PEER RELATIONSHIPS AT SCHOOL

New Perspectives on Migration and Diversity

EMMA SOYE
Foreword by Susanne Wessendorf

EMMA SOYE

WITH A FOREWORD
BY SUSANNE WESSENDORF

PEER RELATIONSHIPS AT SCHOOL

New Perspectives on Migration and Diversity

BRISTOL
UNIVERSITY
PRESS

FSC
www.fsc.org
MIX
Paper | Supporting
responsible forestry
FSC® C013604

Please note that this book contains some brief reports of racist language.

You talk to me of nationality, language, religion.
I shall try to fly by those nets.

James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*

Contents

Acknowledgements

Foreword

For some time now, migration scholars have attempted to move away from analysing processes of migration and diversification solely through an ethnonational lens, highlighting the role of other categories such as gender, migration status, religion, language, economic status, and 'race' in how people move, settle, form social relations and access resources. However, despite this emerging body of scholarship, all too often difference continues to be framed in ethnic and national terms, especially in public and policy discourse. This book represents a refreshing counter-narrative to these discourses by honing into the microcosms of two secondary schools, one situated in a superdiverse area in East London where diversity is commonplace, and the other in a coastal area in Sussex characterized by more recent immigration. In both schools, Emma Soye undertook a total of 14 months of in-depth ethnographic fieldwork, speaking to students, teachers, community workers, and parents, and spending time in classrooms, corridors, and playgrounds. What emerges from her observations and personal engagement with these young people is a complex picture of how they skilfully negotiate various types of differences in their everyday lives, and how these negotiations are shaped by the often precarious socioeconomic positions in which they find themselves.

My own work has explored social relations between people of different backgrounds in East London. Since meeting in early 2019, Emma and I have been struck by the similarities between our findings, for example the huge role played by the socioeconomic precarity our research participants faced, as well as the resentment that long-established and marginalized residents of various backgrounds felt towards newcomers, who they perceived as a threat to their own positions. While my own research looked at social relations in particular areas of East London more generally, Emma's work honed into the

specific context of the school, showing how societal differences are reproduced and reshaped at school, and challenging static understandings of 'culture'. Of particular interest in Emma's work is her comparative approach, looking at two schools in demographically different contexts. This juxtaposition of two contrasting sites with different immigration histories adds to the book's relevance as it highlights how, in the context of East London, the boundaries between 'us' and 'them' get watered down with the accumulation of different types of differences in one place, whereas in the Brighton & Hove school, divisions between long-established residents and newcomers are more clearly marked.

Independent of the demographic composition of a school, the book vividly shows that who belongs to which 'group' or identifies with whom is always situational. Sometimes it is language that connects people, other times immigration status, and yet other times it is religion or 'newness' in the area. With rich ethnographic examples, the book illustrates these processes of boundary-making along multiple lines of identification. This is theorized with the help of Martin Buber's concept of 'I-It' and 'I-Thou' relations to capture processes of social bonding and 'othering', versus processes of social bridging where differences are transgressed, and encounters are enabled across multiple differences. By revisiting this classical concept and illustrating its applicability in the present-day context of the two schools, Emma goes beyond often simplistic understandings of migrant and host communities. She thereby explores both the multiplicity of these young people's identities, as well as the crucial role of precarity. This focus not only contributes to the social scientific understanding of diversification, processes of boundary-making, and identification, but is also relevant to policies around integration and social cohesion.

With often moving examples from these young people's lives, Emma describes the huge relevance of socioeconomic circumstances in how young people fare at school, how they spend their spare time, and whether they feel safe in public

space. Her ethnography represents a stark reminder that it is socioeconomic marginalization, rather than ethnicity or nationality, which often divides young people. The book paints a complex picture of both agency and oppression: the hopeful and creative ways in which young people deal with differences and (often humorously) negotiate these with their peers, versus the stark impact of national welfare policies on the ground, with public resources stripped to the bare minimum. Young people's agency notwithstanding, the book calls for radical changes to social policy and practice to give these young people the support and opportunities they deserve.

Susanne Wessendorf
Professor of Social Anthropology
Coventry University

ONE

Introduction

Seaview School is an old brick building nestled in the quiet, hilly suburbs of Brighton & Hove, on the south coast of England.[1] The grey-blue English Channel can be seen in the distance. Elm trees line the fenced school boundary and there is a broad grassy area in front of the school building, with a small playground to the side, and a larger playing field at the back. The school building is a maze of narrow winding corridors with chipped red tiles and old wooden floors. A massive world map at reception reflects the relatively large number of newcomers who attend Seaview. The majority, however, remains White British, and newcomers often spend break and lunchtimes together. The boys sometimes get involved in games of football in the playground while the girls tend to stick together, often showing each other photos on Instagram and Snapchat.

Sixty miles north, Bradbrook School for boys is a newly built concrete building on a bustling main street in Inner East London. Its entrance is protected from the street by wide metal gates which are opened before and after school and locked during the school day. There is a spacious playground at the back of the school where the boys play football and basketball. The building's wide corridors have grey vinyl floors and freshly painted white walls. At break and lunchtimes, the corridors are full of students from all over the world, laughing, jostling, and speaking in myriad languages and accents – many of them recent arrivals to East London and others about to leave. For a significant number of Bradbrook students, the free school meal they receive at lunchtime will be the main meal of the day, and some will go to bed hungry. (Fieldnotes)

These fieldnotes, written during ethnographic fieldwork in East London and Brighton & Hove between 2019 and 2020, point to some of the complexity and multidimensionality of young people's peer relationships in contexts of migration and displacement. While the migration literature has historically been dominated by an ethnonational paradigm, fruitful ways of thinking about 'diversity' at the local level have emerged in recent years – from multidimensional and contextualized understandings of 'integration' and 'social capital' (for example Strang and Ager, 2010; Ryan, 2011; Dahinden, 2016; Grzymala-Kazlowska and Phillimore, 2018) to vibrant descriptions of 'multiculture' and 'conviviality' in the UK and beyond (for example Gilroy, 2004; Wise, 2005; Noble, 2009; Wessendorf, 2014; Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2016). These qualitative studies have significantly enhanced our understanding of how people from diverse migration backgrounds relate to each other in everyday life. Many others, however, continue to frame 'difference' in ethnic, national, or religious terms, aided in part by continuing reliance on quantitative methodologies. As a result, the complex and kaleidoscopic ways in which people negotiate multiple differences in diverse contexts have often been overlooked. In the UK, little research has been conducted in this area in relation to young people specifically, although empirical studies by Alexander (2000), James (2015), Back and Sinha (2018), Vincent, Neal, and Iqbal (2017), and Winkler Reid (2015) are notable exceptions. Comparative and multi-sited studies are rare. This book seeks to contribute new insights by reporting on the findings of in-depth ethnographic research conducted at 'Seaview' and 'Bradbrook' schools over the course of 14 months. By drawing on Martin Buber's 'I-It' and 'I-Thou' relational framework, the book aims to provide a nuanced and rich understanding of young people's peer relationships in contexts of migration and diversity, building on the important work of scholars in this area while eschewing the pitfalls of traditional frameworks.

Martin Buber was a Jewish philosopher who settled in Jerusalem after fleeing Nazi Germany in 1938. In his best-known work, *I and Thou*, Buber (1937: 4) asserted an inherently relational view of human life: 'There is no *I* taken in itself, but only the *I* of the primary word *I-Thou* and the *I* of the primary word *I-It*'.[2] Buber conceptualized the intersubjective 'I-Thou' encounter as a fragment of mankind's relationship with the divine 'Thou'. This presented a profound challenge to rationalist Enlightenment thought, which in seeking to define and 'know' God had, Buber argued, made Him into an 'It'. In Buber's view, the 'I-It' is a subject–object relation that involves categorizing, observing, and 'experiencing' the other for the purposes of self-definition. The I–It relation is ontologically important because it creates identities and roles, which provide purpose, values, and meaning. But it is the I–Thou encounter that develops real 'personhood' and has a destabilizing effect on cultural categories by momentarily fulfilling our longing for direct and unmediated relation with the other. I–Thou encounters, Buber claims, are forms of 'love' – 'Love is responsibility of an *I* for a *Thou'* (1937: 15). Making use of Buber's framework helps to avoid explicitly communitarian or cosmopolitan ideals of society. His ideas have previously been applied in other socio–political contexts, notably by Martin Luther King (1963), who argued that racial segregation 'substitutes an "I-It" relationship for the "I–Thou" relationship, and relegates persons to the status of things' (King, 1963: 142). As King suggests, and as we will see in Chapter Two, on its own the I–It relation objectifies; opportunities for humanizing encounter are therefore needed. In the context of increasingly xenophobic media narratives and 'hostile' immigration environments in the UK and beyond, it is vital to tell alternative stories about who we are and how we relate to each other. The following section sets the scene for this specific story by outlining national policies in relation to immigration to the UK from outside and inside the European Union, followed by a description of 'Bradbrook' and 'Seaview' schools and their local contexts.

Migration to the UK

Between the 1950s and 1980s, migration to the UK was mostly characterized by the arrival of large numbers of people from the British Commonwealth. Commonwealth citizens were encouraged to come to the UK by the British government in order to contribute to post-war economic recovery; the British Nationality Act of 1948 gave all Commonwealth citizens free entry to Britain. From 1948–1953, around two thousand West Indians migrated to Britain on the SS Ormonde, Almanzora, and Empire Windrush. The British government, however, soon defaulted on its initial decision to encourage migration. Neither Prime Minister Clement Attlee nor the administration welcomed the arrival of Black immigrants – Attlee reportedly sought some pretext to prevent the Windrush from leaving Jamaica (Paul, 1997; Olusoga, 2018). In 1968, the Commonwealth Immigrants Act was hurriedly introduced by Harold Wilson's Labour government amid concerns that up to 200,000 Kenyan Asians fleeing Kenya's 'Africanization' policy would take up their right to reside in the UK. In April of that same year, Enoch Powell gave his infamous 'Rivers of blood' speech to the Birmingham Conservative Association, pitting the White working class – 'the decent, ordinary Englishman' – against the racialized immigrant. Although delivered locally, Powell's speech captured broader opposition to 'coloured' immigration from many working-class people in Britain at the time (Paul, 1997; Olusoga, 2018.). Within the British labour market, West Indians, Indians, and Pakistanis were 'almost invariably rejected as potential employees for all but the most menial work. To the majority of employers, a black or brown skin signified a less capable, poorly educated individual' (Paul, 1997: 120). This prompted anti-racist groups in the 1960s to campaign for legislation to counter discrimination in employment and housing. The 1971 Immigration Act aimed to tighten controls, clarify the rules of the 1968 Act, and unify the law for foreign and Commonwealth nationals.

Since the 1971 Act, successive governments have passed more than a dozen Immigration and Nationality laws. These laws have been progressively more exclusionary, reflecting growing public and political unease about the impact of migration from the British Empire (Paul, 1997; Tomes, 1997; Mayblin, Wake, and Kazemi, 2019).

After a surge in asylum applications in the 1980s there was a sharp policy backlash which involved tightening access to UK territory, toughening refugee status procedures, and making the living conditions for asylum seekers less palatable (Hatton, 2009). The 'dispersal' policy, introduced in 1999, sought to move asylum seekers away from London and southeast England by providing them with accommodation in poorer parts of the UK, including Glasgow, Northern England, and Wales. Asylum seekers were (and remain) excluded from the labour market, and free English language lessons for adult asylum seekers were curtailed in 2007. In British schools, students with English as an Additional Language (EAL) have no entitlement to statutory EAL teaching and learning, nor is there a defined EAL curriculum. Lack of English language support 'remains a significant cause of educational under-achievement, as many young migrants do not develop sufficient academic literacy to pass public examinations' (Rutter, 2015: 135). Refugee families are often dispersed to areas with little or no history of assisting refugees, and where the financial impact on local authorities and schools has not been carefully considered (Arnot and Pinson, 2005). Morrice (2012: 256) observes that the net result of these measures has been 'to promote the perception of those seeking asylum as a burden on the community rather than as an asset or potential resource'. The perception of asylum seekers as a burden on the community is compounded by the right-wing media, which often uses dehumanizing language and portrays asylum seekers and refugees as potential threats to culture, welfare, security, and the health system. Following the terrorist attacks in New York, Madrid, and London in the early 2000s, the UK government and media framed international

immigration as a security risk and there was a concomitant increase in Islamophobic public attitudes. In 2012 the 'hostile environment' policy was introduced and was subsequently enshrined in law through the 2014 and 2016 Immigration Acts. Hostile environment measures restrict access to basic services for non-EU citizens and require landlords, charities, community interest companies, banks, and the National Health Service (NHS) to carry out ID checks. The 2022 Nationality and Borders Act introduced a two-tier asylum system, placing strong focus on penalizing those who arrive in the UK via irregular means.

In contrast to increasingly restrictive policies on immigration from outside the EU, controls on immigration from within the EU were gradually loosened from the 1970s onwards. The UK entered the European Economic Community (EEC) in January 1973; membership of the EEC (now the EU) allowed freedom of movement for workers within member states. In 2004, the New Labour government granted unfettered access from newly acceded EU states in the 'A8 decision'. Immigration to the UK from Eastern Europe increased dramatically following the A8 decision: between 2004 and 2007, 683,000 new workers arrived in the UK, 70 per cent of whom came from Poland. Immigration restrictions were later placed on Romanian and Bulgarian citizens when Bulgaria and Romania acceded to the EU in 2007. In 2016, a majority (52 per cent to 48 per cent) of Britons voted to leave the EU, and the UK left in January 2021 after an extended transition period. Research into the reasons for voting to leave the EU has highlighted scepticism of the EU project and of globalization more generally. The 'Brexit' vote reflects the concerns of more 'authoritarian' and socially conservative voters about the social consequences of EU membership, most notably in regard to immigration (Curtice, 2016; Carl, Dennison, and Evans, 2019; Consterdine, 2020). Olivas–Osuna et al. (2019) emphasize that the 'Leave' vote has been more associated with rapid pace of demographic change than with

high levels of immigration per se. This echoes Kaufmann's (2017) finding that rapid ethnic change, rather than high levels of immigration, increased opposition to immigration and support for the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) among White Britons. Since the referendum there has been a gradual increase in non–EU net immigration to the UK while net EU immigration has decreased. A new points-based immigration system was implemented in January 2021. EU and non-EU citizens are treated equally under the new system, which puts emphasis on 'skilled' workers.

Bradbrook School

Bradbrook School is one of eight maintained schools in the East London borough where the research was conducted. It has around 750 students. In 2021 the borough had a population size of around 350,000. Between 2001 and 2011, it saw the greatest population growth in non-UK born residents of all London boroughs, with 72,285 arrivals from outside the UK. In 2015, 56 per cent of borough residents had arrived in the area within the last ten years, and 63 per cent had arrived within the last five years. Most students at Bradbrook are second- or first-generation immigrants; some were born in the UK to non-British parents, others arrived a long time ago, and some more recently. In the course of the research I met students who were born in (or whose parents are from) Romania, Lithuania, Russia, Poland, Moldova, Georgia, Eritrea, Somalia, Angola, Ghana, Uganda, Nigeria, Algeria, Malawi, The Gambia, Senegal, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Pakistan, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Curaçao, Jamaica, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Spain, Italy, and Portugal. In 2019, only 60 per cent of Year 11 students at Bradbrook had been at the school since Year 7.[3]

Bradbrook's local borough is characterized by 'superdiversity', a concept which refers to post-war immigration to specific

areas of the UK and resulting complexity in relation to places of origin, religious backgrounds, socioeconomic statuses, education profiles, legal statuses, and other categories (Vertovec, 2007). The 2021 census found that, at 14.8 per cent, the borough has the lowest percentage of White British residents of all London boroughs. People from Asian, Black, Mixed and Other ethnic groups make up 69.2 per cent of the borough's population, making it the most ethnically diverse of all local authorities in England and Wales. The UK's 2016 annual school census found that 66.3 per cent of secondary school pupils in state-funded schools in the borough did not have English as their first language. Over 80 per cent of the student population at Bradbrook have EAL and students speak more than 58 languages. In recent years there has been a notable increase in migration to the borough from Eastern Europe (particularly Poland, Lithuania, and Romania) as well as from Africa, Latin America, Italy, and Spain. There are high levels of 'secondary migration', with newcomers from Italy and Spain often having originated in Latin America, Africa, and Bangladesh. In the 2021 census, 35.3 per cent of the borough's population identified as Christian and 34.8 per cent identified as Muslim. A significant proportion identified as Hindu (6.1 per cent) and Sikh (1.6 per cent). Because Bradbrook School is an all-boys school, it is attractive to Muslim families; at the time of the research in 2019, the largest religious groups at the school were Muslim (57 per cent) and Christian (30 per cent).

The borough's superdiversity is in constant flux. In 2019, the borough's 'population churn' rate was 21.5 per cent, meaning that 21.5 per cent of the population were estimated to have either left or arrived in the borough in 2018. This is one of the highest population churn rates in London, with large numbers of people moving into the area for very short periods every year. Many newcomers to Bradbrook arrive in the middle of a school year as 'mid-phase admissions', while other students leave in the middle of the school year. There is

some circular migration, such as Roma students going back and forth to Romania throughout the school year, or other EU students temporarily leaving the UK with their parents to seek employment elsewhere. This circular migration contrasts with the 'settled' immigration status of many post-war Caribbean and Asian migrants who are long-term residents in the borough. In the 2016 EU referendum, 52.8 per cent of voters in the borough voted 'Remain', while 47.2 per cent voted 'Leave' – a slim majority compared to other London boroughs. Anecdotally, the 'Vote Leave' campaign was popular among first- and second-generation immigrants in the borough, including Bangladeshis, Indians, and Ghanaians. Many long-established ethnic minorities reported their concerns about the impact of EU immigration on housing, public services, and employment to local newspapers. Some felt that Eastern European newcomers made no effort to 'mix' or integrate into society, while others were unhappy about restrictions on non-EU immigration contained in EU migration policy (also see Wessendorf, 2020). The impact of these societal attitudes on young people's peer relationships at Bradbrook School will be explored in Chapter Four.

There has been substantial urban remodelling in the borough in recent years. Many of the high-rise flats built after the Second World War have been knocked down and replaced. The Docklands regeneration project from 1981 onwards included the construction of high-rise office buildings at Canary Wharf, and development of the area is still ongoing. The borough's proximity to the City of London has made it attractive to workers in the finance sector, and there has been an increase in new-build flats and homes, making accommodation increasingly expensive. The borough has the highest rate of temporary accommodation in London at 49 per 1,000 households. The rate of eviction is also higher here than in any other London borough. It is one of London's designated 'growth boroughs', where people 'earn less, have fewer qualifications, are more likely to be unemployed, live

in poor and overcrowded housing, be a victim of crime and die younger than an average Londoner' (Growth Boroughs Partnership, 2021). A 2010 report recorded unemployment in the borough at approximately 14 per cent of the working age population – around double the overall unemployment rate for Greater London. The report identified numerous barriers to work in the borough, including low qualifications and levels of English, caring responsibilities, the 'benefits trap', and specific gaps in service provision, particularly in relation to employability-related English language support. Single-parent households accounted for 15 per cent of households in the borough in 2021.

There are high levels of deprivation. 50 per cent of children in the borough are estimated to live in poverty, compared to 37 per cent in London overall. During the school year 2019–2020, Bradbrook School was allocated Pupil Premium funding for 46 per cent of the student population.[4] As of 2016, 5.8 per cent of 16–18-year-olds in the borough were not in education, employment or training (NEET).[5] In 2021, one in five households in the borough had at least one person with a limiting long-term illness; a number of Bradbrook students are young carers. A Youth Survey conducted in 2012 found that job availability, crime, and social cohesion were the top three issues facing the borough's young population. In 2017, close to two fifths of all borough residents (37 per cent) reported being worried about being a victim of crime in their local area. The borough has several youth clubs and centres, one with a particular focus on supporting migrant and refugee newcomers. There are several mentoring and alternative educational provision initiatives, including Polish, Tamil, and Albanian supplementary schools, established and run by local communities. Some non-governmental organizations (NGOs) support specific migrant groups in the borough, including Roma and Albanian residents. In spite of these initiatives, the 2012 Youth Survey highlighted a general lack of local facilities for community engagement in the borough.

Seaview School

Seaview School is a mixed high school in the suburbs of Brighton & Hove, a small coastal city in the county of East Sussex, with a population of 277,200 as of 2021. Seaview is one of the city's seven maintained schools and has around 1,100 students. In sharp contrast to Bradbrook's superdiversity, 70–80 per cent of Seaview students are White British. Some of these students were born in Brighton & Hove or in the local county, while others were born in, or have parents from Scotland, Ireland, or Wales; 77.5 per cent of Brighton & Hove residents identified as White British in the 2021 census. However, there has also been an increase in newcomers to Seaview School in recent years, reflecting growth in migration to Brighton & Hove more generally. Between 2001 and 2011, the number of international migrants in the city increased from 25,200 to 42,900. As of 2016, 18 per cent of city residents were born outside the UK. Of these, 48 per cent were born in European countries, 26 per cent in Asia, and 28 per cent in other countries. In 2011, proportionately more people from non-UK born groups were employed in accommodation and food services, such as hotels and restaurants. Many migrant parents at Seaview work in Brighton & Hove's service industry or are professionals from the EU.

Seaview is undersubscribed and consequently has the largest number of migrant students in Brighton & Hove.[6] The school's progressive policies towards diversity and language support also make it attractive to recent and longer-term immigrants. Most students arrive at the start and end of the school year, with some mid-phase admissions. Approximately 26 per cent of Seaview students have EAL. During the fieldwork I met students who were born in or have parents from Moldova, Romania, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Bulgaria, Venezuela, Peru, Mexico, Brazil, Cuba, Panama, Jamaica, the Gambia, Sudan, Senegal, Algeria, the DRC, Bangladesh, India, Singapore, Turkey, Hong Kong, Vietnam, Australia, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan,

Pakistan, and Iran. Some of these students had previously migrated to the EU before coming to the UK. Brighton & Hove's large Sudanese population, for example, includes families who have been granted refugee status in Germany or Greece and acquired EU citizenship there. Some refugees in the city came to the UK through government resettlement schemes. It has been estimated that there are roughly 200 asylum seekers living in Brighton & Hove at any one time.

According to the 2021 census, the population in Brighton & Hove is predominantly White (85.4 per cent), with non-White minorities representing the remaining 14.6 per cent of the population. Brighton & Hove residents identifying as 'Mixed' are the largest minority group, accounting for 4.8 per cent of the population; 63.4 per cent of Brighton & Hove residents have no religion or did not identify a religion in the 2021 census; 30.9 per cent are Christian, and Muslims are the largest non-Christian group at 3.1 per cent. Attitudes towards immigration in Brighton & Hove are varied. Mazzilli (2020) argues that although Brighton & Hove has a liberal approach to gender identity and sexuality (the city has been described as the 'gay capital' of Europe and the UK), local government has a selective understanding of 'diversity' and often ignores racism. In the EU referendum, 68.6 per cent of the local population voted 'Remain' and 31.4 per cent voted 'Leave'. The area where Seaview School is located has shown strong support for Brexit and UKIP in recent years.

Although Seaview School is located in a suburban, middle-class area, its wide catchment area attracts students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, including single-parent families and 'looked after' young people.[7] During the 2020–2021 school year, 29 per cent of the student population were classed as disadvantaged and eligible for the Pupil Premium. Deprivation is higher in Brighton & Hove than it is on average across England. A 2015 report for Brighton & Hove City Council exposed inequalities across the city in relation to housing, employment, income, welfare, and health. The

report also highlighted child poverty. According to the 2011 Child Poverty Index, 19.6 per cent of Brighton & Hove's dependent children are living in poverty. As of 2016, 4 per cent of 16–18-year-olds in Brighton were NEET. In 2021, almost one fifth of Brighton & Hove residents were disabled or had a long-term health problem.

Brighton & Hove is home to many small NGOs which have helped to fill the gap in funding provision from central government since 2011. The city has a large youth centre that provides young people with a range of activities including music, sports, and dance. Homelessness support is provided by local charities and by a network of local churches. Condon, Hill, and Bryson (2018: 55) note that 'the larger national asylum and refugee charities have not generally had a local presence in the city'. Two smaller charities support refugees and asylum seekers in Brighton & Hove. Psychosocial support projects and English language initiatives are also run by local volunteers. There are a significant number of small migrant and refugee-led groups, including the Sudanese Coptic Association, Oromo Community Association, Kurdish Community group, and many others.

Exploring difference and encounter

Research for this book was conducted as part of a large EU-funded project, 'RefugeesWellSchool' (RWS). The RWS project aimed to contribute to evidence on the role of school-based interventions in promoting the mental wellbeing and 'integration' of migrant and refugee adolescents. Each intervention was implemented and evaluated in two or more of the six countries participating in the RWS project. In the UK, a 'Classroom Drama' workshop was implemented in Bradbrook School in East London, and 'Peer Integration and Enhancement Resource' (PIER) was conducted in Seaview School in Brighton & Hove. The evaluations consisted of focus groups and questionnaires with students and teachers. The pre-intervention evaluation aimed to find out more about young

people's wellbeing at school and at home; the post-intervention evaluation assessed the impact of the interventions. I organized the interventions and conducted the evaluations in both schools; I also facilitated the PIER programme at Seaview School. Working on the project at Bradbrook and Seaview provided the opportunity to conduct ethnographic research on school life. I wanted to find out if the peer relationships of Bradbrook and Seaview students reflected the ethnonational paradigm of difference used by the RWS project to define 'integration' – and if not, which differences, other than ethnicity and nationality, actually 'made a difference' (Berg, Gidley, and Krausova, 2019)? As Wessendorf's (2014) empirical research in East London has shown, particular differences 'make a difference' according to the place and situation – social categories depend on context.

The demographic of Bradbrook, a highly diverse, inner-city London school, fits the traditional understanding of 'superdiversity' as occurring in larger urban areas (Boccagni, 2015; Foner, Duyvendak, and Kasinitz, 2019; Berg, Gidley, and Krausova, 2019). However, Berg and Sigona (2013: 352) suggest that if 'we take seriously the multiplication and increasingly complex intersection of axes of difference, we need to understand how it plays out differently in different conditions, at different scales, in particular places'. While a significant amount of research has examined social interaction in urban neighbourhoods, less is known about what 'superdiversity' might look like in other areas. Ethnographic research at Seaview School allowed me to compare and contrast relational processes of superdiversity in inner-city and suburban areas, asking 'how, what, when, where, why, and for whom differences are produced, made socially significant, experienced, and represented' (Berg, Gidley, and Krausova, 2019: 2724). As we will see, the research reveals the embodied and affective dimensions of young people's experiences of negotiating their differences on an everyday basis. At the same time, it provides important insight into the societal conditions shaping these differences at a structural level.

While pointing to the significance of social differences, Buber's framework does not preclude the possibility that these 'I–It' differences might be (fleetingly) transcended through moments of 'I–Thou' encounter. Recognizing this possibility in research presents new methodological challenges – the I–Thou relation is 'unknowable' in that it cannot be 'represented' through language or image. Buber is clear that the act of representation returns the I–Thou to the end–means paradigm and 'the structure of knowledge' (Buber, 1937: 40); it has been suggested that the impossibility of representing or categorizing encounter is part of its power (Lewis, 1961). We can, however, make guesses about its occurrence by studying the conditions of mutual vulnerability, trust, and respect in which the I–Thou is said to occur, and subsequently explore the social dynamics that become manifest there, including mutual expressions of care, curiosity, and love for the other. As Schinkel (2019: 6) argues, in contrast to traditional classifying understandings in migration studies, 'love' is 'a thoroughly un-academic way of speaking about sociality as entanglement, as being-together. That is its strength'. Highlighting Glissant's (1997) work on the 'poetics' of relation, James (2016: 4) notes that ethnographic research can 'draw attention to the irreducibility of human relations – attending to its interactive, creative, plural and un-categorisable qualities'.

The research process

The research findings presented in this book are drawn from the RWS focus group data, semi-structured interviews, and participant observation at Bradbrook and Seaview. Participation observation was conducted between January 2019 and March 2020. It was mostly structured around the organization, implementation, and evaluation of the RWS project. In the run-up to each intervention, I spent time at the schools meeting with school staff and preparing the questionnaires and focus groups. At Bradbrook I was able to observe in the classroom,

corridors, staffroom, and playground. I also attended several parents' evenings and coffee mornings. At Seaview I spent a lot of time in the staffroom and EAL office in the run-up to the PIER intervention but was unable to spend significant time among students in the classroom or playground. However, facilitating the PIER intervention provided me with deep insight into young people's peer relationships. I conducted a total of 15 focus groups with students and staff at both schools, usually making use of a vacant classroom. As well as giving broad insight into young people's peer relationships, the focus groups revealed power dynamics at a micro-level, evidenced for example by interruptions ("Let me talk let me talk!"). Ethnographic observation before and after the focus groups also exposed social dynamics, for example in this exchange between students at Bradbrook School:

> As the students leave the classroom, I hear Kingsley saying to Tariq, 'You're so sweaty!'. I admonish him – 'Why are you saying that? He's not sweaty at all!'. Kingsley responds, 'Not like that Miss ... I mean he was trying so hard!'. (Fieldnotes)

Kingsley's scathing assessment of Tariq's behaviour in the focus group provides insight into how behavioural norms implicitly shape peer relationships at school. The fieldwork was interrupted by the COVID-19 lockdowns in March 2020, just before the completion of the PIER programme at Seaview. This meant that the post-intervention focus groups at Seaview had to be conducted online.

I conducted a total of 38 interviews at both schools: with students (13), teachers (10), other school staff (3), parents (6), and staff working at local organizations (6). I asked participants about different aspects of peer relationships in school, or in society more broadly, sometimes focusing on a particular social dynamic that I had picked up on during observation, such as the involvement of some students in gangs or the use of certain

words in the corridors. The interviews were usually conducted in a classroom or meeting room, although interviews with Seaview teachers took place online after March 2020. Mindful of Sinha and Back's (2014) warning that interviews in quiet, private spaces can for refugees and asylum seekers be reminiscent of being questioned by the police or immigration officers, I aimed to make the interview setting with students as informal and relaxed as possible, while still ensuring some degree of privacy. I tried to conduct interviews in an empty classroom and would leave the door of the room ajar. Rohini, a Bengali mother who had recently arrived from Italy with her family, invited me to carry out the interview at her home in East London, where her daughter Saaleha helped to interpret. Saaleha also became involved in the conversation, sharing her own perspectives on various issues and adding detail and colour to Rohini's comments. An interpreter was present for my interview with Gianna, an Italian mother – the interpreter began to share her own perspectives as the interview went on, signalling her role as an active agent in the production of the research account (Temple and Edwards, 2002).

I conducted an interview in Spanish with Reina, a Bolivian mother, and later translated it myself. Issues of power and race are inherent to the politics of translation: Spivak (2000: 13) suggests that in 'every possible sense, translation is necessary but impossible'. Language must be understood as a process of meaning construction whose contingency on context and audience negates the possibility of ever achieving a faithful 'translation'. The interviews and focus groups were all recorded with participants' consent and transcribed verbatim, maintaining the grammar, form, and poetry of the spoken text. This was particularly important for the interviews with Bradbrook students and their parents since many of these were carried out in their second or third languages. In order to increase my understanding of specific issues, I conducted follow-up interviews at Bradbrook with a North African parent, Faduma, and a Bengali student, Nadir.

Information sheets and consent forms were given to all research participants. Participants were assured of their anonymity in the research and pseudonyms are used for people and places throughout the book. Recognizing that categorical differentiations are subjective, I have tried to use participants' own descriptions of themselves where possible, for example in relation to ethnicity and nationality. In order to protect anonymity, the book only refers to the specific ethnicity or nationality of the research participant in cases where it is relevant to do so, and where it would not be possible to identify them on this basis. For example, a large number of Bengali Italian students attended Bradbrook School and lived in the East London borough. Here references to nationality are relevant to the discussion at hand but are unlikely to compromise anonymity. On the other hand, it was not considered appropriate to describe the nationality or ethnicity of research participants whose origins were less commonplace or who had unusual familial or personal histories of migration, including young people who had come to the UK as unaccompanied minors. In these instances, only the regional or continental background of the young person or adult is given (for example, 'Middle Eastern' or 'African European'). In line with the 1951 Refugee Convention, the book uses the term 'refugee' to describe young people or adults who had been forced to leave their home countries due to fear of persecution. In cases where the legal immigration status of the research participant is unclear or unknown, the book uses the term 'migrant'. The labels of 'refugee' and 'migrant' are highly politicized, contested, and evolving. As we will see, these terms hold powerful discursive significance and must be understood as socially constructed and contingent.

Societal imaginings

The next chapter seeks to build on research on social relations in contexts of migration, displacement, and diversity by

putting this work in dialogue with Buber's 'I–It' and 'I–Thou' framework. This provides an important theoretical and empirical foundation for the chapters to follow. Chapter 3 centres on the intersectionality of migration at Bradbrook and Seaview, exploring how multiple factors, including young people's personal memories and expectations for the future, shaped the social fabric at school. Chapter 4 examines how societal myths influenced the politics of reception in complex ways as young people reproduced, challenged, and sometimes transgressed these myths at school. Chapter 5 considers the roles of curiosity, humour, and social contact in young people's peer relationships, showing how these intersected and informed each other to foster nuanced expressions of difference and fleeting moments of encounter at Bradbrook and Seaview. Chapter 6 looks at the different ways in which young people navigated socioeconomic inequalities, defined here as 'precarity', with divisive and sometimes transformative effects. Chapter 7 concludes the book by discussing the implications of these stories for research, policy, and political visions for our futures. Young people's peer relationships at Bradbrook and Seaview have much to tell us about societal inequalities in contexts of migration and displacement – about the conditions in which divisions are sown and take root, and are, in turn, transplanted and reproduced in schools. At the same time, the creative ways in which young people negotiate these divisions point to the prevailing hope of their transcendence, inspiring new ways of thinking about how societies live together with difference.

TWO

I-It, I-Thou, and Migration Studies

Buber's relational model is ultimately theological in nature. Yet it also strongly resonates with a number of key concepts in sociological literature, many of which have been taken up in migration studies and post–immigration policy in Britain. These ideas are explored here in dialogue with Buber's framework. In spite of the continued relevance of Buber's ideas, some of his language is now outdated. This is notable in his extensive use of male pronouns. I have tried to address this by using female or gender neutral pronouns.

The I-It

The I–It is a subject–object relationship in which 'one knows and uses other persons or things without allowing them to exist for oneself in their uniqueness' (Friedman, 1947: xii).[1] Buber (1937) describes the I–It relation as a process involving comparison, categorization, and objective description and analysis. The 'I' strives for self-definition through 'cessation, suspension, a breaking off and cutting clear and hardening' (Buber, 1937: 13), as subject differentiates itself from the object, seeking 'through experiencing and using to appropriate as much of it as it can' (Buber, 1937: 64). Buber's formulation of the I–It relation corresponds with modern theorizations of identity which see 'otherness' as central to the construction of social categories. In these understandings, social identities are set up as dichotomies; the development and maintenance of one culture is seen as requiring the existence of a competing other (Said, 1995). Ignatieff (1998) draws on Freudian ideas

on 'narcissism' to describe this process of antagonistic self-definition, arguing that the narcissist gaze does not engage with the 'other' in any real sense. Rather, its gaze is directed at itself and turns to the other only to confirm its difference. Buber (1937: 29) emphasizes this passive, observational element: 'The [wo]man who says *I-It*, stands before things, but not over against them in the flow of mutual action … with the magnifying glass of peering observation [s]he bends over particulars and objectifies them'. From an ontological perspective, the I–It relation is deeply necessary: 'That is how knowledge comes about, a work is achieved, and image and symbol made, in the midst of living things' (Buber, 1937: 40). Social identities, as forms of 'knowledge', are necessary in order to understand others and make ourselves 'understood' to them. They give us shape, values, purpose, and meaning.

Buber underscores the need to recognize social identities for what they are, rather than confusing them with reality: 'There is no illusory world, there is only the world – which appears to us as twofold in accordance with our twofold attitude. Only the barrier of separation has to be destroyed' (Buber, 1937: 77). And yet, as de Beauvoir (1949) points out, representation is often conflated with objective truth. Civil, institutional, and political discourses may deliberately ignore and essentialize the constructed nature of cultural categories in the interests of power. Alexander (2006) notes that politics are not only contingent and rational but stylized and prescribed – they have a symbolic structure. In order to acquire a civil meaning, political classifications and actors must seem to 'be' these qualities rather than being labelled by them. The discourse of civil society is elaborated by narrative or mythical accounts that are believed to faithfully describe the present as well as the past. In his postcolonial treatise, Said (1978) uses the concept of 'Orientalism' to highlight how reductive and essentialized categories were – and still are – used to govern and divide populations. He argues that the 'Orient' is countlessly made and re-made by power,

which acts through knowledge to assert that the Orient has a particular nature and must be dealt with accordingly. Just as history is made, so it can also be 'unmade and re-written, always with various silences and elisions, always with shapes imposed and disfigurements tolerated, so that "our" East, "our" Orient becomes "ours" to possess and direct' (Said, 1978: xiv). As Buber himself observes:

> Knowledge can also be managed in such a way that it is affirmed that 'this, then, is how the matter stands, the thing is called this, made in this way, its place is over there'; that which has become *It* is left as *It*, experienced and used as *It*, appropriated for the undertaking to 'find one's bearings' in the world, and then to 'conquer' it. (1937: 41)

Said (1978) exhorts us to challenge essentialist ideas by revealing how they acquire authority, 'normality', and even the status of 'natural' truth. Foucault (1966, 1980, 1982) advances understanding of these processes by showing how power acts through knowledge to objectify, categorize, and classify others. Watters and Ingleby (2004) suggest that a number of migration studies are Foucauldian in their orientation. These examine the different ways in which state controls and processes act to categorize migrant and refugee populations. Zetter (1991), for example, argues that the 'refugee' label may be used to condition and differentiate, include and exclude, and stereotype and control, and that in consequence, understanding how this label is constructed is imperative. Erdal and Oeppen (2018) also emphasize the discursive power of labels relating to voluntary and forced migration, and underline the need to investigate how, when, and for whom these labels matter. But people are not pliant, passive objects on whom categories are imposed − they also appropriate, internalize, subvert, evade, or sometimes even transform the categories that are imposed on them (Brubaker, 2002). Increasing recognition has been

given to the agency of migrants and refugees in 'doing things' with categories. In his ethnographic research in Southall, South London, Baumann (1996) finds that South Asian and Caribbean residents, including young people, often equate 'community' with a reified 'culture' predicated on different perceived ethnic and religious heritages. At other times, they question and reformulate this association, consciously forging new, post-migration 'communities' in doing so. For Baumann, these reformulations clearly demonstrate the processual and constructed nature of 'community' – however, he also notes that, paradoxically, Southallians continue to use reifying language to legitimate their claims for public resources, recognizing this language to be the hallmark of dominant political and media discourse and therefore as the 'currency' in which they must deal (Baumann, 1996: 192).

Diversity studies build on intersectionality theory, which was introduced by Crenshaw (1989, 1991) and developed by American feminist studies to show how socially constructed categories of gender, race, and class intersect to create systems of inequality. Berg and Sigona (2013) posit that by exploring the intersectional politics of urban spaces, diversity studies have the potential to reproduce what intersectionality has achieved within feminist scholarship. Empirical studies have used the concept to explore how migration status intersects with class, race, and gender in the social experience of migrants and refugees (Vervliet et al., 2014; Ribas, 2016; Fathi, 2017; Wilson, 2020). James (2015) explores how young migrants in outer East London are classed, racialized, and gendered through different mechanisms of the state, but also highlights the different ways in which these young people navigate, resist, and subvert intersectional marginalization. The concept of 'superdiversity' expands the traditional focus of intersectional frameworks on race, gender, and class to include the specific intersection of migration-related categories (Vertovec, 2007; Wessendorf, 2016a). Academic interest in superdiversity signals a marked

shift in the migration literature from an ethnonational lens towards recognition that 'different kinds of differences' matter (Berg and Sigona, 2013: 348). Migration studies increasingly highlight young people's agency in superdiverse settings (Çağlar and Glick Schiller, 2018). For instance, Vincent, Neal, and Iqbal (2017) show that children in ethnically diverse primary schools in London engage multiple dimensions of difference in their friendship choices. Meissner (2020) suggests, however, that young people's active role in shaping the dynamics of superdiversity still remains to be taken seriously. Humphris (2015) also observes that superdiversity has largely been associated with urban areas and points to its potential relevance outside global metropolises.

The I-Thou

Buber (1937: 17) claims that while the objectifying I–It relation is a fundamental and necessary part of social life, it 'snatches only at a fringe of real life'. In contrast, the I–Thou relation is a subject-to-subject encounter involving 'openness, directness, mutuality, and presence' (Friedman, 1947: xii). Buber (1937: 11) writes that the 'relation to the *Thou* is direct. No system of ideas, no foreknowledge, and no fancy intervene between *I* and *Thou*'. The I–Thou encounter has no purpose other than that of relation: 'The aim of relation is relation's own being, that is, contact with the *Thou*' (Buber, 1937: 63). There is only presence and openness as one accepts the other as they are rather than 'turning them to their own account' (Buber, 1937: 40). The meaning of the I–Thou relation is found in the reciprocal relation between subjects – their *encounter* – rather than in the subjects themselves. The I–Thou is an intrinsically ethical relation in which 'I confirm and further my Thou in the right of [their] existence and the goal of [their] becoming, in all [their] otherness' (Buber and Friedman, 1964: 28). According to Buber (1937: 28), real 'personhood' develops only through the I–Thou relation: 'Through the *Thou* a

[wo]man becomes *I*'. Buber (1947: 115) describes the I–Thou as a relation of 'inclusion' which involves mutual engagement with the other from 'over there' through 'the extension of one's own concreteness, the fulfilment of the actual situation of life, the complete presence of the reality in which one participates'. In other words, the I–Thou involves 'being with' the other without losing any sense of oneself.

Buber (1937: 7) emphasizes that the I–Thou has an integrating function: 'There is nothing from which I would have to turn my eyes away in order to see, and no knowledge that I would have to forget. Rather is everything, picture and movement, species and type, law and number, indivisibly united in this event.' The effect on the I–It relation is transformative rather than reproductive: the I–Thou is a creative space where people can repeatedly build new 'dwellings' and 'shape the very community of [wo]men' (Buber, 1937: 54). DeLue (2006) observes that the I–Thou is located in the interstices between an individual's diverse roles and empowers us to make our own judgements about the best course for ourselves. In putting forward a 'dialogical theory of action', Freire (1970: 167) refers to Buber's I–Thou relation to describe how subjects 'meet to *name* the world in order to transform it'. Pryor (2019) also draws parallels between the I–Thou relation and Turner's (1966: 95) account of 'liminal entities' as being 'neither here nor there' and 'betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial'. Turner suggests that this *spontaneous communitas* allows us to scrutinize a culture's central values and axioms. In liminal moments of encounter, the very structure of society is temporarily suspended (Szakolczai, 2009). Mikola (2013) builds on the idea of liminality to argue that Russian asylum seekers in Slovenia use bodily communication and silence to resist structural and spatial boundaries between 'us' and 'others'. Mikola notes that both of these practices create a threshold for potentially humanizing dialogue. The idea of the threshold is foregrounded in postcolonial theory, where it is conceptualized as a 'third space' which 'challenges our sense

of the historical identity of culture as a homogenizing, unifying force, authenticated by the originary Past' (Bhabha, 1988: 21). For hooks (1989), the threshold space presents the possibility of pushing against and challenging oppressive boundaries set by race, sex, and class domination. Here, transformation is possible. hooks emphasizes, however, that this is not a 'safe' space – 'One is always at risk' (hooks, 1989: 19). Similarly, Buber (1937: 34) suggests that, as the antithesis of 'I–It' control, the mutual vulnerability of the I–Thou relation has the effect of 'loosening the well-tried context, leaving more questions than satisfaction behind them, shattering security'. While hazardous, Buber emphasizes that these experiences are fundamental to personhood – without them, we risk losing ourselves entirely.

The humanizing I–Thou relation aligns with the concept of cosmopolitanism, which Nussbaum (1997, 2019) conceptualizes as a universal ethic of care that seeks to recognize humanity in others. Cosmopolitanism has been criticized, however, for failing to capture the importance of local identifications (Gunderson, 2005). Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002) point out that nationalism, for instance, is not acknowledged in the cosmopolitan perspective as continuing to have powerful significance for different actors with different purposes. Buber (1937: 34) himself recognizes the tension between the cosmopolitan ethic and particularist impulses and seeks to resolve it by suggesting that the vital 'presence' of the I–Thou relation must be balanced or 'subdued' by the stability of the I–It: 'It is not possible to live in the bare present. Life would be quite consumed if precautions were not taken to subdue the present speedily and thoroughly'. Homans (1979) draws attention to the intensity of the state of liminality, noting that all liminality must break down eventually and be stabilized by some sort of structure. Similarly, Turner (1982) submits that the spontaneity of I–Thou *communitas* is unsustainable and must eventually become normative, while Easthope (2008) warns that constantly inhabiting the 'third space' would be dangerously akin to the state of psychosis.

Buber (1937: 16) reluctantly concedes that 'this is the exalted melancholy of our fate, that every *Thou* in our world must become an *It*'. Indeed, 'Every *Thou* in the world is by its nature fated to become a thing, or continually to re-enter into the condition of things' (Buber, 1937: 17). Yet without opportunities for the I–Thou encounter, static and reified cultural understandings necessarily persist: 'If a culture ceases to be centred in the living and continually renewed relational event, then it hardens into the world of *It*' (Buber, 1937: 54). As Said (1995) posits, although we all need foundations on which to stand, we must continually question how extreme and unchangeable we understand those foundations to be. Friedman summarizes:

> I–Thou and I–It stand in fruitful and necessary alternation with each other. [Wo]man cannot will to persevere in the I–Thou relationship. [S]he can only desire again and again to bring the indirectness of the world of It into the directness of the meeting with the Thou and thereby give the world of It meaning. So long as this alternation continues, [wo]man's existence is authentic. (1947: xiii)

At the same time, Friedman emphasizes that possibilities for I–Thou encounter are determined by the degree to which the I–It relation characterizes society: 'When the It swells up and blocks the return to the Thou, then [wo]man's existence becomes unhealthy, [her] personal and social life inauthentic' (Friedman, 1947: xiii).

Fruitful alternation

In migration studies, the ideal of a 'fruitful and necessary' alternation between the I–It and I–Thou relation is contained in theories of 'integration'. Integration is one of four 'acculturation' strategies set out by Berry (1997), who introduces a bidirectional model to describe acculturation

as the changes in everyday practices, attitudes, and beliefs that occur when two ethnonational 'cultures' come into contact. Acculturation is a transformative process involving a complex pattern of continuity and change in people's ways of living in new societies. Of the four acculturation strategies presented by Berry (assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization), 'integration' is found to have the most positive psychosocial outcomes. It involves 'maintaining one's original culture', while 'at the same time seeking to participate as an integral part of the larger social network' (Berry, 1997: 9). Berry emphasizes that national institutional structures such as education, health, and labour may need to be adapted to facilitate more inclusive societies. Ager and Strang (2008) also highlight the importance of context, conceptualizing 'integration' as involving multiple domains: functional resources such as employment, housing, education, and health; social connections; facilitators such as language, cultural knowledge, safety, and stability; and foundations in relation to rights and citizenship. They note that the multidimensionality of this framework helps to avoid 'the assumption implied by some policy statements that integration and social cohesion can be achieved through social connection alone' (Ager and Strang, 2008: 186). Their study is, however, also instructive to our understanding of integration at the social level: they draw on Putnam's (1993) work on social capital to conceptualize (social) integration as the complementary development of social bonds and bridges. Social bonds are 'exclusive' and maintain social identities by reinforcing homogeneity within groups, while 'inclusive' social bridges facilitate wider mixing in society and foster reciprocity between them. In later work, Strang and Ager (2010: 598) suggest that conceptualizing integration as involving both bonds *and* bridges helps avoid the emergence of 'separate, very bonded but disconnected communities'. This reflects an ongoing policy framing of social 'integration' in terms of social capital, which directly responds to the 'silos' created by multiculturalist policies from the 1960s onwards (Cantle, 2005).

In spite of their similarities, there are several theoretical distinctions to be made between Buber's framework and social capital or integration theory. The I–Thou has no purpose apart from 'being with' the other, while Putnam (1993) theorizes social bridging as a functional relation. Putnam (2000) also suggests that social bridging involves 'thin' trust – in contrast, the I–Thou involves complete vulnerability with the other. While Buber's descriptions of the I–It and I–Thou relation are often imbued with powerful affectivity, Franklin (2007) points out that the social capital framework is strangely absent of emotion. Lastly, while Buber's 'I–It' relation does not rely on identitarian assumptions, integration and social capital studies tend to implicitly represent individuals as having an identity primarily defined by their national or ethnic group, thus reproducing a nationalist paradigm (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002; Dahinden, 2016; Schinkel, 2019). Glick Schiller (2009) posits that this paradigm overlooks the embeddedness of both migrants and hosts in the social, economic, and political processes, networks, movement, and institutions existing both within – and across – state borders. Others have questioned 'methodological ethnicism' in migration studies (Berg and Sigona, 2013; Berg, Gidley, and Krausova, 2019). In consequence, recent studies have focused their analyses at the local level in order to unsettle assumptions about the internal homogeneity and boundedness of national and ethnic communities (Berg and Sigona, 2013; Wimmer, 2008, 2013). Glick Schiller and Çağlar (2016: 18) observe that the emergence of these studies marks a 'spatial turn' in the migration literature towards the analysis of social relations and their diversities in urban spaces.

In empirical research with Polish migrants in London, Ryan (2011) reappraises the dichotomy of bonding and bridging capital by exploring their relationships, their relative social location, and their available and realizable resources. Meanwhile Bernhard (2021) employs a contextualized understanding of the social capital of recent Syrian refugees

in a German city, examining how they are positioned by and embedded in the various institutions and discourses of the host country. Bhatia and Ram (2009) also contest nationalist, teleological understandings of 'integration' through empirical research with the Indian diaspora in the US. They highlight integration as a non-linear, multidimensional, and constantly negotiated process whose outcomes are never certain: 'For most people living in contemporary diasporas, their negotiation with multiple cultural sites is fluid, dynamic, interminable and often unstable' (Bhatia and Ram, 2009: 148). Multidimensional understandings have been increasingly taken up in British integration policy. In 2018, the Greater London Authority (GLA) published a social integration strategy that stated:

> Our approach needs to go much further than simply integration between different nationalities, ethnic groups or faiths. It must also take account of other important aspects such as age, social class, employment status, sexuality, gender and disability. It is about social integration in a wider context – our bonds as citizens, and how we interact with one another. (GLA, 2018: 4)

Similarly, the 2019 Home Office 'Indicators of Integration' framework foregrounds the multi-directional, intersectional, and ongoing nature of integration, recognizing that 'integration is a process of "mixing" through interaction between people who are diverse in multiple ways, not only on the basis of ethnicity or countries of origin' (Ndofor-Tah et al., 2019: 20).

Theorizations of cultural hybridity, creolization, and syncretism emerged alongside concepts of integration and social capital as part of the academic backlash to multiculturalism (Vertovec and Wessendorf, 2009). As Bhatia and Ram (2009) problematize the idea of achieving 'integrated' identities, so Gilroy (1993: 2) suggests that concepts of hybridity and creolization are still 'rather unsatisfactory ways of naming the processes of cultural mutation and restless (dis)continuity

that exceed racial discourse and avoid capture by its agents'. Later reflecting on these framings, Gilroy (2006: 40) argues that 'culture' is frequently seen 'as ethnic property to be owned and held under copyright' and that 'unruly, convivial multiculture' must instead be understood as 'a sort of "Open-Source" co-production'. Back and Sinha (2018) also contend that academic preoccupation with 'hyphenated identities' and cultural hybridity is no longer useful, proposing that a focus on ongoing 'connection' and 'connectedness' can provide a much richer understanding of the social experiences of young migrants. Qualitative research has examined how 'everyday' and 'vernacular' cosmopolitanisms are practiced in non-elitist settings (Nowicka and Rovisco, 2008; Noble, 2009; Rogaly, 2020). The primary focus of these studies is on what happens *between* or *across* cultures during interpersonal processes of connection at the everyday level. Building on Wise's (2005) work on 'hopeful intercultural encounters', Noble (2009) points to their mutual, local, and transformative elements. As with the I-Thou relation, these humanizing encounters are described as having an integrating function that embraces rather than erodes difference. Glick Schiller and Çağlar (2016) point out that while studies of multiculture and conviviality recognize that sociabilities can be built across difference, as with scholarship on social capital and integration they tend to assume that this 'difference' is ethnic or religious in nature. Similarly, Wessendorf (2016a) observes that conviviality is usually conceptualized as being between people of different ethnic or national backgrounds. The potential usefulness of Buber's framework in studies of migration, untainted by assumptions of ethnic, national, or religious difference, becomes clearer.

The concept of 'multiculture' has strong links to 'conviviality', a term first used by Illich (1973: 10) to describe a post-industrial, localized society of 'autonomous individuals and primary groups'. Wise and Noble (2016) trace the idea of conviviality back to older and broader considerations of how communities 'stick together'. These include Durkheimian

notions of solidarity, cooperation, harmony, connection, and reciprocity, and Mauss' (1925) theorization of the link between reciprocity and solidarity. Hemer, Povrzanović Frykman, and Ristilammi (2020) note that recent academic interest in conviviality has been stimulated by Gilroy's refashioning of the concept against the backdrop of social, racial, and religious tensions in post-imperial Britain. Gilroy (1993) introduces the concept of the 'Black Atlantic' to capture the tension between the 'strategic choices' of Black movements and individuals embedded in national political cultures, and the desire to transcend ethnic and national particularities. While the 'Black Atlantic' describes a specific political and cultural formation, at a broader theoretical level it points to the simultaneously categorical and dialogical nature of all human life, and in later work Gilroy (2004) extends this thinking to the concept of 'conviviality'. Morawska (2014) draws parallels between conviviality and Walzer's (1989) work on 'particularist universalism' to suggest that conviviality combines elements of group-specific concerns and a commitment to universal human values and purposes. In Abspoel's (2017: 242) words, conviviality 'makes it possible for us to see and value the differences between people; at the same time, it bridges the gaps between individuals by strengthening the belief that all, in their own way, contribute to the richness of a larger whole'.

Illich (1973: 17) describes conviviality as 'individual freedom realized in personal interdependence and, as such, an intrinsic ethical value'. Although considerable epistemological attention has been paid to the idea of conviviality as an ethic of mutual care, empirical research has only recently begun to explore convivial processes and capacities at the everyday level. Back and Sinha (2018) examine how young migrants use convivial capabilities to navigate life in postcolonial London. These capabilities include attentiveness and curiosity, care for the life of the city, and the capacity to put oneself in another's place. Back and Sinha claim that these capabilities have the potential to create the conditions for social inclusion. However, scholars

have also challenged the assumption that convivial capabilities inhere in the individual as organic forms of morality – instead, they demonstrate how these are developed through social *practices* (Noble, 2009; Hansen, 2012; Wise and Noble, 2016). Wise (2005) suggests that common to the 'hopeful intercultural encounters' she observed in her fieldwork in a multicultural Australian suburb were certain practices of recognition and hospitality, which can facilitate interethnic belonging, security and trust. This interethnic social capital creates open, joyful, and hopeful dispositions over time, 'full of possibilities for opening up to otherness' (Wise, 2005: 182). Empirical research has devoted particular attention to how the practice of friendship in contexts of diversity cultivates dispositions of openness and reciprocity, thereby creating the conditions for social inclusion (Harris, 2016). Several studies also explore the transgressive role of humour and laughter in negotiating and subverting ethnic and racial differences (Winkler Reid, 2015; Wise, 2016).

Intercultural encounters have the power to transform social divisions. This is evident in Back and Sinha's (2018: 17) finding that the 'convivial life' made by young migrants in East London 'ruins racism, withers its destructive power and allows for different terms of urban existence – however fleetingly – to be established'. Equally, however, it is clear that possibilities for intercultural encounter are strongly shaped by existing structural inequalities – recall Friedman's (1947: xiii) warning that when the It 'swells up', 'the return to the Thou' is blocked. Amin (2002) asserts that the question of what it takes to live with difference and cultural exchange in a multi-ethnic society is influenced by the extent and depth of racism; inequality and deprivation; discourses of immigration and minority rights; and patterns of cultural contact. Meanwhile Valentine (2008) underlines the specific impact of economic inequalities on convivial attitudes in the West Midlands in England, finding that people who had the most cosmopolitan and non-prejudiced attitudes were also those who were most optimistic about their own futures. Others emphasize that conviviality

and racism are not mutually exclusive; Back (1996) recognizes that the dual impulses of anti-essentialism and essentialism co-exist and influence each other in the 'metropolitan paradox'.

A growing number of empirical studies investigate how 'multiculture' and 'conviviality' are established in different contexts. Most of these studies consider co-occupancy and proximity as fundamental conditions for conviviality (Amin, 2002; Gilroy, 2004; Georgiou, 2017; Back and Sinha, 2018; Rzepnikowska, 2020). The condition of co-occupancy often leads to conviviality being depicted as urban. It is therefore unsurprising that academic interest in the concept has predominantly focused on social relations and their diversities in urban spaces (Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2016). However, exceptions exist. Wise (2005) applies the concept of 'multiculture' to suburban social life in Australia while Neal and Walters (2008) contend that the notion of conviviality has as much relevance to rural environments as to urban. It has been emphasized that, although proximity is necessary for encounter, it cannot guarantee it, and may even have the effect of compounding mistrust and entrenching group divisions (Amin, 2002; Wessendorf, 2014; Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2016). Indeed, Lofland (1989) suggests that while 'civility towards diversity' is a key interactional principle in urban public spaces, 'Civility probably emerges more from indifference to diversity than from any appreciation of it' (Lofland, 1989: 465). Subsequent studies underline the importance to 'conviviality' of an active curiosity about the culturally different 'other' (Noble, 2009; Wise and Noble, 2016). Wessendorf's (2013) description of an 'ethos of mixing' in a superdiverse London neighbourhood, for example, resonates with Ager and Strang's (2008: 177) finding that 'integration' means more than the absence of conflict and 'toleration' and requires 'active "mixing" of people from different groups'. Other studies have drawn on Buber's work to argue that, without opportunities for 'I–Thou' encounter, societal narratives of 'tolerance' can foster social relations

which distance and objectify, allowing 'I–It' prejudices such as racism to take a foothold (Shady and Larson, 2010; Morgan and Guilherme, 2013).

According to Buber (1937: 30), 'The *Thou* knows no system of coordination'. Yet Friedman (1976: 21) also argues that it 'makes no sense to talk of pure spontaneity; for structures are necessary and without them we would not have that margin within which spontaneity can arise'. Georgiou (2017) emphasizes the significance of political structures by suggesting that conviviality as an ethic of mutual care requires commitment to a politics of civic engagement. Vollebergh (2016) similarly contends that convivial encounters may be shaped by politics, but also shows that, paradoxically, Flemish residents in Antwerp sometimes draw on culturalist social cohesion policies to give expression to a sincere desire to establish relationships with their culturally different neighbours. Throughout this book, the dynamic relationship between 'I–It' discourse and representation on the one hand, and spontaneous 'I–Thou' encounter on the other, will emerge as a key theme – as we will see, under certain conditions even the 'It' of essentializing and objectifying language may become a 'Thou'. Buber (1937: 33) emphasizes that this possibility is contingent on mutual vulnerability (or 'the relational event'): 'The particular *It*, by entering the relational event, *may* become a *Thou*'.

In recent years, academic interest has turned to the potentially transgressive role of 'micro–publics' of encounter such as workplaces, schools, colleges, youth centres, and sports clubs (Amin, 2002). These everyday spaces can provide 'openings for contact and dialogue with others as equals, so that mutual fear and misunderstanding may be overcome and so that new attitudes and identities can arise from engagement' (Amin, 2002: 972). Schools are often identified in the conviviality literature as important sites for intercultural encounter among children and young people as well as their parents (Hollingworth and Mansaray, 2012; Neal and Vincent, 2013; Wilson, 2013; Neal, Vincent, and Iqbal, 2016; Vincent, Neal,

and Iqbal, 2017). Neal, Vincent, and Iqbal (2016) posit that schools are not only micro-public sites but are also embedded in wider social networks. According to Tajic and Lund (2022), education also gives us clues as to how modes of inclusion and exclusion play out against the backdrop of the 'drama' of the civil sphere. They emphasize education's civil qualities, suggesting that schools can provide space for young people from diverse migration backgrounds to share in the common experience of 'being human'. Nevertheless, Barrett (2010) observes that students enter the school and classroom with different degrees of power and privilege. Amin (2002: 969) also notes that in schools, as in wider society, 'contact is a necessary but not sufficient condition for multicultural understanding'– 'these are sites of mercurial social interaction, divided allegiances, and cultural practices shaped also beyond the school gates'.

The core tenets of Buber's I–It and I–Thou framework are not unique concepts. Rather, they are part of a long and ongoing trajectory of sociological thought on difference and encounter, extending from Biblical traditions to contemporary concepts in the migration literature. Indeed, there are striking parallels between Buber's ideal of the alternating I–It and I–Thou relation and recent theories of integration, social capital, multiculture, and conviviality. Yet there are also important distinctions between Buber's framework and the ways in which these concepts have been theorized and operationalized in migration policy and empirical research. This is perhaps most notable in relation to the continued prevalence of ethnic, religious, and national paradigms of difference. Applying a Buberian lens to peer relationships helps to open up our thinking, presenting the potential for new and generative insights to emerge about how young people negotiate *multiple* and intersecting differences in contexts of migration and diversity.

THREE

Migration, Memory, and Uncertain Futures

At Bradbrook School in East London, there are high levels of inward and outward migration. Seaview School in Brighton & Hove has more 'settled' communities. This chapter takes as its subject neither the 'migrant' nor the 'refugee' student but the student population as a whole in each school. It examines peer relationships between newcomers and long-established students, highlighting how differences such as age and gender intersected with 'newness' to influence how newcomers became part of school life during the research period. Personal memories of the past shaped individual capacities for vulnerability, leading to complex and shifting modes of inclusion and exclusion. Some young people responded to uncertain futures by using digital technologies to maintain transnational connections, with implications for their capacity for I-Thou 'presence' and vulnerability at school.

Newness

East London is home to long-established ethnic minorities who have been in the UK for up to three generations, and more recent arrivals from Italy, Africa, Latin America, Spain, and Eastern Europe. This is reflected in Bradbrook's student population, which is highly diverse. At the time of the research, several Roma students attended the school. Some recent newcomers had been out of school for some time and were unaccustomed to school life. Four Somali brothers had travelled

through Libya to get to the UK, while an unaccompanied minor from the Middle East, Hussein, had been in the Calais 'Jungle' in France before coming to London to live with his uncle. The arrival of new students at Bradbrook School was a regular, almost daily occurrence. Hassan, a teacher, observed: "Kids are just coming continuously, so it's just like, it's just a normal day for the kids already here." The status of 'newness' was a taken-for-granted aspect of school life. Yet Kamran, who was born in Southeast Asia to a Bengali family, emphasized that it had taken time to make friends after he arrived at Bradbrook a few years previously: "When I first came here … the people have their own friend groups. And it's … I think that I had to, like, prove myself before getting into a friend circle. So it took me a while. It took like around probably three or four months." Nadir, a Bengali student, confirmed that newcomers who joined later on in the school year or in school life often found it difficult to integrate because "more often than not, groups have already been formed". Nonetheless, Emily, who was both a parent and the school nurse, observed: "The majority of the time they just get on! They're kids. They don't bat an eyelid, you know." It was common to hear Bradbrook students discussing passports and visas in the classroom and corridors. Karla, a teaching assistant, said that "most of the kids that come here new, they kind of blend in. And I've seen kids that have really tried to take care of the ones who do not speak that much English". In class I observed an exchange between a Bengali student and a newcomer from Goa who spoke Konkani and very little English. Using his fingers to indicate the days of the week, the Bengali student explained that half term was next week: "Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday – no school".

Bradbrook students often called each other 'freshie' (meaning 'newcomer'). The word was used in a light-hearted way to comment on someone being new to the country or to ask when they had arrived ("Are you a freshie?") and was usually met with laughter. Previous studies have

suggested that second- and third-generation immigrant youth in East London use the term 'freshie' as an insult to exclude newcomers (Back and Sinha, 2018; Wessendorf, 2020). Charsley and Bolognani (2017) also show how British Pakistanis use the 'freshie' stereotype to draw a symbolic boundary between themselves and Pakistani newcomers. At Bradbrook, however, the playful and good-natured use of the word appeared to signal the intent to include newcomers in school life. Newcomers responded with laughter, indicating a common understanding about the intent of the humour. As Wise (2016: 491) argues, humour as convivial sociality is enabled 'only when certain conditions are met. That the banter is reciprocal and symmetrical, that participants understand and have evolved together the rules of the joking relationship'. The argument for a ludic, inclusive reading of the use of 'freshie' among young men at Bradbrook School is strengthened by studies which find that boys are particularly likely to use humour to discuss their problems, and that the use of humour for these purposes can increase feelings of closeness (Rose et al., 2016). Humour among Bradbrook students about 'freshies' could be seen as a way of addressing the 'problem' of newness and of encouraging inclusion in a situation marked by understanding for each other's experiences of migration.

Unlike Bradbrook, Seaview School has a large White British student population and a smaller number of migrant and refugee students, reflecting Brighton & Hove's demographic. Some newcomers had never been to school before, including an unaccompanied minor from the Middle East called Berfan who was in Year 10. A member of Seaview's EAL team, Alex, said that many of the newcomers she worked with "feel that they leave everything behind, and they have to start all over again". She added, "At this age, as a teenager, it's really difficult – to start new friendships, especially when you don't handle the language just as your mother tongue. And yeah, to be put in a totally new place". Other EAL staff pointed out that

negotiating 'newness' appeared to have gendered dimensions. George observed,

> 'This is a generalization, but it seems that there are better chances for boys who like sport, and if they're good at sport they'll be recognised in their PE lesson, so when breaktime comes it's "Hey, you can play on our team!". So what are the girls doing? Well, not many of them are playing football. So I'd say generally, as the girls get older, it's proving to be a bit more difficult.'

This confirms research which suggests that even in the context of superdiversity, gender remains a symbolic boundary that is rarely transcended (Tajic and Lund, 2022). Talking about the activities he did at school, Babak, who had recently arrived as a refugee from the Middle East, said, "Some friends, we can play games, football games". George reflected that while being "sporty" helped, most newcomers feared being judged by their peers:

> 'Generally speaking, migrant kids who have come into secondary school, on the whole I think their number one rationale is, "I want to fit in, I don't want to be different, I don't want to be seen to be different", and they will guard against that. Being sporty is helpful, but I've found that most of the EAL kids I've got to know, they at first, certainly, usually feel a sort of shyness and almost embarrassment at the fact that they're from somewhere else.'

In the same vein, Tajic and Lund (2022: 3) note that in ethnic majority schools in Sweden, the culture of the country of emigration is often 'left behind or downplayed' by newcomers. Student arrivals during the school year were much less frequent at Seaview than at Bradbrook, potentially making welcoming newcomers a more daunting task for 'host' students. Alex

remarked that many British students "already have their friends, so they have their friendships settled. So I think it's more difficult for them to accept other students". She suggested that including newcomers meant that "you have to come out of your comfort zone", adding that "most of the students don't have this maturity to, you know, to go the extra mile". It was true that most British students at Seaview knew each other from primary school or had started school together in Year 7. George added,

> 'If they are younger, in Year 7 and 8, there's more chance of them being befriended by someone in the host group. There's more chance of them getting into the mix quicker at the younger age than there is by the time they hit Year 9, 10, and 11, when it's almost impossible.'

These dynamics played out in young people's peer relationships:

> In the period after lunch, George and I pass the art room. We pop in. I talk to three girls in Year 11, one from Scandinavia (Aurora) and two from Central Europe (Zelda and Anja). Zelda is returning to her home country at the end of the school year. Last week the three of them went to the XR [Extinction Rebellion] protest in London together. I ask them what it was like to move to a new school in a new country. They admit that it was hard to break into the British group, 'who already had their own friends'. They say that making friends with other international students was much easier. (Fieldnotes)

The young women's climate activism recalls Mohanty's (2003) observation that political struggles can establish bonds across difference and lead to new forms of solidarity. Indeed, Harris (2016) draws attention to the important role of political action in young people's intercultural relationships. In this instance, however, the boundaries of intercultural practice appear to be limited to the 'international' students. George later noted

that for many newcomers, it was easier to withdraw from the 'host' group and to connect with other newcomers who "also had a story and could actually relate to what they were saying". Even so, he observed that looking or sounding different could sometimes be "a door opener because many of the host kids would think, 'Oh, this chap's different, you know, let me help, let me do something positive'". Some White British students at Seaview built on their memories of being new to school to empathize with newcomers from abroad. Amelia, a tall, softly spoken student from England, said, "When I first started school … I joined, I think, like two months later than everyone else. And it was like a bit hard to fit in. But then you can imagine, like coming from a whole other country, like speaking a different language, into a different culture".

At Bradbrook, students who had come to the UK several years previously also drew on their memories of newness to care for newcomers. Abshir had been born in Central Europe to a North African mother, Faduma. She and her three sons had arrived in East London several years earlier. Abshir, who was 14, described helping newcomers at Bradbrook:

Emma [E]:   What's your perception of, like, when
               someone arrives – what's it like for them?
Abshir: Uh, I mean of course it's scary. You know,
               especially when they don't know the
               language, definitely it is quite hard, that
               language barrier. Trying to teach them
               where everything is … you still get lost.
               Even people that can speak the language,
               you know, this might be a slightly smaller
               school compared to others, but at the same
               time, it's all new to them.
E: Yeah. And what was it like for you when
               you came?

Abshir: Oh, yeah [laughs]. It wasn't too great. I missed the induction day, so where the Year 6s come and everyone was so used to where they were going. And then thankfully I had one of the friends, the Tanzanian one … he said, 'Yeah, come this way'. We're in the same form class now. So he helped me out a lot.

Abshir's willingness to help newcomers ("Trying to teach them where everything is …") is based on his own memories of being helped by a Tanzanian student – now a friend – when he first arrived at Bradbrook. Borsch, Vitus, and Skovdal (2020) make a similar finding in Danish schools, where young migrants and refugees sometimes base their care for newcomers on memories of classmates attempting to make them comfortable. Sontag emphasizes that memories are 'not a remembering but a stipulating: that this is important, and this is the story about how it happened' (2003: 67). Memories are a representation of the past. For Buber, all representation turns the 'Thou' into an 'It': 'As soon as the relation has been worked out or has been permeated with a means, the *Thou* becomes an object among objects … a *He* or a *She*, a sum of qualities, a given quantity with a certain shape' (1937: 17). Memory's representational nature – its impressions, revisions, and selections – means that a person's 'real shape will be quite hidden in the end' (Lewis, 1961: 18). Yet it is clear from both Amelia and Abshir's stories that memories can also prompt acts of hospitality and even 'I-Thou' encounters in the present. Importantly, the possibilities of I-Thou encounter are entirely contingent on *mutual* vulnerability, without which hospitality remains an ethical but nevertheless one-sided act of welcome: 'The *Thou* confronts me. But I step into direct relation with it' (Buber, 1937: 75). This mutuality was evident in Vasile's account of his friendship with Kingsley, a boisterous African European student. Vasile had arrived at Bradbrook several months earlier

from Moldova. He said that Kingsley had helped him when he first arrived at school: "And I have a lot of friends in this school that are very good with me, Kingsley is very good with me, we don't see many times, but every time he is good with me – I share with him, he shares with me. And that's very cool." He added, "I like to help peoples". Here Vasile indicates a strong appreciation for the reciprocal aspects of his friendship with Kingsley. Phillimore, Humphris, and Khan (2018) highlight the importance of reciprocal peer connections, including the exchange of emotional resources such as intimacy, companionship, self–esteem, and purpose, to new migrants in the UK. For Vasile, the act of reciprocation – mutual 'sharing with' – appears to be more important than the nature of the resources exchanged (as Phillimore, Humphris, and Khan also find in some instances). The reciprocal relation *between* subjects, rather than their abstracted subjectivities or what passes between them, is at the heart of the I-Thou encounter (Lumsden, 2000).

Memories can shut down as well as open up possibilities for encounter. At Seaview, Aarush, a Year 8 student with a huge smile, had recently arrived from India. Aarush had been bullied by his peers at his previous school in India. He said that this has made him wary of what he shared with his peers now, asserting, "I won't talk about … maybe … something humiliating or something … maybe that could lead to teasing. I won't talk about that". At Bradbrook, lingering traumatic memories may have influenced some newcomers' capacity for encounter. Hussein commented of his life in the Middle East, "I don't remember that stuff like that now. I don't know … like, I can't remember it like … I'm trying". Altered memory function is a symptom of post–traumatic stress disorder (Bremner, 2006), and unaccompanied asylum–seeking children are particularly likely to have experienced traumatic stress (Bean et al., 2007). Trauma can also lead individuals to perceive the world as unsafe and unpredictable (Janoff–Bulman, 1992; Straussner and Calnan, 2014). As we will see in Chapter Six,

in the context of neighbourhood violence, Hussein's potential trauma may have compounded his desire for safety in the form of gang protection.

Language practices

Several Bradbrook students said that not knowing much English had been a challenge when they first arrived in the country. Batu, who was from Mongolia, said that he didn't know any English at all before arriving in London, while Abshir described the challenges of learning English in a city where you heard so many different accents. Hussein said that he had no choice but to learn English when he arrived at Bradbrook because no one else spoke his language. Like Hussein, Nadir recalled that "when I got here, I had no choice but to speak in English, to get my message across". Hassan observed that many newcomer students in his classes "kind of keep themselves to themselves" and "don't really want to be the centre of attention". Similarly, Folke (2016) finds that newly arrived students at school in Sweden try to take up as little space as possible and seldom pose any questions in class. Diana, a senior member of the pastoral team at Bradbrook, noted that an English accent was a status symbol for some newcomers. Martim had come to the UK from Southern Europe in 2013. When I suggested that he already had quite a British accent, he broke into a huge smile and said, "Oh, I didn't know that! Thank you, Miss". Meanwhile Hussein's language was full of urban British slang. Abdi, a teacher who had come to the UK from Northeast Africa via Central Europe as a teenager, said that he himself had used slang as a way of integrating when he arrived in London: "I think I picked up slang before I picked up like, standard English. Yeah, it was an easy way into the community too, and everybody spoke like that."

At Seaview, Alex observed that EAL newcomers often grouped together, explaining, "I think they see that in a way they are foreigners, and maybe they feel that, you know,

they are not judged … if they make mistakes. If they can't find the right words to express themselves, maybe they feel more accepted among students who come from a foreign background". She added that EAL students used "more or less the same vocabulary. They don't choose like, jokes they don't understand, you know, words they don't understand". George noted that in the classroom, newcomer students would often say, "'I don't want to get it wrong' – but really, they don't want to give an answer where all the other kids in the class look at them or giggle because of the accent and pronunciation". He added, "There's a big difference between laughing *with* and laughing *at*, and they're very aware of that", recalling Wise's (2016) emphasis on the conditionality of 'convivial' humour on mutual understanding. During a focus group, Aarush described his peers laughing at his accent:

Aarush: Some people still go on with my accent, and they try to pretend my accent like whatever I'm saying, and they're saying stuff about India as well …

E: Mm, ok, and how does that make you feel?

Aarush: It makes me feel sad, but I can't really do anything about it.

Aarush describes the painful psychosocial effects of linguistic exclusion, but points to his inability to act to change the situation. It is possible that his experiences may have led to strong ethnic bonds – Aarush was good friends with another Indian student and the two sat together during class and breaktimes. Research confirms that ethnic bonds among minorities may be linked to their perceived discrimination or prejudices in the destination country (Branscombe, Schmitt, and Harvey, 1999; Verkuyten and Yildiz, 2007). However, some Seaview students also challenged linguistic boundaries by drawing on non-dominant languages. Lewis, a student from England, spoke Spanish and told George that he would like to

help to welcome Spanish newcomers in the future. As hooks (1989: 16) argues, while language can be used to dominate, it is 'also a place of struggle'; words 'are not without meaning, they are an action, a resistance' (hooks, 1989: 16).

In contrast to Seaview School, where English was the dominant language, only a fifth of Bradbrook students spoke English as their first language. A recent increase in newcomers from Italy, Spain, Eastern Europe, and Latin America meant that it was particularly common to hear Romanian, Italian, and Spanish in the corridors. Emily remarked that when large numbers of students spoke the same language, they often tended to stick together, noting, "I think there's obviously a barrier in terms of, perhaps, languages. And you see within the school, a lot of children from particular groups tend to stick together". At the same time, some Bradbrook students actively attempted to bridge these group boundaries, as in the following instance:

> I'm walking behind two students in the corridor. I hear them ask an older boy if he's Spanish. He mumbles something back. One of them responds jokingly, 'Yo hablo española' [sic]. (Fieldnotes)

Just as Lewis challenged dominant linguistic practices by using a non-English language at Seaview, here Bradbrook students attempt to transgress the boundaries of linguistic groups by speaking Spanish, a language they are clearly unfamiliar with. In doing so they decontextualize the link between the words and their significance, breaking down the use of language as a barrier and transforming it into a bridge. A South American mother, Reina, told me that she had been attending a Spanish-speaking church in East London but had recently started going to an English-speaking one because she felt that, although difficult, it was important – "The truth is that, since I came here, my mentality hasn't been, 'I must learn English'. I realized that I had to move churches because of that" [translated]. Reina had lived and worked in Spain for several years while her son Alberto had stayed in South America with his grandparents.

He had joined her when she moved to the UK. She described how she had encouraged Alberto to connect with his non-Spanish-speaking peers at Bradbrook:

'You can't take away from him the right to speak to other students in Spanish. This is difficult. This is really difficult. … So I said to him, "You can speak to the kids who speak Spanish, but you should also connect with the other children. Don't do this dividing into categories: only with them, only with them, only …". And he has done it! He tells me, "Mum, I speak with – I have English friends, and I always stick up for them when there are problems". I really like that he does this. He connects with them and speaks with them.' [Translated]

Reina's story confirms the influence of parents' attitudes and practices in the context of migration (Vincent, Neal, and Iqbal, 2017). Reina draws on her own challenges of trying to speak English in empathy with Alberto. She cannot take away his 'right' to speak Spanish at Bradbrook – in much the same way, she cannot force him into encounter which is, by nature, impossible to organize. Just the same, she advises and encourages him to bridge linguistic boundaries at school by speaking English, something which he embraces with gusto. Reina's account highlights the significant (although ultimately limited) role that parents can play in encouraging intercultural encounter.

Transnational connections

Bradbrook students with histories of migration often used technology to stay in contact with the friends and family they had left behind. Abshir said that he still had family and friends in Northeast Africa and kept in touch with them through WhatsApp and phone calls: "You've got to keep up the same talking level before it gets all awkward and stuff", he observed

MIGRATION, MEMORY, AND UNCERTAIN FUTURES

drily. At Seaview, students said that some of their peers tended to spend a lot of time on technology at school:

Jessica: Like, say, it's breaktime and lunch, and you're kind of meant to go outside maybe, have a break from learning or … some people sit and go on their iPad, which is – it's kind of a bad thing, but it's people's choice. But yeah …

Arjun: Yeah, they could be doing more active stuff and more social stuff.

Luis: I do know some people who do that and they're kind of struggling to make friends, some of them are from a different school.

Echoing Reina's comments on Alberto's 'right' to speak Spanish, the students highlight that it is young people's 'choice' whether to use digital technologies or to socialize in person. Nonetheless, they call attention to the impact of the former on 'making friends', observing that it is often newcomers from different schools who choose to use these technologies. This was also the case for newcomers from abroad. During a focus group, Faiza, a quiet Middle Eastern student who had grown up in Central Europe, described keeping in touch with her friends in Europe using WhatsApp. Another student, Hala, had come to the UK from the Middle East six months previously and said that "from the first day I made three friends, um and they really helped me a lot. And I didn't feel so lonely or something because I had people to hang out with, and to be with, so …". However, she later elaborated on her friendships at Seaview:

Hala: Me and my friends at this school aren't that close. They don't know a lot about me, and I don't know a lot about them. Like, my other friends know a lot about me. They like to talk to me 24/7, like we

	always share secrets. But with them, I still don't trust them one hundred percent, so I don't tell them everything.
E:	Ok, and you talked about your other friends, where are they?
Hala:	All in [the Middle East] … I talk to them 24/7. And I sometimes get punished for that. I don't do my work − I just keep talking to them.

It is possible that transnational communication may have compounded Hala's feeling of isolation at Seaview. Brekke (2008) contends that transnational communication can decelerate processes of integration in the host society by making young people less motivated to find friends and make new connections. Komito (2011) similarly suggests that social media usage can slow down processes of integration by encouraging migrants to constantly 'monitor' life in their home countries, producing a 'low-level background, or ambient, presence' (Komito, 2011: 1083). As the Seaview students pointed out earlier, this 'presence' is not 'social' in nature. It is not authentic in the Buberian sense but rather constitutes the 'It' of representation which, if left unchecked, 'overruns' individuals and 'robs' them of the reality of their own 'I' (Buber, 1937: 46). Perhaps in recognition of these risks, the parents of several newcomers to Seaview managed their children's contact with friends in their home countries. Aarush said,

> 'I had a phone back in India, but I've just kept it there 'cos I'm not allowed in here. Because my dad doesn't like socializing that much. I can get like an idea, I talk to my friends … he lets me talk with them once every month, I share my feelings with them.'

Some Seaview students knew that they would soon be returning to their home countries, perhaps discouraging

investment in peer relationships at school. Several students were taking part in international exchanges, such as a young woman from Eastern Europe who had come to Seaview for half a term. Alex noted, "she didn't have time to make … she made some friends, but not like very strong relationships and friendships, I mean". Many Romanian parents had temporary work in the service sector and did not know how long they would be in the UK. Alex reported that Romanian students had told her,

> "'We spend a lot of time when we go home on our PCs, playing games or video games or … and yeah, we don't communicate with other people, with other people our age. We just communicate when we play games with our friends from Romania. And that's the friendships we have, like virtual friendships, which is definitely not the same as real ones".'

Here the Romanian students pointedly distinguish between their 'virtual' and 'real' friendships. It is not clear (to me, at least) how and to what extent the I–Thou encounter can occur online, but studies suggest that online communication does at least make the mutual vulnerability of encounter more difficult to achieve because it increases anonymity and invisibility and reduces eye contact (Lapidot–Lefler and Barak, 2012; Turkle, 2015).

Online communication was not the only factor limiting vulnerability among migrant students at Seaview School. The social lives of some were characterized by a strong sense of temporariness. An Albanian student had left with her French stepfather during the COVID-19 pandemic. "How many others left the country?", George wondered. He talked about a Turkish newcomer who had been attending online classes for four months, after which there was a long gap in his responses to homework exercises. The school eventually got word "through the community" that the family had gone back to

Turkey. This sense of temporariness was prevalent at Bradbrook School even before the pandemic. A local community worker, Aaron, said, "Some areas [of the local borough] are very, very transient. So you get lots of new people in, lots of people leaving". He pointed to the impact of Brexit on local attitudes and practices, adding, "They're not sure of what lies for their future. Are they still able to live here, work here …?" Amy, a member of Bradbrook's pastoral team, observed that mobility impacted people's community engagement. She noted that Bulgarian families would rarely participate in school or local activities such as voluntary English classes. She added that "most people within those communities are working, or doing shift work, or … maybe don't see their future as long term here, they're just here to work and then go …". Ana, a teacher, observed that when Bradbrook students visited their home countries, "A lot of them don't know if they're going to come back". Emily and Myna, the school librarian, discussed mobility among the students:

> 'They're on the move so much. Always telling me they're moving …' says Myna. Emily shakes her head: 'How are they supposed to settle and be happy?' They laugh affectionately about 'bruva and bruva', two brothers who had been at the school last year and looked exactly the same despite being different ages. Their family had been forced to leave very suddenly when their visas ran out and they weren't able to renew them. This is a familiar story. Just yesterday Ana told me that Mahmud, the Italian Bengali student who I interviewed last month, has had to leave the country suddenly. Visa issues, they think. (Fieldnotes)

Tessa, a behavioural support teacher, commented, "People here are constantly on the move. So kids think, 'What's the point in making friends?'". Just as Ager and Strang (2008: 171) find in Glasgow and London, both young migrants and locals at Bradbrook clearly value 'being "settled" in an area over time'. This was evident in the case of Ahmed, a tall, thin newcomer who was born in Northeast Africa but had lived in

Scandinavia for most of his life. Sitting in the library, Ahmed casually slipped off his shoes, explaining, "This is what we do in [Scandinavian country], my home country". He said that he would be moving back there soon with his mum and sister. Although he was amiable towards his peers, he appeared to hold them at a distance and cut something of a lone figure in the corridors and the playground. Notably, Ahmed spent a lot of time speaking to his friends in Scandinavia on Snapchat and WhatsApp. It was only after it transpired that Ahmed would not be moving back to Scandinavia that he appeared to settle and consequently made close friends with Vasile.

This chapter has examined the roles of memory and expectation in young people's peer relationships at school, showing how these intersected with experiences of newness and transnational connections. At Bradbrook and Seaview, young people's personal memories, as well as their expectations for the future, conditioned possibilities for intercultural encounter – the next chapter explores how *societal* memories or 'myths' came to bear on their peer relationships. Patterns of migration – from settledness to temporariness – shaped the social fabric at Bradbrook and Seaview. Parental attitudes also influenced young people's language practices in complex ways. Parents clearly play an important role in peer relationships in contexts of migration and displacement, and this theme will be continued throughout the book.

FOUR

Societal Myths and the Consequences of Freedom

We have seen that personal memories can shut down, but also open up possibilities, for encounter in young people's peer relationships. This chapter explores how these memories, or 'stories' about the past, become societally embedded, codified, and reified over time. In contexts of migration and displacement, societal myths (the 'story' of memory writ large) influence the politics of reception. They are mediated and institutionalized by the mass media (increasingly via digital technologies) and are shaped by local conditions, demographic factors, and intersecting 'histories'. Bradbrook and Seaview students reproduced but also unsettled and transformed these myths through the I-It and I-Thou at school.

Memories of Englishness

While Brighton & Hove has mixed political attitudes, Seaview School is located in an area where a majority has historically voted for UKIP. Walking to the school from the train station, I passed a large UKIP poster prominently displayed in a house window. George pointed out that xenophobic political and media narratives influenced how some Seaview students responded to newcomers: "they might brand them as, you know, 'migrants', 'immigrants', or whatever, and pick up on the media speak and the sort of … accusative language that many people hold, that some of our British kids hear in their own households". Shaima, another member of

Seaview's EAL team, remarked that "the current context is quite another thing that kind of will have an impact on the students, you know, with the whole Brexit thing, and that kind of rhetoric around foreigners and immigrants and all that kind of stuff". As Esses, Medianu, and Lawson (2013: 520) observe, portrayals of refugees in Western countries have become 'increasingly negative, with the media focusing on the threats that immigrants and refugees pose to members of host societies'. One PIER activity involved presenting students with various facts and figures about migration to, and seeking asylum in, the UK:

> We talk about how much asylum seekers have to live on – I ask the class how much they think they get per week. Responses vary from £75 to several hundreds of pounds. They're all shocked when I say it's £36 per week. Harry, who's White British, puts his hand up and says, 'They're actually quite lucky to be given money and a home, because there are lots of homeless people from here who don't get that'. (Fieldnotes)

Harry's argument, which pits the British homeless person against the alien asylum seeker, resonates with the anti-immigrant rhetoric of populist politics and media in the UK. These narratives centre on memories of the unchanging 'purity' of national identity, viewing the newcomer as a cultural, social, and economic threat and a disruption to the national body social (Valluvan and Kalra, 2019). George later confided that Harry's comments during the PIER workshop had not been a surprise, based on what he knew of the attitudes of Harry's parents. He noted that for many newcomers, nationalist views were difficult or even impossible to deal with:

> 'I think the migrant kid is aware that many of the host kids would judge them like that, and that they wouldn't be understood. And why should they? The boy who has

just come from Syria, and has had experiences just in what he's seen, and been through or not been through, which are so different, that when someone in the class says something, it's likely to be so simplistic that either the kid gets upset by it, or actually refuses to be engaged with it. I'm thinking of certain kids.'

As we saw in Chapter Three, at Bradbrook, students were generally empathetic towards each other's experiences of migration. Yet xenophobic media discourse had also filtered into their peer relationships. Bradbrook students used terms such as 'migrant', 'refugee', and 'asylum seeker' as insults in exchanges such as "You're an immigrant!" and "Are you a refugee?", often resulting in conflict. Bradbrook teachers emphasized that young people tended to use these terms without understanding their real meaning – in other words, they were used in a general sense rather than being specifically targeted at newcomers. Amy commented,

'I mean I suppose it's constantly, you know, in the media, in the press and you know, those things get filtered down and get diluted and just cherry picked out. Um, but then … I think if you got groups of students together and talked about these kinds of issues, you'd find a lot of empathy. You'd find a lot of shared experiences. You'd find a lot of, um, knowledge and experience of that. But then if you listen to cussing in the playground, it will be around, you know, "You're an asylum seeker", you know, it's a cuss word.'

Similarly, Hamza said, "So a lot of the things that the boys talk about … is what they hear in the media. … They tend to throw around words such as 'immigrant, you're an immigrant, you're a refugee'. And they don't know the full extent of those words". Ironically, however, when it came to negotiating migration-related differences on an everyday basis, Bradbrook

students described a strong appreciation for diversity. Jamie, a White British student, said,

'You see an Asian person one minute, and the next person you might see is a European person, the next person you might see is American. And they're all different. But if you see just the same person, who relates to you in the same way, then all the stories are gonna be like, always the same. Everything's gonna be the same, and it's just boring.'

As other studies have noted, 'conviviality' involves more than mere 'civility' towards the other but requires curiosity and an active appreciation for diversity (Noble, 2009; Wise and Noble, 2016; Wessendorf, 2016b). Emily, who was White British, said, "I love it around here. In terms of just the diversity, I think it's amazing". In contrast to her attitudes, however, the views of many White British people from the local borough were based on societal myths of East London 'as the home of white Englishness' (James, 2014: 1). Emily observed that their views were "very narrow. And a lot of them have moved out of the area. They tend to all live out in Essex now, because they don't like how everyone was 'coming and taking over'". Some White British students faced conflict between the racist attitudes of their families and their own intercultural experiences at school. For example, Ana told the story of Robbie, a White British student who had previously attended Bradbrook:

'Most of the time he lived with his mum and went to school here and mixed with like a lot of different boys from different cultures and that was absolutely fine. But his dad was extremely racist. And so like whenever he went to live with his dad, who would like spew all these horrible racist things, he kind of had that … I think it was like him trying to figure out whether he was like his dad's son or his mum's son in a way … he had real

difficulties in school, like behaviour and stuff I think kind of stemmed from that a little bit.'

Here Ana attributes Robbie's behavioural difficulties to the challenges of attempting to reconcile two distinct worldviews – one, open and convivial, the other, closed and prejudiced. Berry's theory of acculturation is instructive here: Berry (1997) contends that when individuals encounter culture change, they experience varying degrees of 'acculturative stress'. Yu et al. (2014) identify a number of components of this acculturative stress among migrants including identity threat, lack of self-confidence, value conflict, and homesickness. Less is known about experiences of acculturative stress among individual 'hosts' who encounter the same demographic shifts and concomitant culture change; as with migrants and refugees they are imbricated in the migration landscape, yet their social embeddedness is often overlooked in migration studies. Robbie's experience of being torn between the reified 'bonds' of White Englishness at home and the transformative 'bridges' of intercultural encounter at school gives insight into the psychosocial (and in this instance, painful) dimensions of 'integration' as they are experienced by a White British 'host'.

Some Bradbrook parents had been on the receiving end of racism in East London and drew on these experiences to advise their children on how to respond to racism. Faduma, Abshir's mother, had fled conflict in her country as a teenager, living in a refugee camp for several years before relocating to the Middle East, then Scandinavia, and later, the UK. Faduma had a strong Muslim faith and thought that everyone should be treated with the same level of respect, regardless of their religion, gender, race, or class. She had encountered divergent attitudes from different White British women at the job centre after receiving her refugee status in the UK:

'First day I went there, I met one lady, she was sooo kind and helpful, and she was saying, "All people is the same,

even if they are working in there … or some other place. Everyone is different – different country, different face, different skin, different everything!". So the one lady, she was so good, and she was helpful. But the third meeting I feel so bad. She was so rude, and she say, "Why do you come here? … I don't understand these people why they come, and [the Scandinavian country] is very nice, so why did you come here?". I look at her like this … "Excuse me, I come here to look for job, I didn't come here to listen for what you say". Even my English was so more bad than now [laughs] and I said, "I come here … but I didn't come here for you! And now I'm here, I'm not taking money from you, I come here to look after job". She became so angry, her face was so red. I was scared inside a little bit, but I talked like that [laughs].'

Here Faduma draws attention to the range of attitudes – from convivial to racist and Islamophobic – towards immigration in East London, capturing the complexities of the 'metropolitan paradox' (Back, 1996). The second woman's question, 'Why do you come here?', recalls the territorial narratives described by Emily, in which refugees are represented as an attack on the ordinary workings of 'national' society. Socioeconomic deprivation and the recent gentrification of the borough are likely to have played a part in the woman's attitudes; 'resentful nationalism' in the UK has been linked to declining class situations (Fenton, 2012). Faduma's account reveals the emotional impact of xenophobic narratives on newcomers – 'I feel so bad'. Still, she holds her ground. She challenges the societal myth of the 'dependent' refugee by demanding recognition of her right to belong, and to contribute to, rather than 'take money from', society. She maintains her dignity in the face of anger. Noble (2009) and Wessendorf (2020) use the idea of 'convivial labour' to describe conscious strategies to 'get along' and maintain peaceful relations in diverse communities, which can involve choosing not to

rise to provocation. Faduma's fear in doing so highlights the laborious, psychosocial dimensions of these practices, which, Wessendorf (2020) observes, may leave a bitter aftertaste and lead to a sense of hopelessness. Yet Faduma is able to laugh about the situation, her use of humour potentially dampening the negative effects of the racism (Nezlek and Derks, 2001; Simione and Gnagnarella, 2023). Faduma told me that she had talked about her experience at the job centre with Abshir in the hope that he would learn from it: "Every time we're talking about it. Every time I'm giving him idea, if it happen something like this, how he can protect himself or how he can talk with him." The possibility that her own experiences might lead to a better life for her son gives her reason for hope. From influencing racism to encouraging conviviality, parental attitudes clearly hold significant reproductive and transformative power in their children's peer relationships.

Histories of migration

Recent newcomers to Bradbrook included a large number of Eastern Europeans as well as Italians, including Italian Bengalis[1] who had lived in Italy before coming to the UK. Saaleha, the daughter of an Italian Bengali family (introduced in Chapter One), noted, "Many people want their children to study here, while others moved here because they lost their jobs in Italy. Because many factories closed". Gianna, an Italian mother at the school, said that her family had moved to London two years ago because of the lack of opportunity for job progression in Italy. She felt that in the UK, "If you show that you are capable of working, you proceed. In Italy, no". She described making the move for her son Luca's sake: "We started life all over again. It's very hard. But I would like for him to have an easier life, if possible … I'd rather my son has a job and works well." Gianna added that her decision to move to London had been influenced by the city's diversity, in contrast to the city she had come from in Italy:

'I would like my son to open up his mind wider, to accept every religion, every culture. This is extremely important for me. I was a foreigner in my own city, this is how I felt, because of the way people think … I breathe, I feel free here. I breathe the smog [laughs], but I breathe freely. And I want my son to be free.'

As Gianna intimates, one no longer has to feel like a 'foreigner' in London. Rather, she describes a sense of freedom from the nets of ethnic and religious identity. In research in urban public spaces in the US, Lofland (1989) finds that many people report a sense of freedom from judgement as a 'major pleasure of being "out in public"' (Lofland, 1989: 464). Wessendorf (2014: 59) confirms that 'commonplace diversity' facilitates 'a great sense of freedom to be whoever and however you want to be'. In East London, Nadir said, "Interestingly, I think I can practise my religion better in this country than I can in Bangladesh. … And I'd say people are a lot more judgemental there as well". Meanwhile, several Bengali Italian newcomers described how London's commonplace diversity allowed them to leave behind the racism they had experienced in Italy. Saaleha, who had lived in Italy for most of her life, said that if people in Italy asked where she was from and she said 'Italy', they would respond, "Yes, but where are you *really* from?" She felt that in London she could respond as she liked without question. As Malkki (1995: 16) discovers in her study of town refugees in Kigoma, Tanzania, 'the very ability to "lose" one's identity and to move *through* categories was for many a form of social freedom'.

Saaleha and her mother Rohini said that in Italy they had both worn t-shirts and jeans without wearing the hijab. But Saaleha explained that in London, "There are, like many women from Bangladesh that in Italy … used to act like us. But when they moved here in London, they started to wear the hijab and the burka". Since arriving in London, Rohini and Saaleha had continued to go without the hijab. Saaleha

and Rohini described the perspectives of their Muslim peers on these practices:

Saaleha: There are many people that say um … we don't actually look like a real Muslim [Rohini speaks Italian and Saaleha translates]. Yes, we pray, we practice Ramadan and everything …

Rohini: And not use burka. … You mean, I am not real Muslim?

Saaleha: Yes, some people started to judge us like, 'You are not really religious'. But just because I'm wearing a t-shirt doesn't mean that I'm less Muslim than other people! [laughs]

Rohini noted that her son's peers at Bradbrook had been curious about this dynamic:

Saaleha: Yes, so like my mum is saying that at school like, uh, my youngest sibling, the one that goes to Bradbrook, there are many students there that ask him, 'Why doesn't your mum–'

Rohini: 'Your mum … not use burka, not use hijab?' [laughs]

Saaleha and Rohini's refusal to embrace the religious practices of their Bengali Italian peers unsettles assumptions of monolithic Muslim 'communities', confirming Warsi's (2017) insistence on the complex heterogeneity of Muslims in Britain in terms of race, sexuality, clothing, financial circumstances, and levels of religiosity. Their account reveals how people from the same religious background respond to 'freedom' in broadly diverse ways, from a sense of liberation to embracing orthodoxy. Scholars have highlighted how globalization can

cause people to turn inwards and induce a desire for group-making, the excesses of 'McWorld' incentivizing particularist forms of 'Jihad' (Barber, 1995). As Said (1995: 333) suggests, 'no one finds it easy to live uncomplainingly and fearlessly with the thesis that human reality is constantly being made and unmade, and that anything like a stable essence is constantly under threat'. Indeed, Saaleha herself pointed to this tension towards the end of our interview, quietly noting, "I feel that I'm a citizen of the world … but also that I don't really belong anywhere". Her sense of being a 'citizen of the world' aligns with the cosmopolitan tradition, which defines people not according to nationality, family, or class, but as equally worthy citizens of the world (Nussbaum, 2019). Yet her admission that she feels that she doesn't 'really belong anywhere' also highlights the cost of a cosmopolitan orientation, capturing the tension between the desire for the I–Thou (cosmopolitan fluidity) and the necessity of the I–It (local identity). As Buber contends, the I–It and the I–Thou are equally important; 'however much identity bedevils us, we cannot do without it' (Appiah, 2018: 32). We need the nets of identity too.

Saaleha and Rohini's account of religious group-making in East London shows that superdiversity makes it possible to 'find one's social milieu' and to 'lead separate lives' (Wessendorf, 2014: 60). For many Italian Bengalis, London's superdiversity also made it possible to feel part of a distinct national community. Anwar, a Bengali Italian student at Bradbrook, said that his family came to the UK "because they want me to have a good future. If you here study good, you can have a better future". He described returning to Italy to visit:

Anwar: I went to Italy again for like one week and actually it was weird like – you know what is the situation in Italy now, like the Bengalis? There's no Bengalis, like … there is a new, like, how do you say–

E: Prime Minister?

Anwar: Yeah, Prime Minister. And he's … no one is coming to Italy because he don't want immigrants. So like the people were looking at me like, weird. And I feel … bad, so bad. But they asked me, 'You like London or Italy? If you're a true Italian, you're going to say is Italy'. But I said, 'Is London because there's more Bengalis here'. So you can … like you feel you are in Bangladesh. And there's more Italian. Here there is Italian and Bengali, so … it's good.

Anwar's description of people 'looking at me like, weird' gives insight into his experiences of xenophobia in Italy, which he links to the new prime minister at the time (Giuseppe Conte, who implemented strict controls on immigration to Italy during his premiership). For Bengali Italian newcomers like Anwar, memories of xenophobia may have motivated national group-making in London; the likely intersection of xenophobia with Islamophobia in Italy may also suggest why so many Italian Bengalis embraced stricter religious practices in London. According to Anwar, London's superdiversity means that 'you feel you are in Bangladesh'. Importantly, however, implicit in Anwar's account is the definitively 'Italian' character of this 'Bengali' community. The group's Italian language practices marked them as distinct from other Bengalis who had moved directly to the UK from Bangladesh. Nadir, for example, said,

'When I got here, I had no choice but to speak in English, to get my message across. … For them [Bengali Italians], they can find someone that speaks for them, so firstly it's not as urgent for them to learn English, and secondly, they will obviously try and stick with them, because they're in their comfort zone.'

Yonas, a teacher, had travelled alone from Northeast Africa to claim asylum in England as a teenager. He observed that when he arrived in London in the early 1990s, there were "not many migrants": "So, yeah, that helped probably learning the language and, you know, appreciate, uh, everything." He said that in London's now superdiverse context, "you don't have to worry about whether you can speak English or not, because … you know there will be someone to speak your language. So there's no rush for them to learn the language where we had to really pick it up because there's only a few you can speak to". He added that in contrast to his own experiences, newcomers at Bradbrook "can feel like they're almost walking into their own country. … They're not going to feel like they're walking into an English community".

Most research on attitudes towards newcomers in the UK has focused on the White British majority. Yet a growing number of studies also explore attitudes and reactions towards immigration from longer-established ethnic minorities, often in disadvantaged areas (for example Hall, 2012; Hickman, Mai, and Crowley, 2012; Wessendorf, 2020). For long-established ethnic minorities in East London, the perceived lack of effort by newcomers to integrate was a sore point. In our second interview, Nadir (who at this point had left Bradbrook to go to college) explained:

'I've heard people say things like, you know, "We've already faced so much struggle and we've worked so hard to build all of this up. And then now all of these people are here" … and then even, whilst I was at Bradbrook, I started seeing like … you see, when the Italians would form their own groups and stuff, I'd see like other groups making condescending comments about them like, you know, "Why did they all have to come at once?", and stuff like that. Nothing too serious, but it's noticeable.'

As Berg and Sigona (2013: 352) suggest, urban spaces have 'histories (and memories) of migration, as well as of minorities' struggles for rights and recognition'. Here we see how memories (and ongoing experiences) of 'struggle' for socioeconomic recognition ('to build all of this up') shape how long-established ethnic minorities respond to newcomers. There is a sense of threat in their arrival 'at once', their perceived 'groupness' compounded by the rate and scale of immigration. Nadir added,

> 'Because there's a sudden influx of these, for example, these Italian Bengalis and things like that, that caused them to … that makes them think that their opportunities are being taken by this other group. … And there's this perception that these communities have come here because of the benefit system in place … they're seen as like exploiting the whole system.'

Recall the societal myth of the dependent refugee, which shaped a White British woman's attitudes towards Faduma at the job centre. Here this myth is reflected in the attitudes of long-established ethnic minorities, who perceive newcomers as taking away their economic opportunities and 'exploiting the whole system'. In one of London's most deprived boroughs, newcomers are seen as a source of threat and competition. This idea of resource competition aligns with the anthropological concept of 'the image of the limited good' (Foster, 1965: 304), which dictates that

> all the desired things in life such as land, wealth, health, friendship and love … exist in finite quality and are always in short supply, but in addition there is no way directly … to increase the available quantities … it follows that an individual or a family can improve a position only at the expense of others.

Watters (2008: 118) applies the concept of the 'limited good' to competition over English language resources in the British education system, suggesting that in the context of limited funding, 'it is not hard to see how the image of the "limited good" can arise and result in a competitive orientation'. At Bradbrook, societal perceptions of the limited good were manifest in a discourse of 'us versus them' among students. Xenophobia towards European newcomers at Bradbrook was often racially inflected. An Italian student, Giorgio, said that when he started at Bradbrook, his peers were "very, very racist, and very discriminating", saying, "Go back to Italy, you White something-something …". Resentment of 'whiteness' in similar contexts is not atypical, with Wessendorf (2020: 209) finding that negative reactions to newcomers from long-established ethnic minorities in East London are underlined by fear that the newcomers' 'whiteness' facilitates their access to jobs, jeopardizing their own or their children's opportunities. Wessendorf argues that these responses must be situated within long-established ethnic minorities' own histories of socioeconomic exclusion and racism. As we saw in the previous section, these 'histories' of racism continue for many long-term residents in East London.

Mahmud, who was born in Italy to Bengali parents, described being bullied by a Bengali student after arriving at Bradbrook: "He say to everybody to don't talk with me, to go away. And every time he say to me, 'Go in your country, go in Italy, don't come in London, is our country, don't come …'." There are echoes of the territorial narratives of White Englishness in the Bengali student's insistence on England as 'our country'. Like Faduma, Mahmud engaged in convivial labour in his response to xenophobia, making a deliberate effort not to engage in conflict: "I don't care if the people say, 'You are new, you can do nothing'. I say, 'I come to learn, you come to learn. You stay on your side, I stay on my side. Don't disturb me'." Italian Bengali students had a reputation for working hard

and were described by other students as 'the smart ones'. Yet Mahmud also described supporting newcomers: "For me it's ok if there come a lot of people. I can help them. But I don't want the people who swear at me, say these things. Because I didn't do nothing to him." He reasserts his desire to distance himself from the bullies while emphasizing that if 'a lot of people' arrive at Bradbrook, he is happy to help them, thus maintaining an open attitude in spite of his own experiences of exclusion at school.

In contrast to Bengali Italians, many Romanian students at Bradbrook embraced distinctly *unacademic* identities:

> Walking from the staffroom to Ana's room just after the bell rings, I notice a tall, well-built Romanian boy with blond hair and an earring walking in front of me with two other Romanians. They are going up to other students and pushing them hard in the chest, seemingly at random. I'm shocked. When I tell Ana later, she's not surprised. The older Romanian boys have formed a close group and have a reputation in the school for bullying – 'They are literally a gang', she says. (Fieldnotes)

Year 8 students brought up 'Romanian people' when I asked them to reflect on negative aspects at the school:

Martim:	You know, some people they're scared of the Romanians, because you know they're big. As in, physically, they're strong. 'Cos they're also older than us, they're trying to … you know, you know how olders are, they always try to target youngers–
Kingsley:	Money–
Martim:	Yeah, especially money. Oh, Miss, that's the worst thing!
Patrick:	Oh my God!
Martim:	When you go past the Buffalo Chicken and … it's beep beep beep beep beep beep …

> you going to Burger King, 'I know you
> have money, so bust me some right now,
> otherwise watch or I cut you in school!'.

Ana talked about a Romanian student who would "kind of be embarrassed of some of the Romanians in our school. I mean you know like, 'Oh these are kind of like bad Romanians'". But she added that newcomers were sometimes drawn into these groups anyway:

> 'It's like, well if I have come here and I only speak Romanian it's like my only choices here are other Romanian speakers. Um and so I think it's interesting to see how that kind of develops. Like there was one kid who came from Romania who actually didn't want to be part of the specific Romanian gang. Uh, so he was like quite reluctant to do that. But he kind of had to find other Romanian kids because he's not yet fluent in English.'

At the same time, I spoke to several Romanian young people who did not want to be associated with the Romanian 'gang' and made active efforts to distance themselves by making friends with other students. Daniel, a Romanian student in Year 8, said, "Like, from Romania I don't have like really friends … but like I have more English friends here because I don't like really Romanians how they … like in the school the Romanians are not really good like behaving or something like that". He had arrived from Romania with his father 16 months earlier. He was highly academic and proudly showed me the achievement badges pinned to his crisply ironed blazer. Aware of the stereotype, Daniel strategically disidentifies from 'the Romanians' at Bradbrook by having 'more English friends' and embracing a more academic identity. Other young people used language to attempt to transgress group boundaries. I observed Vasile attempting to speak English to his Romanian-speaking peers, even though (being from Moldova) he could have spoken

to them in Romanian. They refused to respond to him in English and carried on speaking Romanian. Vasile eventually seemed to give up on this endeavour and went on to become good friends with Ahmed (introduced in Chapter Three). In contrast to the I–It power dynamic of the Romanian 'gang', Vasile and Ahmed's friendship was characterized by mutual trust and based on a shared desire to learn English. They sometimes helped each other with the language – "It's sheep, not 'sheeps'", Vasile corrected Ahmed one day in class.

This chapter has shown that territorial narratives prevail in Brighton & Hove and East London, shaping young people's peer interactions at school in complex ways. Seaview students mostly unquestioningly reproduced these narratives, creating a symbolic boundary between newcomers and White British students. At Bradbrook, in contrast, everyday experiences of diversity allowed young people to break free of societal myths – although not without psychosocial cost. We have seen that superdiversity encourages (or perhaps provokes) some communities to retreat into their ethnic and religious identities. Yet young people have significant agency and strategically renegotiate and reframe these identities at school, marking themselves as distinct exceptions to the societal rule.

FIVE

Funny Language? Curiosity, Contact, and Humour

Real curiosity about the differences of the other, based on mutual trust and respect, can lead to the humanizing I–Thou relation. At Bradbrook and Seaview, young people sometimes expressed playful curiosity for each other's ethnic and religious differences, with transcendent effects. These differences were also the subject of 'ironic' humour, which helped young people to critically reflect on societal norms and narratives. At other times, however, questions were asked not out of genuine curiosity but rather to mock and deride. In these instances, humour solidified the 'I-It' boundaries created by a lack of social contact and compounded by 'othering' media representations. As George highlighted in Chapter Three, there is an important distinction between 'laughing *with*' and 'laughing *at*'. The outcomes of humour depend on context, including the subject, the tone, the intent, and the situation (Nilsen, 1994). Humour is complex! Examining its use can tell us much about the nuances of how young people in contexts of migration and displacement respond to and negotiate difference.

Convivial tools

The local area at Bradbrook School had an eclectic mix of cultural influences, which emerged from decades of migration to the borough:

> Walking to school at 8:15 am, I pass several bargain food stores selling 'world foods', three fast food chains, a halal butcher, and a couple of newsagents advertising cheap international calls to Ghana and Pakistan. There is a Turkish barber shop and an Afro Caribbean hair and cosmetics store. I pass an Asian hairdresser, African and Eastern European beauty parlours, an Italian pizzeria, several Turkish kebab shops, and a Polish bakery with sweet buns in the window. There's 'Buffalo Chicken' where the students go after school, and the community centre where I interviewed Aaron on Tuesday. I usually join the teachers at the local Turkish café for lunch on Fridays. A large grocery store advertises 'Eastern European, European, Asian, Russian, Brazilian and Hungarian groceries'. Upbeat Eastern European music drifts from its windows. I pass the marketplace – it's market day and they're loading boxes of colourful fruit and vegetables into the stalls. (Fieldnotes)

This 'commonplace diversity' (Wessendorf, 2014) was reflected in the student population at Bradbrook. Amy observed that in being "different", these young people were "all in the same pot". Bradbrook students from diverse ethnic backgrounds often asked each other about their differences, such as during a Year 8 focus group:

Patrick:	I was born here. My parents are from Congo.
E:	Have you ever gone to the Congo?
Patrick:	Uh, yeah! Three times, but I was young. I'm going next week.
Martim:	What language do they speak there?
Patrick:	What? Oh! Many languages!
Kingsley:	Swahili?
Patrick:	French.
Will:	Oh, they speak French?
Martim:	Oh yeah, French, they share a part of Congo or something innit …
Patrick:	Belgium.

After telling Ana my surprise at how well Bradbrook students got along with each other despite being from diverse ethnic backgrounds, she replied, "They don't have a choice, in a school like this". Nadir said, "You know, at the most basic level, I don't have a choice but to get along with everyone because I'm put in a situation where, if I get on with people, I'm with people. If not, I'm alone". As Massey (2005: 14) posits, the 'throwntogetherness' of urban spaces makes 'negotiating a here-and-now' an 'unavoidable challenge'. Later in the Year 8 focus group, the conversation turned to different societal norms:

Kingsley:	If someone's older than you, like waaay older than you, you have to call them by 'Uncle', either 'Sir' or 'Miss'.
Martim:	Yeah it's – it's like an African thing. My mum and dad–
Vasile:	No, it's everywhere!
Martim:	My mum and dad say the same thing, like, even if they're not older, like just show respect, even when I go to church or something, everyone, even if they're not your mum's sister or related, still–
Vasile:	'Hello Mr Jones!' [laughter]

Ethnic difference is, for these students, the source of unruly joy and whimsical humour. Here Bradbrook students demonstrate an *active* curiosity about the other, underscoring the importance of an 'ethos of mixing' as opposed to mere 'civility' in convivial interactions (Noble, 2009; Wessendorf, 2013, 2016a; Wise and Noble, 2016). Nadir said that he enjoyed researching other religions, noting that having friends from many different faiths meant that he was "very much interested in finding out what they have to say. It's only right for me to go back and like … read what their beliefs are". As Nadir's words indicate, convivial curiosity does not organically inhere in individuals but rather,

develops through social practices (Noble, 2009; Hansen, 2012; Wise and Noble, 2016).

An Italian Bengali student at Bradbrook, Pratul, had a cosmopolitan view, observing that "even though we're from different places, at the end inside there's all we have left, at the end we are all humans". His comments recall Glick Schiller and Çağlar's (2016) suggestion that instead of focusing on the fusion of ethnic or religious difference, it may be more useful to consider the ways in which domains of commonality – including the 'mutual sense of being human' (Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2016: 19) – emerge from interactions in diverse contexts. Indeed, this sense of common humanity often appeared to transcend ethnic divisions in East London. Jo, who ran a youth club for refugees and migrants in the borough, expressed her surprise at the lack of interethnic divisions among young people from Sudan: "You've got like different types of Sudanese, ones that are from different factions. Like, you know, would definitely not have been friends in Sudan. And they're just … it just never seems to come up, you know?". At Bradbrook, Ana described how two boys, one from Pakistan and one from Bangladesh, had chosen to do a presentation together on the war between their countries. Both students were new to the UK and had lived in Italy previously. They were close friends and had delivered, Ana said, an excellent presentation: "They were so passionate, but it was so friendly between them." A politics of possibility for individual and collective transformation emerges with regard to ethnic difference. As we will see later in the chapter, however, for certain groups of students this politics was bound up in latent prejudices and conflict.

In the context of mutual trust and respect, Bradbrook students drew on their ethnic differences as the source of convivial humour. As with their use of the term 'freshie' (mentioned in Chapter Three), they often used food-based terms to playfully refer to each other as 'fish' (meaning Bengalis), 'curry' (Asians),

and 'fish and chips' (White British). I asked Nadir about the use of these terms in our second interview:

> 'I think like … almost in every one of those instances, there's never like any malicious intent. They don't want to offend anyone, it's … you know, the Spanish friend in our group, we called him "paella" from time to time [laughs] and I think as long as they know that it's a joke, as long as they know they're not being … they're not being left out of the group, or they're not being bullied … I think, I don't think it should be seen as something that's like very serious, because the majority of the time, I do think it's just a – just a joke.'

Here Nadir emphasizes that these jokes are made in the context of mutual understanding (as with the use of the term 'freshie' in Chapter Three). Staff members from ethnic minority backgrounds made similar comments. Ganav, a senior staff member, said that although young people did acknowledge their ethnic differences, it was all "banter" and rarely meant to be discriminatory. Hassan noted, "You know, they may say to each other about fish because they like eating fish and etcetera, and it's all kind of … it doesn't cause divides, I think, it just helps them just … just joke about each other". Similarly, Abdi said, "They roast each other for, for being from a different country. They accept each other. They're not racist with each other, but they just make fun of … um what they eat. So, 'You eat curry', or like, 'Go eat some fish and chips', or just to wind each other up". Abdi had also attended Bradbrook after arriving in East London as a teenager. He said that he and his peers had similarly made light of each other's ethnic differences through playful humour: "Some of my mates would make fun of a Jamaican boy and say, like, 'Ah, like, you guys aren't even good at football, like, would you guys … what kind of cup do you have, a coconut cup?'. Little silly things but not … not stuff that would hurt someone". Abdi's

account shows how convivial forms of humour can become normalized and codified over time. Like Nadir, he distinguishes between convivial and hurtful forms of humour. Notably, the 'banter' described here all occurs between young men – as will emerge later in the chapter, their openness towards differences of ethnicity often failed to extend to differences of gender, manifesting in misogynistic forms of humour at school.

Ana observed that Bradbrook students would challenge racist views, being "very quick to step in and shut that down pretty quickly. When it comes to racism, there's a very clear line of like, no, that's not ok". This was evident during a Year 8 focus group, when Vasile described his experiences with 'Black peoples' and 'White guys':

Vasile:	I want to say that Black peoples for me are more beautiful than White guys. And they can have a bigger heart than White guys. And if you want to ask for help to a Black guy, they will help me, I am sure for that. Because … because my mum was, when my mum go first time to the work, she go to White guy to ask him for help and he doesn't understand, but when he go to a Black guy, he help her …
E:	I appreciate the point that you're making, but it's also important not to distinguish between people just like … oh, the Black people are …
Waleed:	Just because one person is …
E:	Exactly!

Here Waleed, who was born in England to Bengali parents, helped to problematize the essentialist views that Vasile had picked up from his mother. All the same, many Bradbrook students appeared to be confused about the actual definition of 'racism'. As I walked around the classroom during a group

activity, a Kenyan student, Joseph, asked me, "Miss, is it rude to ask where you're from?". Ana highlighted this confusion:

> 'Not so much that people are racist, but I think not understanding really what racism is, because a lot of the time, they're, "Oh I don't want to be racist, but the boy in the picture is White", and like that's not racist to identify. I think there's kind of almost, they're overly conscious about talking about race, being politically correct. And other times, they'll say, "Oh, you're a Somalian pirate!" in the same breath, and not realise that that's actually quite racist. So I think sometimes them not understanding how the subtleties of racism ...'.

Hassan remarked, "Sometimes the joke goes a bit too far". Sure enough, Kingsley complained that some students "bully Nigerians, call them 'big nose', 'big lips' … 'Somalians', 'White people' …!'", the latter term possibly in reference to the xenophobia towards European newcomers discussed in Chapter Four. There were other clearcut instances of ethnic prejudice, such as in the case of mocking 'laughing at' humour from several non-Roma Romanians towards Bogdan, a Romanian Roma student in Year 8. Bogdan had a cheeky smile, messy brown hair, and an ear piercing, which he told me was representative of Roma culture. He had been in the UK for a year before starting school at Bradbrook; he said that his aunt and uncle had "made him afraid" to attend school. Cristian, who worked for a local Roma support charity, told me that many Roma families worried that previous experiences of discrimination in Romania would be repeated in the UK. This played out in the classroom:

> Bogdan is telling Ana about the differences between Romania and the UK. He says that the UK is much more 'legal'. When Ana asks what he means, he says that in Romania you didn't need a driving licence. The other Romanians (non-Roma) say that's dangerous, and it wasn't like that where they lived. They

ask him where he lived and when he responds one of them says something to the other in Romanian and they start to snigger. (Fieldnotes)

In 'laughing at' Bogdan, the non-Roma Romanians draw a symbolic boundary between themselves and Roma Romanians at school. Ana noted that "the Romanian kids are like, 'Well, like these Roma kids are giving us a bad name', and that kind of thing". Cristian explained, "Many non-Roma children coming from Eastern Europe, they know what Roma is and they have their own image of that. And those children will bring these things in schools". He added, "And this is, you know, affecting Roma children, because then, you know, all the children who have no idea who Roma are, are hearing those kinds of thing". Fortunately, prejudice from the non-Roma Romanian students towards Bogdan did not appear to influence the attitudes of other students towards him. He was a cheerful, gregarious character and asked me many questions about myself during our interview. His confidence and curiosity towards difference may have helped him to secure friendships with students from Portugal, Romania, England, and other countries: "Sergio, Mariusz, Charlie … a lot". Bogdan did not 'lose' his Roma identity but maintained it through the visible marker of his ear piercing. At the same time, his ongoing intercultural engagement at Bradbrook destabilized cultural memories of discrimination. As Buber reflects,

But [s]he is free and consequently creative only so long as [s]he possesses, in action and suffering in [her] own life, that act of the being – so long as [s]he [herself] enters into relation. If a culture ceases to be centred in the living and continually renewed relational event, then it hardens into the world of *It*. (1937: 54)

By 'entering into relation', Bogdan's peer interactions at Bradbrook loosen and reshape the 'It' of Roma identity,

showing how it can be redefined and understood in new ways vis-à-vis 'I-Thou' encounters in the context of superdiversity. While superdiversity can be the ground from which conviviality emerges, it can also be the soil in which old divisions thrive and prejudices take root. Convivial tools and capacities – such as curiosity, openness, and perhaps the ability to discern the difference between conviviality and racism – all play a vital role in developing conditions for social inclusion.

Knowing the other

In contrast to East London's commonplace diversity, in Brighton & Hove there was a distinct 'English' community. Faith, who had Central African parents and grew up in Scotland before moving to England, said, "Like you feel happy in school, with all your friends, but then when you're outside, you're not with them, and it's difficult because you don't know these people and they're different to you. And you don't know what they think about you". She noted that the wider Brighton & Hove area was "not really diverse". Her words evoke a sense of distance from people who are 'different', their lack of 'knowledge' about each other creating a chasm between them. George (a member of Seaview's EAL team) observed that many ethnic and religious minorities at Seaview bonded over a shared sense of 'feeling different' from the White British majority:

> 'Just this lunchtime, I discover a gaggle of four girls stood outside the Muslim prayer room, just trying to get a peep, you know, "What are the boys doing in there, and which one is smiling at me?" One's wearing an African badge and she's sure that, you know, "Black is beautiful", and her family are from Jamaica. She's talking with the girl from Libya in the hijab … and then the two friends who join them, both Bangladeshi, and one says, "I'm half Malaysian", and she's learning Malay. So we've got there

an international group all speaking English, all bonded and making friends. … And it's this "feeling different" which has actually brought them together.'

He added that these students were "all finding a new identity, knowing that they've got another identity, you know. And whatever the other identity is, it's not the British White working class or the British White middle class". Convivial humour emerged within the boundaries of this 'international group' at Seaview. Faith was close friends with Mona, who was born in the UK to North African parents. They played netball and went shopping together and were united in their dislike for "fakeness". During a focus group, Mona said, "Oh, I mean me, me and my other friends we switch from English to Arabic within a split second. Just to annoy Faith! But she does it to me as well so …". Both Mona and Faith laughed loudly. Mona's joking humour captures what Bourdieu describes as 'the art of making fun without raising anger' (1984: 183). In the context of mutual respect, the act of switching languages has a convivial rather than exclusionary effect, transcending difference and creating a space for each young woman to be 'more than their ascribed identities' (Harris, 2016: 512). While convivial humour was limited to the in-group, Faith also felt that a wider understanding had developed with her White British peers over time. She said that when she was younger, "I always had braids in my hair … and then I took it off and I just kept my natural hair, and then everyone was like, asking me questions like, 'How is your hair like that?'. I think people like, understand better now". Her account illustrates how the gap of knowledge about the ethnic other may be gradually bridged at school through sustained social contact. Allport (1954) suggests that if (under certain conditions) people have the opportunity to communicate with others over a long period of time, they may be better able to understand and appreciate different perspectives. Allport's social contact hypothesis is contingent on individuals having equal status and common

goals. For Seaview students from diverse backgrounds, the act of regularly attending school may have encouraged equal status and led to the common goal of receiving an education, fostering broad forms of solidarity which prepare the ground for – but never guarantee – encounter across ethnic divides.

Just as social contact has the power to break down prejudice and divisions over time, so can its absence entrench and reify group boundaries. Levinas (1985) suggests that mediated representations of the other eliminate 'presence', increasing our 'knowledge' of the other but removing the ethical responsibility that comes with the face–to–face encounter. In the absence of opportunities for the I–Thou, the 'It' grows larger. This was evident at Bradbrook, where a lack of social contact with young women (it being a boys' school) combined with digital representations of the female 'other' to produce unique forms of ethnic conflict. Misogynistic and sexualized insults between Bradbrook students were common. Sitting in the pastoral office one day, I observed Tessa dealing with the aftermath of a fight between two students that had happened at breaktime:

> Tessa goes away and comes back with Tom, a White English student, and Jay, a Black student with an accent that I can't place. She asks them to tell her what happened: apparently Tom called Jay's mum a prostitute and Jay responded that he would 'F his sister'. Tessa shakes her head in disbelief. 'Why are you talking like this? I can't believe that this language comes out of your mouth. Do you speak like this at home, Tom? I know you don't.' Tom looks sheepish. (Fieldnotes)

Like the young men in Kehily and Nayak's (1997) research in a school in the West Midlands, Bradbrook students mobilized 'a sexist discourse of power against other males through a verbal attack on their mothers' (Kehily and Nayak, 1997: 73). While most students did not have regular contact with young women, many did have access to the internet; from 2006 to 2015, the proportion of 15-year-olds in OECD countries with

access to internet at home increased from 75 to 95 per cent (Burns and Gottschalk, 2019). Ford (2019) argues that the massive growth of internet use in recent years has normalized 'toxic masculinities' by allowing negative and dehumanizing views of women to be widely disseminated. As we will see in Chapter Six, the normalization of toxic masculinities via social media may have also legitimized neighbourhood violence in East London. In the case of misogynistic insults at Bradbrook, dehumanizing views of women are likely to have been compounded by growing access to and use of online pornography among young people (Martellozzo et al., 2020). Studies have linked unhealthy relational attitudes among children and adolescents, including acceptance of sexual aggression towards women, to exposure to pornographic content online (Ybarra et al., 2011; Rothman and Adhia, 2015; Martellozzo et al., 2016). A recent rapid review conducted by Ofsted (2021) in British schools and colleges also relates prevalent peer-on-peer sexual harassment to widespread access to pornography. Misogynistic insults among Bradbrook students were particularly divisive when directed towards young people from Eastern European countries, especially Albanians. Marjeta, a community worker who worked with Albanian young people in the borough, explained,

> 'Sometimes very often the fight will go … just because you said something about my mum or use the F word, it's used here in different context. They take it really personal. So because that is not allowed, you know, it's the mum and the sister, are the two figures in the house that need to be protected.'

Kehily and Nayak (1997: 73) note that the potency of 'mother insults' is 'exacerbated when males are located as moral guardians of the sexual reputations of mothers, girlfriends and sisters'. As Marjeta explained, for young Albanians, the 'protection' of mothers and sisters was a key part of their identities.

While at Bradbrook, digital representations compounded the objectifying effects of a lack of social contact with young women, Islamophobia among Seaview students was likely influenced by Islamophobic narratives in the British media (Field, 2007; Fekete, 2009). George said that most of the White British population at Seaview were 'nominally Christian' but secular in practice. The recentness of demographic change in Brighton & Hove meant that many students were not familiar with Islam or its practices. This manifested in 'laughing at' humour:

> I am sitting in the library between PIER sessions. It's empty until a teacher comes in with two Middle Eastern boys. They start to fill out an incident report. One of the boys, Ali, is translating for the other, Ahmad. Ali has a British accent. He tells the teacher that an English boy named Josh and his friends have been laughing at and making fun of Ahmad's accent in the playground. He imitates them enunciating the guttural 'Ah' sound of Ahmad's name. He adds that they've been saying, 'Allah Akbar and that stuff which you know like is offensive to Muslims'. He concludes, 'Ahmad's got nothing against him, Josh has been trying to cause trouble and problems, but he just wants to be left alone. Ahmad ignores him and doesn't talk to him, but he keeps annoying him, I've seen this happening. He's abused, harassed, assaulted Ahmad so many times'. (Fieldnotes)

Ali's use of formal, technical terms to report the bullying is notable. The serious, corporate tone of his words highlights the absence of conviviality and underscores the offence caused. The divide between Muslim and non-Muslim students thus becomes institutionalized through language. Other Muslim students responded to Islamophobia with similar outrage. Kasia was an Eastern European student whose stepfather was from the Middle East. Although Kasia had worn a hijab during Year 7, Shaima told me that she had started to wear it intermittently in Year 8 and was "quite confused about her identity". During a PIER session, I observed an interaction

between Kasia and Margret, a Scandinavian newcomer with
South Asian roots:

> The students are working on the first activity. I hear Margret ask
> Kasia, who is at another desk, 'Kasia, why are you wearing that
> today?' (Kasia is wearing a hijab). Margret is smirking. Someone
> else chips in, 'Yeah, why are you wearing that?' and there is some
> tittering. Kasia's face goes bright red. She explodes, 'Because it's
> Friday and I was praying and it's my religion, OK!'. She is badly
> behaved for the rest of the lesson. Eventually the teacher sends
> her out. (Fieldnotes)

Kasia's experience highlights the nuances of 'curiosity' and
the contingency of its outcomes as convivial or divisive
on context, tone, and audience. Where questions of the
other are accompanied by 'laughing at' humour, encounter
is impossible – Buber is clear that curiosity and a desire to
'know' the other can only lead to the I–Thou relation where
it is welcome and reciprocal. Said (1978: xiv) emphasizes that
there is an important distinction between knowledge 'that
is the result of understanding [and] compassion … for their
own sakes, and on the other hand knowledge – if that is what
it is – that is part of an overall campaign of self-affirmation,
belligerency and outright war'. Unlike Faduma, who in the
previous chapter responded to xenophobia and Islamophobia
with convivial labour, Kasia does not have the grounded
confidence necessary to do the same with her peers – as Shaima
noted, she is unsure about her religious identity. Importantly,
the Islamophobia she experiences is prompted not by White
British students but by another newcomer, complicating
ascriptions of a homogenous 'newcomer' identity and
highlighting the pervasive influence of Islamophobic discourse
on young people's peer relationships at school. Nonetheless,
gradual social contact over time gives reason for hope: during
a focus group, Mona said that when she had started wearing
her headscarf to school, "I sort of got isolated a bit … it wasn't

really, how can I say it, I think it's not *normal*, maybe. Maybe it's like the first time they've seen it". However, she continued, "But then it got, like, better. So, like, now people just accept me for who I am".

In contrast to Seaview, the religious majority at Bradbrook was Muslim. Muslim students at Bradbrook often shared similar religious practices. Many attended local mosques and would often see each other there after school. They also interacted in the school prayer room, where Nadir (during our second interview) said he had encountered new students on a daily basis: "At lunchtimes I would go to pray and I would meet people there every day. Every day I would meet new people." Hassan noted that during Ramadan he would hear Muslim students in the corridors, "asking if each other is fasting". Watching Romeo and Juliet during an English lesson, around a third of the class turned around in their seats when a love scene came on the screen – "That's haram, Miss", one boy said to the teacher. In the context of mutual respect and understanding for each other's religious differences, Muslim and non–Muslim students engaged in convivial language practices:

> The students are arriving to class. Kalam (Bengali) says to Emmanuel (Congolese English), 'Salaam alaikum'. Emmanuel laughs and says it back, adding, 'But I'm not Muslim'. Kalam responds, 'Yeah, but it's still nice to say it anyway!'. (Fieldnotes)

Abshir also described his non–Muslim peers making the effort to speak to him in Arabic: "A couple in the class I just came from, they're always saying stuff in Arabic like greetings, 'Salaam alaikum'. It's quite nice, you know." As with the use of Spanish to disrupt group norms in Chapter Three, here Bradbrook students decontextualize the Arabic language. By delinking it from its Islamic connotations and using it themselves, they transform it from a group signifier into a bridge across religious difference. At the same time, some Muslim students at Bradbrook described experiencing Islamophobia in less

ethnically diverse parts of the city. I observed Ana speaking to two Muslim students after school one day:

> It's non-uniform day and two British Asian students, Halim and Akram, have stayed behind after school to chat to Ana. They're discussing what other students had been wearing that day, including the Muslim dress. Halim says that he used to wear full Muslim dress to the mosque but stopped wearing it after being verbally abused on his way home. Akram adds, 'Yeah, and why do people always think Muslims are terrorists, Miss?! If you go into central London, yeah, and you're walking down the street wearing your thobe and carrying a sports bag … people are gonna think you're a bomber'. He says this lightly and everyone laughs, but there is weight in his words too. (Fieldnotes)

Halim and Akram's experiences of Islamophobia in other parts of the borough echo Wessendorf's (2020: 213) finding that although young people in her research in East London rarely experienced racism in their local settings, they felt 'very differently' in less ethnically diverse parts of the borough. Their experiences point yet again to the role of social contact (or lack of it) in exacerbating the alienating effects of Islamophobic discourse in the British media. The students respond with convivial labour, choosing to no longer wear full Muslim dress in public. And, like Faduma in Chapter Four, they use laughter as a coping strategy to manage the stress of Islamophobia. Akram's tongue-in-cheek reference to being perceived as 'a bomber' in central London carries heavy undertones, suggesting his recognition that convivial approaches to religious difference are not universal. Nonetheless, in the context of mutual vulnerability between himself, Halim, and Ana, Akram is able to critically reflect on his role 'in the world and with the world' (Freire, 1970: 62). Other Bradbrook students also used ironic humour to simultaneously reflect on and subvert the power of dominant media narratives. Walking in the corridor at lunchtime, I heard a Black student ask another Black student with mock seriousness, "Are you a member

of Al-Shabaab?''. They both laughed uproariously. Butler (1997: 101) argues that the 'possibility of decontextualizing and recontextualizing [racist] terms through radical acts of public misappropriation constitutes the basis of an ironic hopefulness that the conventional relation between word and wound might become tenuous and even broken over time'. By 'decontextualising and recontextualizing' I–It stereotypes in the context of mutual trust, young people are able to subvert them through the ironic and 'hopeful' humour of the I–Thou relation.

Winkler Reid (2015: 40) emphasizes that the use of ironic humour 'turns on a delicate line between significance and subversion'. She suggests that 'face-to-face interactions' enabled young people in her research to 'police these boundaries', highlighting the importance of laughter in 'validating the subversion of meaning' (Winkler Reid, 2015: 40). Bradbrook students similarly 'policed' the boundaries of ironic religious humour. As with racism, they would sometimes step in to challenge each other's views on religion, particularly where these were Islamophobic:

> Ana tells me that Oscar, a White British boy in Year 7, made some mocking comments about another boy's Muslim clothing on the last non-uniform day. But the other kids called him out on it, and he quickly realised that he was in the minority for thinking it was funny. (Fieldnotes)

In refusing to react to Oscar's 'laughing at' humour with laughter, Bradbrook students drew a clear line around the boundaries of convivial humour. At other times, they directly confronted essentialist narratives. During a focus group, Bradbrook students used the example of Islamophobia to respond to one student's comments on violence:

Billy: So … and then, also, because where
                they're from, their country, their mindset is

	different. They might think that violence is better because their country is more violent, or stuff like that, so …
Ishan:	Well you don't, like – that's like saying, y'know, you know when the ISIS thing happened, everyone was saying Muslims were terrorists or stuff like that yeah, but just 'cos a group of people, that's like in the country, doesn't mean the *whole* country is like that.
Billy & Malik:	Yeah.

Ishan's reaction recalls Waleed's critical response to Vasile's essentialism described earlier in the chapter ('Black peoples' and 'White guys'), further demonstrating how in the context of ethnic and religious diversity, young people can draw on critical capacities to challenge and contest reified understandings.

It is clear that the consequences of objectifying language depend critically on context. Young people's use of humour about their ethnic differences can allow them to transcend these differences, although critical capacities for 'ironic humour' are potentially stifled by institutional orthodoxies. The research at Seaview shows that conviviality is clearly possible in non-metropolitan settings. However, it must be understood as a situated practice shaped by the specific contours of superdiversity in different contexts. Dehumanizing tropes lead to Islamophobia and unique forms of ethnic conflict at school. Yet the hope engendered by social contact persists; attending school can foster a common sense of purpose among young people in the context of migration and diversity. The next chapter builds on these findings to explore how Bradbrook and Seaview students negotiated their differences in relation to socioeconomic inequality, which shaped moral communities and alternate (sometimes violent) forms of belonging.

SIX

Navigating Precarity

As we have seen thus far, socioeconomic status intersects with differences of ethnicity, language, and migration status (including 'newness' and histories of migration) to produce complex and shifting forms of xenophobia and racism. The role of socioeconomic disadvantage as a major driver of these tensions is increasingly recognized (for example Fenton, 2012; Wessendorf, 2020). However, its direct impact on peer relations in contexts of migration and displacement has not yet been fully explored. This chapter focuses specifically on socioeconomic inequality and its outworking in the lives of Bradbrook and Seaview students. It draws on the notion of 'precarity', which describes the condition of vulnerability and insecurity produced by a lack of steady income and stable work. Butler (2012) suggests that precarity is distinct from the universal human experience of 'precariousness' precisely because it is unequally distributed; in other words, socioeconomic inequalities persist. These inequalities shaped diverse forms of belonging among Bradbrook and Seaview students, prompting young people to draw moral boundaries between themselves and others based on their backgrounds and behaviour. As we will see, precarity has embodied and affective dimensions (Berlant, 2011), and young people engaged in different – sometimes violent – strategies to secure their own physical safety on the streets of East London and Brighton & Hove, with profound consequences for their peer relationships at school.

Moral communities

Most Bradbrook students shared similar socioeconomic backgrounds. Yonas observed, "Most students are not from a well-off family. They might be, some might be ok – from an ok income, but nothing well-off". According to Abdi, "A lot of them are on free school meals".[1] During the teacher focus group, Bradbrook teachers described hunger and temporary homelessness as the biggest issues affecting young people at the school. They estimated that around 30 students (4 per cent) were 'technically' homeless. Kate, a teacher, explained that this meant "sofa-hopping with people ... living in overcrowded relatives' house ... have to be rehoused in some sort of hostel ... whole family living in one bedroom in a bed-and-breakfast type thing, without washing clothes facilities, or proper cooking facilities". Gentrification meant that council housing was increasingly scarce in the local area as houses were converted into flats for city workers. Tessa had recently learned that one student had been sleeping in a car, while Abshir said that his family had been evicted from their first house in London. "Some of the living situations are pretty awful. Like I've got one kid in my class who's going to be evicted soon, um ... and they're just kind of like waiting, waiting, waiting", said Ana. Migration studies have underscored the emotional impact of the uncertainties created by the UK asylum system (for example Cwerner, 2004; Griffiths, 2014; Rainey, 2019). Less is known about how newcomers experience the precariousness of the UK housing system. Ana's words point to the mentally draining effects for migrant families living with the threat of eviction ('waiting, waiting, waiting').

Seaview students were more mixed in terms of socioeconomic status. White British students were from both working- and middle-class families. Newcomer parents had come to the UK for different types of work, including in the health and service sectors. George said that many migrant parents worked long

hours "to make ends meet". He added that several migrant families at the school had no recourse to public funds (NRPF). James, a teacher, noted,

> 'A third of the country is living under the poverty line. And that would be quite a lot of our kids, I would imagine. Even with parents who are working … and some are working nights. And then if there's also a family breakdown as well … probably a lot of what they're doing is acting out stuff that's from home or from instability at home.'

James' observation supports recent research which finds that socioeconomic deprivation is a strong risk factor for behavioural problems among children and young people (Flouri, Midouhas, and Francesconi, 2019; Visser et al., 2021). During a focus group, Seaview students from different migration backgrounds said that peer behaviour influenced who they chose to spend time with:

E:	And what do you think stops you from being a closer friend to someone?
Daniel:	It depends. I know some people in the school that smoke … and do some weird things that I wouldn't like doing. I don't really push myself to be involved with any of them.
Alfie:	Just don't wanna get involved in it.
Daniel:	Don't wanna get involved. They're troublemakers. Yeah. Sometimes they get in trouble and it's always like crazy, crazy bad. Like some people got kicked out of the school for stupid – like they do something dumb, I don't hang out with them a lot. I think they're a bit weird. *I'm* not weird.

Aarush: According to me, the people who are like,
       indulged in various mischievous things,
       I don't get along with them, most of them.

Daniel was born in the UK to Caribbean parents. Alfie was White British. He had a complex family background and had been assigned a social worker. Shaima noted, "I think he's free school meals – and he's completely different to the 'middle-class' students here". Alfie joins Daniel and Aarush in defining the 'troublemaking', 'weird', 'dumb', and 'mischievous' other. In doing so, he distances himself from any expectation that precarity might influence his own behaviour in the same way. Writing on ethnic boundary-making, Wimmer (2013: 31) suggests that the dominated sometimes strategically 'adopt cultural boundary markers in order to disidentify with other minorities or their own ethnic category and gain acceptance by the majority'. Wessendorf (2020) builds on Wimmer's work to show how long-established ethnic minorities use moral discourses of 'civility' and 'order' to draw symbolic boundaries between themselves and newcomers in East London. This boundary-making is evident in the young men's conversation just given. Crucially, however, it is the behavioural consequences of precarity, rather than differences of migration status, that are central to their exchange.

Behavioural problems among Bradbrook students also tended to stem from their socioeconomic and family circumstances. Hassan remarked on the link between the behaviour of Bradbrook students and their family backgrounds: "I think some of the kids that draw attention to themselves a lot are … kids that come from broken homes and, um, there is no father figure around … and that has an effect on them seeking attention constantly, uh, being disruptive." This was clear in the situation of Tyler, a Caribbean student who lived with his mother and older brother. Climate change had forced the family to leave their

home in the Caribbean several years previously. Ana said that Tyler's mother had severe depression and was "struggling to cope" – the family's living situation was highly precarious, and they were waiting to be evicted. Tyler had serious behavioural issues. The effects of his disruptive behaviour were visible in his peer relationships:

> I see Tyler come into the classroom. He just got back from a couple of months in a special behavioural school – Ana says that although his behaviour has definitely improved, it's still quite erratic. I hear Tyler ask Bogdan if he can sit next to him. Bogdan shrugs and mutters what I presume to be a negative response because Tyler looks disappointed and goes to sit on his own. I've noticed that Bogdan has been keeping his head down since the initial rocky period of settling into student life. Ana tells me that he hasn't been in internal exclusion for a while. (Fieldnotes)

In declining Tyler's request to sit next to him, Bogdan draws a symbolic boundary between himself and the morally dubious 'other'. Like Alfie, Daniel, and Aarush at Seaview, he may have sought to strategically distance himself from troublemakers – deeming this a necessary means, perhaps, to embracing a more academic identity. Tyler's palpable disappointment at Bogdan's rejection reveals the psychosocial impact of moral practices of 'othering'.

At Seaview, teachers noted that some newcomers lived in overcrowded housing, which Cable and Sacker (2019) emphasize to be a material aspect of socioeconomic position. Alex said that many Romanian students at Seaview were living with other families in shared accommodation:

> 'Usually, when they come, the accommodation they live in, it's very basic. Sometimes they have to share the accommodation with other families, and they don't have their privacy. Some of them don't even have their own rooms. So they have to share with a parent or with

a sibling, and they find it really hard, and they struggle with that.'

Alex's account exposes the challenge and 'struggle' of precarity for young people. At Bradbrook, Ana said that it was "pretty normal" for newcomer students to live with other families. She explained,

'For a lot of them, especially like coming over here, like for a limited amount of time – or you think that you're going to be here for a limited amount of time – like just go to these houses where you live with, like a whole bunch of different people. Not even having … like, everyone being in one room all together.'

Tessa described students living with 18 other people, with six people to a room. Matis, a Lithuanian student, said that he shared a house with another family, admitting, "I really don't like it but for now it will be good … we're just saving money right now". Another student told me that he lived with his cousins but quickly added that this was "confidential", suggesting a fear of being stigmatized. As Barrett, Kitcher, and Stewart (2012) note, living in multi-occupancy housing often leads to stigma. This stigma was manifest in derisive 'laughing at' humour in the classroom at Bradbrook:

The English class is about to have a group discussion and the teacher has asked them to move the chairs into a circle. As they're moving the chairs, I hear Eric making fun of another student whose name I don't know: 'You brush your teeth and get dressed in school, man, that's so weird! You're supposed to do that at home.' He adds, 'You don't have a bedroom to get dressed in'. (Fieldnotes)

Home life influenced the peer relationships of Bradbrook students in other ways. Imran in Year 9 was British Bengali. He was from a single-parent family and spent long periods of

time on his own after school. He was often disruptive in the classroom. During a focus group, he mocked a White British student, Billy, for his behaviour at school:

E:	Billy, what do you think [about what makes you feel good at school]?
Billy:	Nothing.
E:	Nothing makes you feel good?
Imran:	This guy's on drugs or something [laughing]. Do you know how he comes into school every day?
E:	So how would you describe your wellbeing at school, then, Billy?
Billy:	Bored.
Imran:	But you know how he comes in school? He comes in like, late every day. This is how he comes in, like [miming zombie], like he's a drunk or something [everyone, including Billy, laughs].

Like a number of other Bradbrook students, Billy was a young carer. He was absent from the next focus group with the same students:

> I do a head count. Billy isn't here. 'Is Billy not in today?', I ask. Imran looks up – 'Billy, the White one? No.' He adds under his breath, 'He's on drugs'. 'That's not very kind', I tell him. 'Miss, he looks like an alcoholic or something! His eyes are always drooping, and he looks asleep!' he objects. 'Well', I say, 'he must be very tired'. We get started. (Fieldnotes)

Billy's tiredness reinforces the findings of studies which point to the psychosocial impact of early caregiving (Shifren and Kachorek, 2003; Chikhradze, Knecht, and Metzing, 2017; Dharampal and Ani, 2020; Robison, Inglis, and Egan, 2020). Seeking attention, Imran uses Billy's tiredness as material for

performative humour, mimicking his demeanour through exaggerated, zombie-like movements. Although Billy joins his peers in laughing at Imran's performance, there is a clear I–It power dynamic. Unlike convivial humour, the exchange is not characterized by mutual understanding: Imran appeared to be unaware of Billy's status as a young carer and may have simply wanted to get an affirming laugh from his peers. He may have hoped that laughing at Billy would distract from his own socioeconomic background. These dynamics significantly complicate one-dimensional understandings of oppression, revealing how much is missed when we use a migration-focused lens to analyse processes of social inclusion at school. While Billy and Imran are from different migration and ethnic backgrounds, here these differences fade into relative insignificance. Instead, the alienating effects of precarity take centre stage.

Socioeconomic inequality was clearly a significant barrier to encounter among Bradbrook and Seaview students. In many instances it led to I–It othering which threatens any possibility of the I–Thou. And yet, other instances also reveal precarity as the site of encounter between young people. On one occasion I observed Ryan, a Year 8 Bradbrook student, reporting domestic abuse to his teachers after school. He was accompanied by his friend, Camilo.

> It's 4:15 pm. I'm sitting in the back of the classroom sorting out the questionnaires when Diana and Ana come in with Ryan and Camilo. Diana asks Ryan to tell them the story. He quietly recounts the details of the physical abuse he has been experiencing at home. Diana tells Ryan that a social worker will be coming to the school and that he won't be staying at home tonight. She looks at Camilo and says solemnly, 'Thank you for being such a good friend to Ryan'. (Fieldnotes)

Camilo's quiet presence while Ryan recounts details of the abuse indicates a huge level of mutual respect. In this moment,

they are equals. It is here, at the margin, where precarity becomes much more than a site of deprivation. Rather, it emerges as a 'site of resistance – a location of radical openness and possibility' (hooks, 1989: 23). The encounter between them is emblematic of friendship as involving social support – we are reminded that the margin is 'not a "safe" place. One is always at risk. One needs a community of resistance' (hooks, 1989: 19). In using language to label the encounter as 'friendship', Diana returns the I–Thou relation to the I–It, an outcome which Buber (1937: 33) considers inevitable: 'The particular *Thou*, after the relational event has run its course, is bound to become an *It*'. Still, the It *may* become a Thou, and Diana's words may have had the effect of legitimizing and reinforcing the ethical nature of the interaction. As we have seen throughout the book and will continue to see in this chapter, the judgements of adults on young people's peer relationships clearly have influence.

Safety

The parents of many Bradbrook students had multiple jobs and worked long hours. "If you're living in poverty and your parents are working two jobs to keep afloat – the supervision of young people who, for large periods of time, after school, the weekends, the holidays, are left to their own devices, is quite staggering", said Kate. Hamza noted,

> 'We have students who wake up alone, go to sleep alone, because their parents are so busy working, so they can barely come to school on time and get home rather than, you know, go outside of London and on holidays. That's literally at the back of the list. It's more about, you know, surviving.'

Kate added, "For a lot of our students, this small bit of town is all they see of the world – not even the bigger picture of

East London, let alone the bigger picture of London, let alone the bigger picture of the country". Similarly, Ana observed, "Loads of the kids have never been like to the seaside or anything like that". Imran talked about being out on the streets until his mum got home from work at seven o'clock in the evening: "I used to be out all the time in primary school. When I was in primary school, I used to be out all the time, until like seven o'clock. That's 'cos my mum … yeah …" Other students spoke of not going home until 10 o'clock at night. Amy noted that several local community centres had closed in recent years due to public funding cuts. She added, "Where there is anything, everyone is just scrabbling around, like scraps off the table". Government austerity measures since 2010 have drastically reduced public funding for community and youth centres (Van Reenen, 2015; Yeo and Graham, 2015).

A significant number of Bradbrook students had been recruited by county line gangs, which use children to move illegal drugs from cities into more rural areas. Abshir said, "You hear of people going out on county lines, stuff like that, sent to places like Exeter". Sighing heavily, he added, "It's just … not nice things to hear about people your age". When I asked Aaron (a local community worker) what led young people to become involved in these gangs, he said,

'It can't be attributed to one factor. Um, there's been a closure of youth service and youth provisions. Obviously, we've had a reduction in money for those sorts of services and support … young people's support and services in general have had to be withdrawn. Lots of those parents are having to work a little bit harder, maybe a little bit longer, so they don't have as much time to spend with their children as they would like, or as we all would like. Some young people … it's all they know. They've just grown up in that cycle. They don't know anything different.'

As Aaron noted, while gang involvement was influenced by financial austerity and parents working long hours, some young people simply didn't 'know anything different'. Ana said, "Um, sometimes it's just the friendships that they've got. Or if they've got an older brother or whatever, that kind of starts to link them". Similarly, Hassan observed, "Sometimes you've got a family member in there or your older brother is in there. So you just automatically go down that same route". Hamza added that the combination of peer pressure and deprivation also played a part:

'So relative poverty, relative deprivation – those are things that make them turn to gangs. For example, their friends might have the fanciest phones. They might not … they might want it, they can't afford it, what are they going to do? They're going to steal it, or they might get money to get it from somewhere.'

Aaron said that for many young people, gangs offered a quick route to financial gain:

'They may see the person at the top with the flash clothes, flash car, lots of money, but miss out that gap in the middle, how to get there. … They really want to go from A to Z, and they want to be at Z, but they don't recognize that journey in between, and that process.'

He added that being in a gang helped some young people to provide for their families:

'They may not have enough money at home, so to go out and sell drugs or be a runner for a gang, it just helps ease the financial situation at home. And you might think, "Oh, I'll only do it for a little bit, just to get us – " this whole, "Mum, Dad, Nan needs some money, so I can

bring in some money, I'll do it for a little bit" – by then, you're drawn into it.'

Teachers felt that social media had normalized gang membership for students:

Ana: And also social media I think normalizing gang culture and making it seem like that's a normal thing … some of the boys are creating this echo chamber where everything they're seeing is all gang-related, and they think that's perfectly normal and that's how everyone lives.

Hamza: We've had kids who are not involved, but they're following gang members on Instagram for example, which is an easy way for them [county line gangs] to contact them and get them involved.

Drill music videos on YouTube and Instagram were a common way to communicate threats between gang members from different postcodes.[2] Ana described how Bradbrook students responded to these threats: "And then it's like, 'Oh, are you gonna take that?' You hear lots of that, like, 'Are you gonna take that, are you gonna take that?' And then it's like, 'Well, I'm not gonna take that, I've got to assert myself as like, the top dog'. It's gang culture."

McLean and Holligan (2018) detail how 'toxic masculinities' emerge in youth street gangs in Glasgow, expressed through behaviours including aggression, physical dominance, violence, and esteem within the dominant gender hierarchy. Ana spoke about a student who had recently used Instagram to send "like a diss … to a famous drill artist and stuff – well, not *famous*, famous, but like, famous for here, you know. And yeah, it's like you're having to sit down with dad like, 'Your son is now in danger'". As Ana noted, these threats (or 'disses') were

not hypothetical but rather had material, sometimes life-or-death consequences for young people and their families. In the context of 'postcode wars' between gangs from rival areas, young people could be attacked simply for being in the wrong area at the wrong time. Rohan remarked that a large part of the pull of gangs was the promise of protection on the streets: "it's kind of like, you need to know people to make sure you're safe as well". Research confirms that fear of violent victimization often drives young people to seek protection in gangs (Marfleet, 2008; Foster, 2013; Densley, Deuchar, and Harding, 2020). Hussein described how he had been caught up in neighbourhood violence after arriving in London from Calais:

E: And outside school, where do you spend the most time?

Hussein: The most time? The park [laughs].

E: Oh, really, what do you do there?

Hussein: Just playing … do push-ups, see friends, sit. Sometimes, they won't, like … if my friend is busy, I'm staying at home. Just stay home.

E: Do your family, like, want you to stay home or …?

Hussein: They just want me to stay safe, and that's it. And they just want to see me happy.

E: Yeah. What about like 'staying safe' here? What does that mean?

Hussein: Like … 'cos. … Here, it's like everything's different, innit … there's bare [a lot of] people, like, getting stabbed. Like me. I got stabbed as well, innit. I was stabbed, like, just by accident. It wasn't, like … that's why I'm listening to them and therefore I respect them, show them respect. It's … pfft.

Teachers said that after being stabbed, Hussein had been on life support in hospital for several weeks. Teachers said that he was now heavily involved in gangs – 'staying safe' was now a key priority, by any means necessary. Ana said,

> 'I think that he's kind of leant on [gangs] more out of survival. I think like definitely the Jungle and stuff is going to have impacted the way that he sees, like, his own place in the world and the way he feels like he needs to have teamed up with different people. Especially if you've come over as an unaccompanied minor, that's going to completely shift your perspective of, like, your own place in the world and who you kind of need to survive.'

As Ana points out, for Hussein it is about 'who' rather than 'what' he needs to survive in East London. She added, "I wonder, like, whether he actually wants to really be involved with that gang stuff at all or whether he sees it as like a kind of a necessity, of like, 'I need to have some kind of family, I need to have some kind of network and community to make me feel safe … on the streets'".

Importantly, not all unaccompanied minors were involved in gangs – Abdul, another unaccompanied minor at Bradbrook who was from the same country as Hussein, said that he didn't hang out with Hussein because he was a "bad boy". This sheds further light on the moral dimensions of precarity and reiterates the importance of research that is attuned to complex subjectivities and experiences. Hussein's potential trauma (mentioned in Chapter Three) may have increased the risk of gang involvement following his exposure to neighbourhood violence. Ellis et al. (2015) find that trauma and exposure to neighbourhood violence are critical risk factors for violence in young Somali refugees in North America. Quinn et al. (2017) also suggest that frequent and ongoing exposure to neighbourhood violence, and personal and familial trauma, can lead young people to become involved in gangs.

County lines are not restricted to London but rather are spread across the UK (McLean, Robinson, and Densley, 2019; Densley, Deuchar, and Harding, 2020; Harding, 2020; Windle, Moyle, and Coomber, 2020). At Seaview, George noted that the Albanian "mafia" were recruiting young people on the streets of Brighton & Hove for county line gangs. An Albanian unaccompanied minor at Seaview, Drin, had been trafficked to the UK. George said that Drin had been involved in moving and potentially selling drugs in Albania and was now at significant risk of becoming involved in county lines. A community worker in London (Marjeta) observed that Albanian unaccompanied minors who were in the UK illegally were particularly vulnerable to involvement in organized crime: "But what happens even with younger ages, if they are here illegally the only thing – they become really, really vulnerable – and the only solution to survive will be organised crime." In the absence of family or other forms of social support, unaccompanied minors are highly vulnerable to exploitation. Indeed, a recent investigation found that criminal gangs had kidnapped dozens of asylum-seeking children from a Brighton hotel (Townsend, 2023). A latent sense of insecurity may have encouraged Drin to bond with other newcomers at Seaview and to respond to external threats with violence. He was good friends with another Eastern European newcomer and an unaccompanied minor from the Middle East. The three young men assaulted a White British student after he was racist towards the Middle Eastern student. This violence may be understood as an alternate expression of the 'in-group' conviviality described in Chapter Three and Chapter Five: Back and Sinha (2018: 18) confirm that conviviality can also be forged from 'damaging formations of masculinity, misogyny and violence'.

At Bradbrook, a heightened sense of insecurity on the streets shaped the mobility of young people who were not (or not yet) involved in gangs. Hassan noted,

'There's kids who come into the school from certain areas that are affiliated to gangs. Uh … but then they're coming into another gang territory. So these kids, you know, there's been times when they've been having to mini-cab in and out from school, because, you know, they're – they're in danger of being attacked.'

Abshir described 'taking caution' in certain parts of town after school:

Abshir: You know, it's worrying like, people fighting over postcodes and stuff like that. Sometimes it's like … there's a near 14s [football team] I want to join, but they do trainings late at night in the winter. So obviously, being from this side of whatever town and being in that side of town, playing football and then you just come back … you never know what's going to happen, unfortunately.

E: So do you feel, I mean, do you feel safe most of the time or …?

Abshir: Most of the time. But at the same time, you've always got that thought at the back of your head. You know, something might happen to me, or when you see a couple of guys or girls or whatever moving a bit suspicious. You just want to take caution.

Staying at home was for many the safest option, and a strategy often actively enforced by parents. Bradbrook students said that they spent a lot of time playing video games such as 'Fortnite' with their friends from school. Momodou, a newcomer from rural Gambia, said:

Momodou:	One brother he feels sometimes that he wants to go back to Gambia. Every time he is sitting in the house, he don't go out. So he always like to go to Gambia … 'cos in Gambia he always play in the whole night. And many people are always outside.
E:	Hmm. And why … why do you think here you don't go outside so much?
Momodou:	My mum doesn't allow us many times to go outside. She sends us to shop, like that, and come back to her. She say it's not safe.

Momodou's account highlights the contrast for many newcomers between their old lives and the present dangers they faced in East London. As Hussein observed, "Here, it's like everything's different". Parents were often painfully aware of the risks to their children and managed their mobility accordingly. Ana noted that although the local borough ran an "amazing" summer programme,

'The only problem is the parents feel quite unsafe, like allowing their kids to go to these things on their own. So it's not that easy to just be like, "Just go along to this activity on your own", when it's like, "Oh, there's been a stabbing down the road". … And you just think like, I can understand why the parents are like not that keen.'

She showed me a survey that had been conducted at a recent Year 8 parents' evening: one question asked, 'We would like to run a series of workshops on keeping your son safe. Please indicate which of the workshops you would be interested in'. Twenty-four parents (75 per cent) chose 'Knife crime – keeping young people safe'. Emily told me, "I make sure that I'm in contact with my children. As soon as he leaves school, on the

way home. And he's meant to go straight home from school". Nonetheless, she added, "I think there's only so much you can do as a parent". Young people will do what they feel they must in order to protect themselves against knife violence.

Several Bradbrook teachers noted that some parents did not realize that their children were in gangs at all. "Parents sometimes don't even know what their kids are up to. They're so busy working that they don't actually know where they are, or anything like that," said Hassan. According to Hamza,

> 'A lot of our children are involved, and parents have absolutely no idea. The parents are inviting some of these boys home thinking, "They're my son's friends", but they are friends involved together in gangs. … They won't think, you know, my son is involved in that until it's probably too late, or until we say something.'

Ana described how the school had advised the family of an Italian student to leave the country after he had become heavily involved in gangs: "The school literally told his mum in a meeting, like, 'You should take him to Italy, for his own safety, because he's getting involved with gang stuff and he's going to get … like, he might get killed over it'." She added, "And that happens like a fair amount as well, like where kids get really involved with gang stuff and the whole family has to move". Her words reveal a previously hidden driver of onward migration for young people and their families in East London. Precarity can have far-reaching, transnational consequences.

Yet, as we have already seen, precarity is also a site where 'communities of resistance' emerge. Rohini described how her older son had been mugged by a gang at knifepoint six months after the family arrived in London. She noted, "Neighbours say, 'This is normal. It's London. It's happening every day'". The neighbours thus normalize gang violence as an everyday, almost banal aspect of life in East London. Nevertheless, Rohini and her daughter described how the same neighbours provided

their family with care and support in the aftermath of the attack on their son. Saaleha said, "Our neighbours who are from Pakistan they helped us, they called the police and that was really, really nice of them". Their account reveals the fleeting but transformative effects of encounter in the context of neighbourhood violence. Here we find a profound 'reparative humanism' (Gilroy, 2018: 30) that is capable of momentarily unsettling violent norms, providing a 'radical perspective from which to see and create, to imagine alternatives, new worlds' (hooks, 1989: 20). As Buber suggests, the I–Thou encounter 'stirs, rejuvenates, and transforms the stable structures of history' (1937: 57). It offers the possibility of not simply 'surviving' but of thriving. In short, it offers hope.

Keeping an open mind on the differences that matter to Bradbrook and Seaview students makes the impact of precarity on peer relationships – so often overlooked by migration studies – painfully clear. It reveals what we miss when we focus on national, ethnic, or religious modes of belonging alone, radically challenging culturalist explanations of 'diversity' by bringing socioeconomic inequalities to the fore. As this chapter has shown, these inequalities have moral, affective, and sometimes violent dimensions. They are inherently political, forged from the global forces of neoliberalism on the one hand, and the dereliction of state responsibility on the other. But they are also deeply personal, involving moments of friendship and neighbourliness which allow structural divides to be briefly transcended. We have seen throughout the book that parents play an important mediating role in their children's peer relationships. In the context of precarity, their presence or absence in young people's lives is crucial. The next and final chapter points to the policy implications of the impact of precarity and other structural inequalities on young people's peer relationships in the UK.

SEVEN

Conclusions and Beyond

Young people's peer relationships, in whatever context, restlessly evade capture in simplistic binary terms. They are always multifaceted, complex, and nuanced. In settings of migration and displacement, multiple intersecting factors lead to shifting constellations of social inclusion/exclusion. Far from being one-dimensional, the social lives of Bradbrook and Seaview students are vibrantly kaleidoscopic. This book has sought to grasp some of this complexity by using Buber's relational model of 'I–It' difference and 'I–Thou' encounter. It has shown how diverse socio-historical and political processes shape 'I–It' identities at a societal level, and how young people, in turn, reproduce these group-making processes at school. Social identities matter. For Bradbrook and Seaview students, they can mean the difference between inclusion and exclusion, acceptance and prejudice, staying and leaving, security and insecurity, peace and violence, and sometimes even the difference between life and death. At the same time, young people can transform the meaning of these social identities through moments of 'I–Thou' encounter, the purpose of which is simply 'being with' the other. These encounters cannot be engineered. Yet their paradoxical power is to fleetingly overcome xenophobia, Islamophobia, and racism, to bridge the gap between newness and settledness, to transgress divides of language and religion, and to offer extraordinary forms of hope in the face of marginalization and violence. Schools thus become sites for the reproduction and transformation of cultural norms.

As we have seen, peer relationships are profoundly affective. I-It group-making processes involve complex emotions including anger, shame, resentment, pain, nostalgia, pride, and fear. I-Thou encounters are, by contrast, often marked by lightness – from playful expressions of curiosity to whimsical celebrations of difference. At other times, young people 'enter into relation' with great solemnity and gravitas. The I-It and the I-Thou are in constant interplay, taking on new shapes and dimensions and informing each other in distinct ways depending on the particularities of the context.

The significance of context

The situated contours of superdiversity influenced unique forms of conviviality among young people at each school. At Seaview, largely homogenous ethnic groupings led to pockets of conviviality among newcomers, who often remained at a distance from their White British peers. This distance may well have been compounded by dominant media narratives about the racialized migrant 'other'. Distances can, however, also grow smaller with habitual social contact over time – the shared identity of being a 'student' may have encouraged equal status and led to the common goal of receiving an education, laying the foundations for convivial encounter among young people from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Wilson (2017) emphasizes that the sustained, everyday nature of social contact makes it distinct from the transience of 'encounter'. She suggests that this may account for Allport's (1954) infrequent use of the term 'encounter' in his seminal work on social contact. Nonetheless, Amin (2002) argues that intercultural encounter cannot be 'effective and lasting' without being 'inculcated as a habit of practice … in mixed sites of everyday contact' (Amin, 2002: 976). Noble (2009) also posits that the question of temporality is crucial to intercultural practices, because 'these are durable relations built over time' (Noble, 2009: 60). The relationship between habitual social contact and more fleeting

forms of encounter at school thus presents a compelling avenue for further empirical research.

At Bradbrook, the sense of ethnic and religious 'freedom' engendered by London's commonplace diversity led to distinct forms of relation. Quotidian processes of ethnic mixing at school permitted genuine curiosity for the other to grow and flourish, cultivating creative and joyful celebrations of diversity. However, the same sense of freedom may have encouraged the formation of ethnic, linguistic, and religious groupings at school, the expansive and unpredictable waters of superdiversity potentially strengthening young people's desire for the safe harbours of social identity. This insight serves as a caution to studies of superdiversity and mobility which, in emphasizing agency, choice, and fluidity in the context of migration, can sometimes understate the ontological importance of group identities. Against the backdrop of significant socioeconomic inequality, the rapid pace and large scale of recent immigration to the East London borough fostered resentment towards newcomers from long-term residents who were both White British and ethnic minorities. As climate change and conflict (often itself a consequence of climate change) force ever-growing numbers of people to leave their homes in coming years, so research must increasingly attend to the impact of the rate and scale of immigration on public attitudes.

The impact of precarity on young people's peer relationships cannot be overstated. The research finds that neighbourhood violence was a significant driver of forced onward migration; this is an underexplored phenomenon which demands further exploration in empirical research. The membership of some unaccompanied minors in gangs also points to the need for more research into the conditions and factors which heighten their risk of involvement. It is unequivocal that socioeconomic inequalities must be addressed at the political level. Ager and Strang (2008) highlight that 'safety' is a key facilitator of integration. Yet this element is frequently overlooked in post-immigration policy. Empirical research should continue

to challenge – rather than reproduce – culturalist explanations for social tensions in contexts of migration and displacement, especially as these explanations are often used to excuse a lack of political action on socioeconomic inequality. There is an obvious need to inject public funds into community services and programmes in order to provide young people with safe spaces for encounter outside school. These interventions should build on, rather than replace, the informal structures of solidarity and support – from acts of neighbourliness to the closeness of friendship – which emerge from marginalization. They should be alive to local conditions, for example the reticence of some parents to send their children to holiday clubs because of neighbourhood violence. We have also seen that teachers take responsibility for protecting young people's wellbeing, including their reporting of gang membership to parents (Chapter Six). Teachers' perceptions and experiences of pastoral practices, and the implications for educational policy in turn, could be the subject of further empirical research.

Moments of mutual vulnerability and trust – however ephemeral – give hope that even the 'It' may lead to the 'Thou'. And yet the 'Thou' is always forced to return to the 'It' by the need for representation in language and image. Several key themes have emerged in this regard – memory, technology, language, and adults' attitudes and narratives.

Forms of representation

Personal memories restricted young people's encounter by limiting capacities for vulnerability in the present. Nonetheless, these personal memories also had positive ethical qualities, shaping empathetic care for the newcomer. Societal memories or 'myths' solidified group boundaries but were also transformed in spontaneous moments of mutual trust and vulnerability. In escaping categorical framings, these moments of encounter unsettle and challenge ahistorical and essentialist understandings of 'culture'. At the same time, tensions between

reified 'I–It' memories and intercultural 'I–Thou' encounters at school produced internal conflict for some students, as for instance in the case of young White British individuals at Bradbrook. The psychosocial experiences of those 'hosts' is an important area for further research. So too is the significant influence of socioeconomic inequality on the politics of reception at school – the link between xenophobic attitudes and precarity points to the need for further understanding of the socioeconomic dimensions of hosting practices, the nuances of which some studies have recently begun to explore (see, for example, Wessendorf, 2020; Phillimore, 2021; Verkuyten, 2021).

Young people's use of technology had complex, sometimes alienating effects on their peer relationships. Some young migrants and refugees used social media to bridge the distance between themselves and friends in other countries, with diverse consequences for their peer relationships at school. At Bradbrook, social media encouraged dehumanizing views of women and magnified the 'otherness' of rival gang members. As Buber contends, the bigger the 'It' of representation becomes, the less we are able to approach others as a 'Thou'. Video games can play a protective role in the context of neighbourhood violence. Steinkuehler and Williams (2006) note, however, that the virtual relationships engendered through participation in multiplayer online games do not usually provide deep emotional support. Rose (2017) also suggests that online spaces should not replace opportunities for face-to-face encounter; like Buber, she posits that the 'facelessness' of online communication may contribute to 'a further inability to engage empathetically with others – and, indeed, to a devaluation of human contact in general' (Rose, 2017: 24). Video games cannot deliver the spontaneity of direct confrontation with the 'otherness' of the other.

Another burgeoning theme in relation to representation is that of language. Linguistic differences can limit possibilities for encounter across group boundaries by maintaining

racialized hierarchies or encouraging insularity at school. But we have also seen that in the context of mutual trust and respect, linguistic differences can themselves become the tools for encounter. The English language is an important bridge. In this light, the absence of statutory EAL support in schools and the lack of government funding for community English classes are stark. In addition to linguistic difference, the language of humour also plays a key role in young people's peer relationships, with distinct outcomes depending on intent, tone, audience, and context. Bradbrook and Seaview students reproduced and entrenched linguistic, religious, ethnic, and socioeconomic divisions through mocking ('laughing at') humour at school, while also expressing genuine curiosity and unbridled delight towards the 'otherness' of the other in light-hearted moments of 'laughing with'. Ironic forms of humour helped Bradbrook students to critically reflect on societal prejudices and stereotypes. Confusion among young people as to the definition of 'racism', however, signals the need for more research in this area – if, as Ana suggests (Chapter Five), young people's confusion arises from the growth of narratives of 'political correctness', in what specific ways do these institutional orthodoxies shape different forms of humour at school? How do teachers' own perspectives on the legitimacy of different forms of convivial humour, or conviviality more broadly, come to bear on young people's social lives?

This links to a fourth and final theme: the influence of adults' attitudes and narratives on peer relationships at school. Teachers engaged in the I–Thou relation with young people in informal educational spaces. The triadic form of the exchange about Muslim clothing between Akram, Halim, and Ana (Chapter Five) challenges Buber's dyadic conceptualization of the I–Thou relation; in a 1955 letter, C. S. Lewis (2004: 631) argues that 'two best friends, or one's parents, or one's wife and daughter, at times are very distinctly neither Thou nor They but "You two"'. This intriguing theoretical argument could usefully be explored through further empirical research

in educational contexts. Do these exchanges between teachers and students become formalized in educational practice, and if so, to what effect? When Ryan and Camilo reported domestic abuse to their teachers (Chapter Six), Diana's comment on the quality of the boys' friendship returned the I-Thou to the I-It while also reinforcing the ethical nature of their encounter. Similarly, parental attitudes and narratives significantly mediated young people's peer relationships, limiting or encouraging – but never guaranteeing – opportunities for encounter. We can extrapolate this insight to political visions of society. Although these visions have a vital role in guiding how we live together with difference, the outcomes are necessarily unpredictable. As Gilligan (1987: 24) suggests, applying generalized standards to sociality is 'morally problematic, since it breeds moral blindness or indifference'. Real encounter can never be 'organised'.

Political visions of society

In globalized societies, much can be learned from the ways in which young people negotiate difference in school, reproducing societal ideals through the I-It but also imagining new worlds in the I-Thou. This book has provided a window into the creative ways in which young people work out definitions of community at school, with significant implications for how we think about 'belonging' on global, national, and local scales.

At Seaview, the presence of (sometimes violent) forms of what I have described as 'in-group conviviality' raises ethical questions about the role of nations in international politics. National policies which only focus inwards may have damaging consequences at the global level. In recognition of the potentially negative impact of an I-Thou relationship that is, in practice, exclusive, DeLue (2006) suggests the need to supplement Buber's concept of direct immediacy with an overarching ethos of mutual respect. This has notable implications for the UK government's 'hostile' environment towards international asylum seekers as well as its complicity as

a key player on the world stage of conflict and climate change. Inward-facing forms of conviviality are not enough and on their own may be harmful to the 'out-group'. As Appiah (2018: 219) warns, 'We live with seven billion fellow humans on a small, warming planet. The cosmopolitan impulse that draws on our common humanity is no longer a luxury; it has become a necessity'. Buber's ideal of striking a balance between the 'I–It' and the 'I–Thou' suggests that it is possible, and in fact essential, that nations maintain a sense of identity while also affirming their 'cosmopolitan existence' through global dialogue (Arendt, 1992: 75). Membership of a 'world community' does not – indeed should not – preclude the significance of national identity.

We have seen that societal 'memories' of the purity of national identity drive mythmaking. Yet it is abundantly clear that, for Bradbrook and Seaview students, belonging cannot be singularly defined in national terms. We have also seen how moments of welcome, friendship, and neighbourliness can have a transgressive effect on cultural boundaries, enabling young people to support each other in the face of complex intersecting inequalities. Political affinities emerge as young people construct multiple spheres of belonging on an everyday basis. The constructed nature of belonging does not negate its significance – as the book shows, identities are important and without them we risk rootlessness and anomie. This calls for political visions of society which can grasp some of these complexities in their definitions of community. We need stories about society which, like those told here, do not reject the significance of social 'identities' altogether, but rather see them as interdependent and open to change – even betterment – through creative and ongoing moments of encounter with difference.

It is evident from the social lives of Bradbrook and Seaview students that political narratives are not, on their own, enough to secure dialogical forms of inclusion. There is a critical need to address the policies and structures which limit equal

participation in globalized societies. This book reveals the multiple exclusions experienced by individuals in contexts of migration and displacement, providing rich insight into practical barriers to participation in different social spheres, both at school and in society: xenophobic media narratives engendered exclusionary and racialized forms of belonging while socioeconomic inequalities shaped highly uneven forms of belonging. The lives of Bradbrook and Seaview students were profoundly influenced by the precarity which flows from the dual forces of globalization and neoliberalism. As Held (1995: 97) points out, the influence of corporate capitalism on politics means that democracy is now 'embedded in a socioeconomic system that grants a "privileged position" to certain interests'. In societies deeply divided by the ravages of neoliberalism, the notion of 'equal participation' becomes a chimera.

At the same time, however, individual students and parents claimed their right to belong, regardless of their identity or status – what Arendt (1949) describes as the right of all human beings 'to have rights' as *de facto* members of a world community. Faduma, for example, demanded the right to be recognized as a proactive social actor, passing these claim-making practices on to her son Abshir (Chapter Four). Through their climate activism, Aurora, Zelda, and Anja claimed the right to be recognized as legitimate political actors (Chapter Three). In making these claims, both Bradbrook and Seaview students (and sometimes their parents) exercised their right to tell alternative stories about belonging in the context of migration and displacement. I have built on these claim-making practices by offering alternative stories about diversity. In doing so, I make a rejoinder to dominant paradigms of 'difference' in the migration literature, refusing to reproduce a 'colonising mentality' (hooks, 1989: 15). In recognizing the place of 'I–It' divisions in young people's social lives while placing value on their experiences of 'I–Thou' conviviality, I have deliberately focused not only on 'what is wrong with the world' but also on

'what is right' (Chesterton, 1912: 7). We need to be clear-eyed about the work required to build the political and institutional conditions necessary for encounter in contexts of migration and displacement. We must also recognize the critical need for stories about I-Thou encounter across difference of many kinds. At their root, these are stories about 'love' – only love, King (1963) reminds us, can drive out hate.

Notes

one Introduction

[1] Pseudonyms are used for all places and people in the book in order to protect anonymity.

[2] *I and Thou* was originally published in German in 1923; the 1937 English version is cited here and throughout the book.

[3] In England, students normally attend secondary school for five years, from Year 7 (age 11–12) to Year 11 (age 15–16).

[4] The 'Pupil Premium' is a government grant which provides schools with additional funding for disadvantaged students.

[5] Being NEET between the ages of 16 and 18 is a major predictor of later unemployment, low income, depression, and poor physical and mental health (Allen, 2014).

[6] Jones and Rutter (1998) note that newcomers are more likely to attend undersubscribed schools, which usually have more places.

[7] A 'looked after' child refers to a child who has been in the care of their local authority for more than 24 hours.

two I-It, I-Thou, and Migration Studies

[1] Maurice Friedman was Buber's biographer, and they often wrote together. The 1947 references to Friedman in this book refer to his 'Introduction' to *Between Man and Man* (characterized, 1947).

four Societal Myths and the Consequences of Freedom

[1] I use the terms 'Bengali Italian' and 'Italian Bengali' interchangeably throughout the book to reflect their contested and shifting use among individuals from these backgrounds in the research.

six Navigating Precarity

[1] Eligibility for free school meals is treated as a proxy for disadvantage. Students are only considered eligible for free school meals if their household income is less than £7,400 a year after tax.

[2] Drill is a subgenre of hip hop and gangsta rap music. In the UK, drill lyrics are often characterized by violent and provocative lyrics.

References

Abspoel, P. (2017) 'In praise of foolish conviviality: Some thoughts on the unthinkable connection between tradition, spontaneity and ethics', *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology*, 78(3) pp 234–257.

Ager, A. and Strang, A. (2008) 'Understanding integration: A conceptual framework', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 21(2) pp 166–191.

Alexander, C. (2000) *The Asian Gang: Ethnicity, Identity, Masculinity*. Oxford: Berg 3PL.

Alexander, J. C. (2006) *The Civil Sphere*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Allen, M. (2014) *Local Action on Health Inequalities: Reducing the Number of Young People Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)*. Public Health England.

Allport, G. W. (1954) *The Nature of Prejudice*. Oxford: Addison-Wesley.

Amin, A. (2002) 'Ethnicity and the multicultural city: Living with diversity', *Environment and Planning A*, 34(6) pp 959–980.

Appiah, K. A. (2018) *The Lies That Bind: Rethinking Identity*. New York: Liveright.

Aptekar, S. (2019) 'Super-diversity as a methodological lens: Re-centring power and inequality', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 42(1) pp 53–70.

Arendt, H. (1949) *The Rights of Man: What Are They?*. American Labor Conference on International Affairs.

Arendt, H. (1992) *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy*. 3. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Arnot, M. and Pinson, H. (2005) *The Education of Asylum-Seeker & Refugee Children: A Study of LEA and School Values, Policies and Practices*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge, p 71.

Back, L. (1996) *New Ethnicities and Urban Culture: Racisms and Multiculture in Young Lives*. 1st edition, London: Routledge.

Back, L. and Sinha, S. (2018) *Migrant City*. Florence: Routledge.

Barber, B. R. (1995) *Jihad Vs McWorld*. London: Corgi.

Barratt, C., Kitcher, C., and Stewart, D. J. (2012) 'Beyond safety to wellbeing: How local authorities can mitigate the mental health risks of living in houses in multiple occupation', *Journal of Environmental Health Research*, 12(1) p 12.

Barrett, B. J. (2010) 'Is "safety" dangerous? A critical examination of the classroom as safe space', *Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. University of Western Ontario and Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 1(1).

Baumann, G. (1996) *Contesting Culture: Discourses of Identity in Multi-Ethnic London*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bean, T., Derluyn, I., Eurelings-Bontekoe, E., Broekaert, E., and Spinhoven, P. (2007) 'Comparing psychological distress, traumatic stress reactions, and experiences of unaccompanied refugee minors with experiences of adolescents accompanied by parents', *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, 195(4) pp 288–297.

de Beauvoir, S. (1949) *The Second Sex*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Berg, M. L. and Sigona, N. (2013) 'Ethnography, diversity and urban space', *Identities*, 20(4) pp 347–360.

Berg, M. L., Gidley, B., and Krausova, A. (2019) 'Welfare micropublics and inequality: Urban super-diversity in a time of austerity', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 42(15) pp 2723–2742.

Berlant, L. (2011) *Cruel Optimism*. Illustrated edition, Durham: Duke University Press Books.

Bernhard, S. (2021) 'Reaching in: Meaning-making, receiving context and inequalities in refugees' support networks'. *The Sociological Review*, 69(1) pp 72–89.

Berry, J. W. (1997) 'Immigration, acculturation, and adaptation'. *Applied Psychology*, 46, January, pp 5–34.

Bhabha, H. K. (1988) 'The commitment to theory', *New Formations*, (5).

Bhatia, S. and Ram, A. (2009) 'Theorizing identity in transnational and diaspora cultures: A critical approach to acculturation', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 33(2) pp 140–149.

Boccagni, P. (2015) '(Super)diversity and the migration–social work nexus: A new lens on the field of access and inclusion?', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 38(4) pp 608–620.

Borsch, A. S., Vitus, K., and Skovdal, M. (2020) 'School caringscapes: Understanding how time and space shape refugee and immigrant adolescents' caring practices and wellbeing in Danish schools', *Wellbeing, Space and Society*, 2(100001).

Bourdieu, P. (1984) *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Branscombe, N. R., Schmitt, M. T., and Harvey, R. D. (1999) 'Perceiving pervasive discrimination among African Americans: Implications for group identification and well-being', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 77(1) pp 135–149.

Brekke, M. (2008) 'Young refugees in a network society'. *In* Bærenholdt, J. O. and Granås, B. (eds) *Mobility and Place: Enacting Northern European Peripheries*. 1st Edition, Routledge, pp 119–130.

Bremner, J. D. (2006) 'Traumatic stress: Effects on the brain', *Dialogues in Clinical Neuroscience*, 8(4) pp 445–461.

Brubaker, R. (2002) 'Ethnicity without groups', *European Journal of Sociology/Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, 43(2) pp 163–189.

Buber, M. (1937) *I and Thou*. English edition, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

Buber, M. (1947) *Between Man and Man*. London: Routledge.

Buber, M. and Friedman (1964) 'Interrogation of Martin Buber'. *In* Rome, S. C. and Rome, B. K. (eds) *Philosophical Interrogations: Interrogations of Martin Buber, John Wild, Jean Wahl, Brand Blanshard, Paul Weiss, Charles Hartshorne, Paul Tillich*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Burns, T. and Gottschalk, F. (2019) *Educating 21st Century Children: Emotional Well-being in the Digital Age*. Paris: OECD Publishing (Educational Research and Innovation).

Butler, J. (1997) *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*. 1st edition, New York: Routledge.

Butler, J. (2012) 'Precarious life, vulnerability, and the ethics of cohabitation', *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, 26(2) pp 134–151.

Cable, N. and Sacker, A. (2019) 'Validating overcrowding measures using the UK Household Longitudinal Study', *SSM – Population Health*, 8, August, 100439.

Çağlar, A. and Glick Schiller, N. (2018) *Migrants and City-Making: Dispossession, Displacement, and Urban Regeneration*. Illustrated edition, Durham: Duke University Press.

Cantle, T. (2005) *Community Cohesion*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Carl, N., Dennison, J., and Evans, G. (2019) 'European but not European enough: An explanation for Brexit', *European Union Politics*, 20(2) pp 282–304.

Charsley, K. and Bolognani, M. (2017) 'Being a freshie is (not) cool: Stigma, capital and disgust in British Pakistani stereotypes of new subcontinental migrants', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 40(1) pp 43–62.

Chesterton, G. K. (1912) *What's Wrong with the World*. London: Cassell.

Chikhradze, N., Knecht, C., and Metzing, S. (2017) 'Young carers: Growing up with chronic illness in the family – A systematic review 2007–2017', *Journal of Compassionate Health Care*, 4(1) p 12.

Condon, R., Hill, A., and Bryson, L. (2018) *International Migrants in Brighton & Hove*. Brighton & Hove City Council (part of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment programme).

Consterdine, E. (2020) 'Parties matter but institutions live on: Labour's legacy on Conservative immigration policy and the neoliberal consensus', *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 22(2) pp 182–201.

Crenshaw, K. (1989) 'Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics', *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, (1) pp 139–167.

Crenshaw, K. (1991) 'Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color', *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6) p 1241.

Curtice, J. (2016) 'The vote to leave the EU: Litmus test or lightning rod'. *In* Clery, E., Curtice, J., and Harding, R. (eds) *British Social Attitudes: The 34th Report*. London: NatCen Social Research, pp 1–24.

Cwerner, S. B. (2004) 'Faster, faster and faster: The time politics of asylum in the UK', *Time & Society*, 13(1) pp 71–88.

Dahinden, J. (2016) 'A plea for the "de-migranticization" of research on migration and integration', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 39(13) pp 2207–2225.

DeLue, S. M. (2006) 'Martin Buber and Immanuel Kant on mutual respect and the liberal state', *Janus Head*, 9(1) pp 117–133.

Densley, J., Deuchar, R., and Harding, S. (2020) 'An introduction to gangs and serious youth violence in the United Kingdom', *Youth Justice*, 20(1–2) pp 3–10.

Dharampal, R. and Ani, C. (2020) 'The emotional and mental health needs of young carers: What psychiatry can do', *BJPsych Bulletin*, 44(3) pp 112–120.

Easthope, A. (2008) 'Bhabha, hybridity and identity', *Textual Practice*, 12(2) pp 341–348.

Ellis, B. H., Abdi, S. M., Miller, A. B., White, M. T., and Lincoln, A. K. (2015) 'Protective factors for violence perpetration in Somali young adults: The role of community belonging and neighborhood cohesion', *Psychology of Violence*, 5(4) pp 384–392.

Erdal, M. B. and Oeppen, C. (2018) 'Forced to leave? The discursive and analytical significance of describing migration as forced and voluntary', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(6) pp 981–998.

Esses, V. M., Medianu, S. and Lawson, A. S. (2013) 'Uncertainty, threat, and the role of the media in promoting the dehumanization of immigrants and refugees', *Journal of Social Issues*, 69(3) pp 518–536.

Fathi, M. (2017) *Intersectionality, Class and Migration: Narratives of Iranian Women Migrants in the UK.* 1st edition, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Fekete, L. (2009) *A Suitable Enemy: Racism, Migration and Islamophobia in Europe*. London: Pluto Press.

Fenton, S. (2012) 'Resentment, class and social sentiments about the nation: The ethnic majority in England', *Ethnicities*, 12(4) pp 465–483.

Field, C. D. (2007) 'Islamophobia in contemporary Britain: The evidence of the opinion polls, 1988–2006', *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations*, 18(4) pp 447–477.

Flouri, E., Midouhas, E., and Francesconi, M. (2019) 'Neighbourhood deprivation and child behaviour across childhood and adolescence', *Longitudinal and Life Course Studies*, 11(2) pp 203–227.

Folke, J. N. (2016) '"Sitting on embers": A phenomenological exploration of the embodied experiences of inclusion of newly arrived students in Sweden', *Gender and Education*, 28(7) pp 823–838.

Foner, N., Duyvendak, J. W., and Kasinitz, P. (2019) 'Introduction: Super-diversity in everyday life', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 42(1) pp 1–16.

Ford, C. (2019) *Boys Will Be Boys: Power, Patriarchy and Toxic Masculinity*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Foster, G. M. (1965) 'Peasant society and the image of limited good', *American Anthropologist*, 67(2) pp 293–315.

Foster, R. (2013) *Knife Crime Interventions: 'What Works?'*. The Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research.

Foucault, M. (1966) *The Order of Things: Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. London: Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1980) *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (1982) 'The subject and power', *Critical Inquiry*, 8(4) pp 777–795.

Franklin, J. (2007) 'Social capital: Between harmony and dissonance', *Families & Social Capital ESRC Research Group Working Paper*, 22.

Freire, P. (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed: 30th Anniversary Edition*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Friedman, M. (1947) 'Introduction'. *In* Buber, M. (ed) *Between Man and Man*. London: Routledge, pp xi–xx.

Friedman, M. (1976) 'Aiming at the self: The paradox of encounter and the human potential movement', *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 16(2) pp 5–34.

Georgiou, M. (2017) 'Conviviality is not enough: A communication perspective to the city of difference', *Communication, Culture & Critique*, 10(2) pp 261–279.

Gilligan, C. (1987) 'Moral orientation and moral development'. *In* Kittay, E. F. (ed) *Women and Moral Theory*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, pp 19–33.

Gilroy, P. (1993) *The Black Atlantic – Modernity and Double Consciousness*. 1st edition, London: Verso Books.

Gilroy, P. (2004) *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture?*. 1st edition, Abingdon: Routledge.

Gilroy, P. (2006) 'Multiculture in times of war: An inaugural lecture given at the London School of Economics', *Critical Quarterly*, 48(4) pp 27–45.

Gilroy, P. (2018) '"Where every breeze speaks of courage and liberty": Offshore Humanism and Marine Xenology, or, Racism and the Problem of Critique at Sea Level', *Antipode*, 50(1) pp 3–22.

GLA (2018) *All of Us: The Mayor's Strategy for Social Integration*. Greater London Authority.

Glick Schiller, N. (2009) 'A global perspective on transnational migration: Theorising migration without methodological nationalism', Working Paper No. 67, University of Oxford: Centre on Migration, Policy and Society, p 23.

Glick Schiller, N. and Çağlar, A. (2016) 'Displacement, emplacement and migrant newcomers: Rethinking urban sociabilities within multiscalar power', *Identities*, 23(1) pp 17–34.

Glissant, É. (1997) *Poetics of Relation*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Griffiths, M. B. E. (2014) 'Out of time: The temporal uncertainties of refused asylum seekers and immigration detainees', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 40(12) pp 1991–2009.

Growth Boroughs Partnership (2021) *London Growth Boroughs: Convergence framework*. London's Growth Boroughs. [Online] www.growthboroughs.com/convergence [Accessed 22 June 2021].

Grzymala-Kazlowska, A. and Phillimore, J. (2018) 'Introduction: Rethinking integration – New perspectives on adaptation and settlement in the era of super-diversity', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(2) pp 179–196.

Gunderson, M. (2005) 'Martha C. Nussbaum: Cultivating humanity – A classical defense of reform in liberal education', *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 11(1) pp 245–248.

Hall, S. (2012) *City, Street and Citizen: The Measure of the Ordinary*. London: Routledge.

Hansen, T. B. (2012) *Melancholia of Freedom: Social Life in an Indian Township in South Africa*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Harding, S. (2020) *County Lines: Exploitation and Drug Dealing among Urban Street Gangs*. Bristol: Bristol University Press.

Harris, A. (2016) 'Rethinking youth conviviality: The possibilities of intercultural friendship beyond contact and encounter', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 37(5) pp 501–516.

Hatton, T. J. (2009) 'The rise and fall of asylum: What happened and why?', *The Economic Journal*, 119(535) pp F183–F213.

Held, D. (1995) 'Markets, private property and the possibility of democracy', *Theoria: A Journal of Social and Political Theory*, (85) pp 93–109.

Hemer, O., Povrzanović Frykman, M., and Ristilammi, P.-M. (2020) 'Conviviality vis-à-vis cosmopolitanism and creolisation: Probing the concepts'. *In* Hemer, O., Povrzanović Frykman, M., and Ristilammi, P.-M. (eds) *Conviviality at the Crossroads: The Poetics and Politics of Everyday Encounters*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, pp 1–14.

Hickman, M., Mai, N., and Crowley, H. (2012) *Migration and Social Cohesion*. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Hollingworth, S. and Mansaray, A. (2012) 'Conviviality under the cosmopolitan canopy? Social mixing and friendships in an urban secondary school', *Sociological Research Online*, 17(3) pp 195–206.

Homans, P. (1979) *Jung in Context: Modernity and the Making of a Psychology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

hooks, bell (1989) 'Choosing the margin as a space of radical openness', *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media*, (36) pp 15–23.

Humphris, R. (2015) *Intersectionality and Superdiversity: What's the Difference?* University of Birmingham: IRiS (IRiS Key Concepts roundtable series).

Ignatieff, M. (1998) *The Warrior's Honor.* 1st edition, New York: Holt Paperbacks.

Illich, I. (1973) *Tools for Conviviality*. London: Marion Boyars.

James, M. (2014) 'Whiteness and loss in Outer East London: Tracing the collective memories of diaspora space', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 37, March, pp 652–667.

James, M. (2015) *Urban Multiculture: Youth, Politics and Cultural Transformation in a Global City*. London: Palgrave Macmillan Limited.

James, M. (2016) 'Diaspora as an ethnographic method: Decolonial reflections on researching urban multi-culture in Outer East London', *Young*, 24(3) pp 222–237.

Janoff-Bulman, R. (1992) *Shattered Assumptions: Towards a New Psychology of Trauma*. New York: Free Press.

Jones, C. and Rutter, J. (eds) (1998) *Refugee Education: Mapping the Field*. Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books Ltd.

Joyce, J. (1944) *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. New York: Viking Press.

Kaufmann, E. (2017) 'Levels or changes? Ethnic context, immigration and the UK Independence Party vote', *Electoral Studies*, 48, August, pp 57–69.

Kehily, M. J. and Nayak, A. (1997) '"Lads and Laughter": Humour and the production of heterosexual hierarchies', *Gender and Education*, 9(1) pp 69–88.

King, M. L. (1963) *Strength to Love*. New York: Harper & Row.

Komito, L. (2011) 'Social media and migration: Virtual community 2.0', *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 62(6) pp 1075–1086.

Lapidot-Lefler, N. and Barak, A. (2012) 'Effects of anonymity, invisibility, and lack of eye-contact on toxic online disinhibition', *Computers in Human Behavior*, 28(2) pp 434–443.

Levinas, E. (1985) *Ethics and Infinity: Conversations with Philippe Nemo*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press.

Lewis, C. S. (2004) *The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis: Volume III*. London: HarperCollins.

Lewis, C. S. (1961) *A Grief Observed*. London: HarperCollins.

Lofland, L. H. (1989) 'Social life in the public realm: A review', *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 17(4) pp 453–482.

Lumsden, S. (2000) 'Absolute difference and social ontology: Levinas face to face with Buber and Fichte', *Human Studies*, 23(3) pp 227–241.

Malkki, L. H. (1995) *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania*. 1st edition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Marfleet, N. (2008) *Why Carry a Weapon? A Study of Knife Crime Amongst 15-17 Year Old Males in London*. London: Howard League for Penal Reform.

Martellozzo, E., Monaghan, A., Adler, J., Leyva, R., Davidson, J., and Horvath, M. (2016) '"… I wasn't sure it was normal to watch it …": A quantitative and qualitative examination of the impact of online pornography on the values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of children and young people'. UK: NSPCC/OCC.

Martellozzo, E., Monaghan, A., Davidson, J., and Adler, J. (2020) 'Researching the affects that online pornography has on U.K. adolescents aged 11 to 16', *SAGE Open*, 10(1).

Massey, D. (2005) *For Space*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Mauss, M. (1925) *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*. London: Routledge.

Mayblin, L., Wake, M., and Kazemi, M. (2019) 'Necropolitics and the slow violence of the everyday: Asylum seeker welfare in the postcolonial present', *Sociology*, 54(1) pp 107–123.

Mazzilli, C. (2020) '"The happiest city in England" Brighton's narratives of diversity between "success stories" and sidelined issues', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 44(11) pp 2074–2092.

McLean, R. and Holligan, C. (2018) 'The semiotics of the evolving gang masculinity and Glasgow', *Social Sciences*, 7(8) p 125.

McLean, R., Robinson, G., and Densley, J. A. (2019) *County Lines: Criminal Networks and Evolving Drug Markets in Britain*. 1st edition, Cham: Springer.

Meissner, F. (2020) 'Growing up with difference: Superdiversity as a habitual frame of reference'. *In* Titzmann, P. F. and Jugert, P. (eds) *Youth in Superdiverse Societies: Growing up with Globalization, Diversity, and Acculturation*. 1st edition, Routledge.

Mikola, M. (2013) 'Behind the iron fence: (Dis)placing boundaries, initiating silences'. *In* Gronseth, A. S. (ed) *Being Human, Being Migrant: Senses of Self and Well-Being*. 1st edition, Berghahn Books, pp 139–151.

Mohanty, C. T. (2003) *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Morawska, E. (2014) 'Composite meaning, flexible ranges, and multi-level conditions of conviviality: Exploring the polymorph', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 17(4) pp 357–374.

Morgan, W. J. and Guilherme, A. (2013) *Buber and Education: Dialogue as Conflict Resolution*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Morrice, L. (2012) 'Learning and refugees: Recognizing the darker side of transformative learning', *Adult Education Quarterly*, 63(3) pp 251–271.

Ndofor-Tah, C., Strang, A., Phillimore, J., Morrice, L., Michael, L., Wood, P., Simmons, J., and Pertek, S. (2019) *Home Office Indicators of Integration framework 2019*. Home Office, p 60.

Neal, S. and Vincent, C. (2013) 'Multiculture, middle class competencies and friendship practices in super-diverse geographies', *Social & Cultural Geography*, 14(8) pp 909–929.

Neal, S. and Walters, S. (2008) 'Rural be/longing and rural social organizations: Conviviality and community-making in the English countryside', *Sociology*, 42(2) pp 279–297.

Neal, S., Vincent, C., and Iqbal, H. (2016) 'Extended encounters in primary school worlds: Shared social resource, connective spaces and sustained conviviality in socially and ethnically complex urban geographies', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 37(5) pp 464–480.

Nezlek, J. B. and Derks, P. (2001) 'Use of humor as a coping mechanism, psychological adjustment, and social interaction', *Humor - International Journal of Humor Research*, 14(4).

Nilsen, A. P. (1994) 'In defense of humor', *College English*, 56(8) pp 928–933.

Noble, G. (2009) 'Everyday cosmopolitanism and the labour of intercultural community'. *In* Wise, A. and Velayutham, S. (eds) *Everyday Multiculturalism*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, pp 46–65.

Nowicka, M. and Rovisco, M. (eds) (2008) *Cosmopolitanism in Practice*. 1st edition, Farnham: Routledge.

Nussbaum, M. C. (1997) *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Nussbaum, M. C. (2019) *The Cosmopolitan Tradition: A Noble but Flawed Ideal*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Ofsted (2021) *Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges*. Ofsted.

Olivas-Osuna, J. J., de Lyon, J., Gartzou-Katsouyanni, K., Bulat, A., Kiefel, M., Bolet, D., Jablonowski, K., and Kaldor, M. (2019) *Understanding Brexit at a Local Level: Causes of Discontent and Asymmetric Impacts*. London: London School of Economics and Political Science, p 29.

Olusoga, D. (2018) 'The myths of Windrush', *BBC History Magazine*, 14 June.

Paul, K. (1997) *Whitewashing Britain: Race and Citizenship in the Postwar Era*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Phillimore, J. (2021) 'Refugee-integration-opportunity structures: Shifting the focus from refugees to context', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 34(2) pp 1946–1966.

Phillimore, J., Humphris, R., and Khan, K. (2018) 'Reciprocity for new migrant integration: Resource conservation, investment and exchange', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(2) pp 215–232.

Pryor, A. (2019) 'Intersections, Kairos, and Cyborgs'. *In* Carson, T. (ed) *Neither Here nor There: The Many Voices of Liminality*. ISD LLC.

Putnam, R. (1993) 'The prosperous community: Social capital and public life', *The American Prospect*, (13) pp 35–42.

Putnam, R. (2000) *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Quinn, K., Pacella, M. L., Dickson-Gomez, J., and Nydegger, L. A. (2017) 'Childhood adversity and the continued exposure to trauma and violence among adolescent gang members', *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 59(1–2) pp 36–49.

Rainey, M. J. (2019) 'Time in the shelter: Asylum, destitution and legal uncertainty', *Borderlands*, 18(2) p 27.

Ribas, V. (2016) *On the Line: Slaughterhouse Lives and the Making of the New South*. 1st edition, University of California Press.

Robison, O. M. E. F., Inglis, G., and Egan, J. (2020) 'The health, well-being and future opportunities of young carers: A population approach', *Public Health*, 185, August, pp 139–143.

Rogaly, B. (2020) *Stories from a Migrant City: Living and Working Together in the Shadow of Brexit*. 1st edition, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Rose, A. J., Smith, R. L., Glick, G. C., and Schwartz-Mette, R. A. (2016) 'Girls' and boys' problem talk: Implications for emotional closeness in friendships', *Developmental Psychology*, 52(4) pp 629–639.

Rose, E. (2017) 'Beyond social presence: Facelessness and the ethics of asynchronous online education', *McGill Journal of Education/ Revue des sciences de l'éducation de McGill*, 52(1) pp 17–32.

Rothman, E. F. and Adhia, A. (2015) 'Adolescent pornography use and dating violence among a sample of primarily Black and Hispanic, urban-residing, underage youth', *Behavioral Sciences*, 6(1) p 1.

Rutter, J. (ed.) (2015) 'Bumpy integration: Children and schooling'. *In Moving Up and Getting On*. 1st edition, Bristol: Policy Press, pp 129–152.

Ryan, L. (2011) 'Migrants' social networks and weak ties: Accessing Resources and constructing relationships post-migration', *The Sociological Review*, 59(4) pp 707–724.

Rzepnikowska, A. (2020) *Convivial Cultures in Multicultural Cities: Polish Migrant Women in Manchester and Barcelona*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Said, E. W. (1978) *Orientalism*. 1st edition, New York: Vintage.

Said, E. W. (1995) 'Afterword'. *In Orientalism*. 25th anniversary edition, London: Penguin Books.

Schinkel, W. (2019) 'Migration studies: An imposition', *Comparative Migration Studies*, 7(1).

Shady, S. L. H. and Larson, M. (2010) 'Tolerance, empathy, or inclusion? Insights from Martin Buber', *Educational Theory*, 60(1) pp 81–96.

Shifren, K. and Kachorek, L. V. (2003) 'Does early caregiving matter? The effects on young caregivers' adult mental health', *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 27(4) pp 338–346.

Simione, L. and Gnagnarella, C. (2023) 'Humor coping reduces the positive relationship between avoidance coping strategies and perceived stress: A moderation analysis', *Behavioral Sciences*, 13(2) p 179.

Sinha, S. and Back, L. (2014) 'Making methods sociable: Dialogue, ethics and authorship in qualitative research', *Qualitative Research*, 14(4) pp 473–487.

Sontag, S. (2003) *Regarding the Pain of Others*. London: Hamish Hamilton.

Spivak, G. C. (2000) 'Translation as Culture', *Parallax*, 6(1) pp 13–24.

Steinkuehler, C. A. and Williams, D. (2006) 'Where everybody knows your (screen) name: Online games as "third places"', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 11(4) pp 885–909.

Strang, A. and Ager, A. (2010) 'Refugee integration: Emerging trends and remaining agendas', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 23(4) pp 589–607.

Straussner, S. L. A. and Calnan, A. J. (2014) 'Trauma through the life cycle: A review of current literature', *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 42(4) pp 323–335.

Szakolczai, A. (2009) 'Liminality and experience: Structuring transitory situations and transformative events', *International Political Anthropology*, 2(1).

Tajic, D. and Lund, A. (2022) 'The call of ordinariness: Peer interaction and superdiversity within the civil sphere', *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*, 11(3) pp 337–364.

Temple, B. and Edwards, R. (2002) 'Interpreters/translators and cross-language research: Reflexivity and border crossings', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 1(2) pp 1–12.

Tomes, J. (1997) *Balfour and Foreign Policy: The International Thought of a Conservative Statesman*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Townsend, M. (2023) 'Revealed: Scores of child asylum seekers kidnapped from Home Office hotel', *The Observer*. [Online] 21 January. www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/jan/21/revealed-scores-of-child-asylum-seekers-kidnapped-from-home-office-hotel [Accessed: 4 July 2023].

Turkle, S. (2015) *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age*. New York: Penguin Press.

Turner, V. (1966) *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-structure*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Turner, V. (1982) *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*. New York: PAJ Publications.

Valentine, G. (2008) 'Living with difference: Reflections on geographies of encounter', *Progress in Human Geography*, 32(3) pp 323–337.

Valluvan, S. and Kalra, V. S. (2019) 'Racial nationalisms: Brexit, borders and Little Englander contradictions', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 42(14) pp 2393–2412.

Van Reenen, J. (2015) 'Austerity in the UK: Past, present and future', British Politics and Policy at LSE. [Online] 11 March. https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/austerity-past-present-and-future/ [Accessed: 18 March 2021].

Verkuyten, M. (2021) 'Public attitudes towards migrants: Understanding cross-national and individual differences', *World Psychiatry*, 20(1) pp 132–133.

Verkuyten, M. and Yildiz, A. A. (2007) 'National (dis)identification and ethnic and religious identity: A study among Turkish-Dutch Muslims', *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 33(10) pp 1448–1462.

Vertovec, S. (2007) 'Super-diversity and its implications', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 30(6) pp 1024–1054.

Vertovec, S. and Wessendorf, S. (eds) (2009) *The Multiculturalism Backlash*. 1st edition, London: Routledge.

Vervliet, M., De Mol, J., Broekaert, E., and Derluyn, I. (2014) '"That I live, that's because of her": Intersectionality as framework for unaccompanied refugee mothers', *The British Journal of Social Work*, 44(7) pp 2023–2041.

Vincent, C., Neal, S., and Iqbal, H. (2017) 'Encounters with diversity: Children's friendships and parental responses', *Urban Studies*, 54(8) pp 1974–1989.

Viruell-Fuentes, E. A., Miranda, P. Y., and Abdulrahim, S. (2012) 'More than culture: structural racism, intersectionality theory, and immigrant health', *Social Science & Medicine (1982)*, 75(12) pp 2099–2106.

Visser, K., Bolt, G., Finkenauer, C., Jonker, M., Weinberg, D., and Stevens, G. W. J. M. (2021) 'Neighbourhood deprivation effects on young people's mental health and well-being: A systematic review of the literature', *Social Science & Medicine*, 270, February, 113542.

Vollebergh, A. (2016) 'The other neighbour paradox: Fantasies and frustrations of "living together" in Antwerp', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 50(2) pp 129–149.

Walzer, M. (1989) 'Nation and universe', The Tanner Lectures on Human Values, Brasenose College, University of Oxford, 1 and 8 May. University of Utah Press. [Online] https://tannerlectures.utah.edu/_resources/documents/a-to-z/w/walzer90.pdf [Accessed 20 January 2024].

Warsi, S. (2017) *The Enemy Within: A Tale of Muslim Britain*. London: Allen Lane.

Watters, C. (2008) *Refugee Children: Towards the Next Horizon*. 1st edition, London: Routledge.

Watters, C. and Ingleby, D. (2004) 'Locations of care: Meeting the mental health and social care needs of refugees in Europe', *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry*, 27(6) pp 549–570.

Wessendorf, S. (2013) 'Commonplace diversity and the "ethos of mixing": Perceptions of difference in a London neighbourhood', *Identities*, 20(4) pp 407–422.

Wessendorf, S. (2014) *Commonplace Diversity: Social Relations in a Super-Diverse Context*. London: Palgrave Macmillan (Global Diversities).

Wessendorf, S. (2016a) 'Settling in a super-diverse context: Recent Migrants' experiences of conviviality', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 37(5) pp 449–463.

Wessendorf, S. (2016b) 'Settling in a super-diverse context: Recent migrants' experiences of conviviality', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 37(5) pp 449–463.

Wessendorf, S. (2020) 'Ethnic minorities' reactions to newcomers in East London: Symbolic boundaries and convivial labor', *British Journal of Sociology*, 71(2) pp 208–220.

Wessendorf, S. and Phillimore, J. (2019) 'New migrants' social integration, embedding and emplacement in superdiverse contexts', *Sociology*, 53(1) pp 123–138.

Wilson, E. R. Y. (2020) *Front of the House, Back of the House: Race and Inequality in the Lives of Restaurant Workers*. New York: New York University.

Wilson, H. F. (2013) 'Collective life: Parents, playground encounters and the multicultural city', *Social & Cultural Geography*, 14(6) pp 625–648.

Wilson, H. F. (2017) 'On the paradox of "organised" encounter', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 38(6) pp 606–620.

Wimmer, A. (2008) 'Elementary strategies of ethnic boundary making', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 31(6) pp 1025–1055.

Wimmer, A. (2013) *Ethnic Boundary Making: Institutions, Power, Networks*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Wimmer, A. and Glick Schiller, N. (2002) 'Methodological nationalism and the study of migration', *European Journal of Sociology*, 43(2).

Windle, J., Moyle, L., and Coomber, R. (2020) '"Vulnerable" kids going country: Children and Young people's involvement in county lines drug dealing', *Youth Justice*, 20(1–2) pp 64–78.

Winkler Reid, S. (2015) 'Making fun out of difference: Ethnicity–race and humour in a London school', *Ethnos*, 80(1) pp 23–44.

Wise, A. (2005) 'Hope and belonging in a multicultural suburb', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 26(1–2) pp 171–186.

Wise, A. (2016) 'Convivial labour and the "joking relationship": Humour and everyday multiculturalism at work', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 37(5) pp 481–500.

Wise, A. and Noble, G. (2016) 'Convivialities: An orientation', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 37(5) pp 423–431.

Ybarra, M. L., Mitchell, K. J., Hamburger, M., Diener-West, M., and Leaf, P. J. (2011) 'X-rated material and perpetration of sexually aggressive behavior among children and adolescents: Is there a link?', *Aggressive Behavior*, 37(1) pp 1–18.

Yeo, A. and Graham, J. (2015) 'A deep dive into social and emotional learning: What do the views of those involved tell us about the challenges for policy-makers?', Social and emotional learning: Skills for life and work report 3. EIF/Cabinet Office/Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission/ResearchAbility.

Yu, B., Chen, X., Li, S., Liu, Y., Jacques-Tiura, A. J., and Yan, H. (2014) 'Acculturative stress and influential factors among international students in China: A structural dynamic perspective', *PLoS ONE*, 9(4).

Zetter, R. (1991) 'Labelling refugees: Forming and transforming a bureaucratic identity', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 4(1) pp 39–62.

Index