts have acquitted suspects who have claimed that the girl wanted sex with six, seven or eight men.

Denmark

A 2012 newspaper report in Denmark revealed that “*Iraqis, Iranians, Turks and Somalis are vastly over represented in rape convictions in Denmark*” with over 1 in 3 rape convictions involving members of immigrant groups.

As has been described above, a prominent imam in Copenhagen said that women who did not wear hijab were inviting rape. Shahid Mehdi made the remarks in a televised interview and then re-iterated them when questioned by the press. The Copenhagen Post Online commented “*As a mufti, a jurist who interprets Islamic law, Shahi Mehdi is in a special position of authority as a Muslim scholar*” . It claimed that Mehdi was affiliated with Islamic Cultural Center in Copenhagen. Various public figures, from left and right, agreed that Mehdi’s remarks could incite Muslim men to rape Danish women.

Norway

In April 2010, a major Norwegian TV channel reported that rapes of ethnic Norwegian women in the city of Oslo, from 2007 to 2010, had been carried out exclusively by “*non-Western immigrants*” and were characterised by extreme violence. The police officer featured in the report said that “*the perpetrators are relatively young men who come from other countries. They are often asylum seekers who come from traumatized countries, or from countries where they have a completely other view on women than we have in Norway. There are both traumatised men and culturally related acts as we see it. We see that many of them have a view on women which means that they want, they can take control over other people – mostly women*”.

When asked if there were cases in Oslo of violent stranger rape committed by ethnic Norwegian men, she replied “No, we have had no such cases in our department”.

Conclusion

To conclude, let us look at what we know for certain. A vast number of girls, mostly white English girls, have been groomed, sexually abused, gang-raped, and tortured by organised gangs of men. It is a pre-planned crime that continues over time and involves large numbers of men. This specific kind of sexual abuse has become known as Child Sexual Exploitation. Some of the girls victimised have been in the care of local government when the abuse took place. We know that the majority of the perpetrators, certainly based on prosecutions, are men of the Muslim faith.

We are very aware too of the attitude to rape, and women in general, that is taught, encouraged, and preached in mosques all over the world – including in Britain.

If we are honest with ourselves, we should begin to look at whether religion is providing at least some self-justification for men who participate in these kind of crimes. If you believe that women who do not behave as your religious leaders say they should, deserve to be raped, can it really be denied that this may very incentivise rape. Add to this a notion that Western society 41

is decadent and weak, mix in a rather venomous hatred of white people, and you have the recipe for anti-white crime.

This crime takes place against a backdrop of political correctness and a paralysing fear; the public sector, thanks to dominance by Left-wing ideologues, is terrified of the word racist. This is across the board – the police, social services, the NHS, local government. Decisions, often significant ones, can be decided on the basis of whether a racism accusation could result. I have spoken to many public sector workers who confirm this to me, and have experienced it myself as a workers' rep in the NHS many years ago.

Being dominated by leftist thought, the public sector has become reluctant to place “blame” or hold people personally responsible for their actions. This can manifest in something resembling sympathy for offenders, or a greater consideration for their rights than those of the victim. One gets the impression that many in the public sector view the rapists as a kind of victim also.

One thing that Left-wing councils seem particularly reluctant to do is challenge suspected criminals if they happen to be members of an ethnic minority community. One gets the impression here also that Labour councils chose to ignore rape and sexual torture as to take firm action would lead to racial tension (but of course it is the rapists who cause this ‘tension’) and worse still, offer ammunition to their political opponents. The extreme Left ideology, which influences all areas of public life, will not allow for truths to be exposed if they could cause public disquiet on the topics of immigration or multiculturalism.

The public sector is disorganised and excessively bureaucratic. Committees and sub-committees are common and problems are discussed far more often than they are resolved.

Policing has been all but redefined. The police are politicised and their role has been altered from law-enforcer to something akin to social worker. Large resources are used gathering information on crime, and “highlighting” crime, but far less, it seems, is being done to punish crime – something that is highly likely to reduce it.

What has been learned from this report is that few of the above problems have actually been addressed in the wake of the Rotherham report, or other high-profile “grooming” criminal trials. The public sector is still not keeping separate records or data on the sexual abuse and rape of girls in its charge. To even speak of this issue causes a damaging fear among workers in social services and police because the fear of racism accusations has not dissipated one iota.

Finally, what we know for certain is that any religiously-inspired attitudes towards women will not be discussed – this too has not changed one iota. We still refuse to fully acknowledge the hatred for white people, and white women in particular, that exists within the homes of some ethnic minority homes throughout the West. We are encouraging such disdain with our laws when we punish white people far more severely than we do non-whites in our courts.

The change needed is a complete cultural shift away from racial division and double standards to real justice – where a person is held responsible for their crimes irrespective of their skin colour or that of their victims. What is needed is an honest look at what drives attitudes towards women, and women's sexuality, within minority communities and what impact this is having. We must be honest and brave and confront these problems for the sake of all concerned. 42

We need accurate and detailed recording of these crimes and investigation in to any emerging patterns. Finally, we need to look with objectivity at the attitudes common in countries to which we open our borders. We have to ask whether a society in which sharia law, and all that it entails, is supported by the majority, can fit easily in to a secular Western democracy. We have to ask what problems this brings, and more importantly, we must prioritise the best interests of the people of Britain. The question that must be answered, but is not yet being asked is this: is it in the best interests of the people of Britain (particularly its women) to open our borders to countries which stone rape victims, and kill people for blasphemy? I would submit that it most certainly is not, as Rotherham and elsewhere have shown.

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