RUNNYMEDE

The State of the Nation:

Respect as a Justification for Policy

A Runnymede Thematic Review

by Omar Khan

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Since 1968, the date of Runnymede's foundation, we have worked to establish and maintain a positive image of what it means to live affirmatively within a society that is both multi-ethnic and culturally diverse. Runnymede continues to speak with a thoughtful and independent public voice on these issues today.

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Foreword

In January 2006 the government launched its *Respect Action Plan*. Twelve Cabinet members lined up to endorse the plan and explained how and why respect was central to their brief and the policies being pursued therein. While the document's key focus is 'anti-social behaviour', it also suggests a more ambitious aim, to create a 'culture of respect' in Britain. The government cited £155 million in the Safer Stronger Communities Fund, £45 million for the Youth Justice Board, £140 million for the Single Non-Emergency Number and 'up to £80 million of new resources over two years' as policies to ensure that 'every citizen' would ultimately 'behave in a respectful way'.

Respect obviously matters to the government. It is also matters to Runnymede because human dignity and basic respect are central to a race equality agenda. As the government considers the form and content of the new Commission on Equality and Human Rights, we urge them to think more expansively about how to ensure that all citizens are treated with basic dignity and respect. Of course we must act in respectful ways towards our fellow citizens, but we must also have the self-respect to participate in civic institutions. A respect agenda that avoids these difficult questions will be less likely to create the culture of respect in Britain that we all believe is a desirable goal.

For the next three years Runnymede will be producing annual Thematic Reviews. In this, the first of such Reviews, we have focused on 'Respect' as a key government policy agenda. We believe that policy agendas are vital for crafting effective and fair policy, especially because principles are necessary to justify and ultimately to assess the consequences of various policy measures. 'Respect' can indeed provide an overarching policy agenda, but as we elaborate we need to be clearer about the meaning of respect in order to make that agenda coherent. We also explain why thinking about the needs of BME Britons helps to provide that clarity.

This only partly explains why we've chosen 'respect' as the subject of our first Thematic Review. As we have consistently emphasized, race equality goals should be integrated into all mainstream policy agendas. While most analysts and commentators understand that BME Britons have specific needs and interests, they *don't* seem to think that discussions of major policy areas such as health, education, culture and employment need to include BME citizens more centrally. This review critically evaluates the respect agenda to show why the view that BME concerns are 'separate' or 'secondary' is misguided.

'Respect' clearly resonates in public discussions. Among young people but in popular culture more generally there is a great deal of emphasis on being respected, or on not being 'dissed' (i.e. disrespected). More relevant for policymakers is anti-social behaviour, wherein out-of-control individuals are seen as threatening our social institutions and disrespecting basic codes of decent behaviour and tolerance. To make sense of these seemingly unconnected issues, this review discusses the philosophical literature on respect and indicates how it helps us unpick the issues involved.

So why have we chosen to write this review now, more than a year after the *Respect Action Plan* was published? Our first point is the general observation that the consequences of policy agendas are not immediately visible, and in order to be fair, we have waited over a year to assess the respect agenda. Second is our experience of researching *Equal Respect*, our report on anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs). Our main conclusion was that effective monitoring – and not just in terms of BME data – is simply not being done. While monitoring is not being done, it is difficult to evaluate whether or not the policies are achieving their stipulated aim, namely a broader 'culture of respect' in Britain.

In this review we endorse that aim, but explain first why we need to be clearer when we think about the idea of respect; and, second, why BME Britons need to be more centrally included in the design of fair and effective policy. In the case of respect, these points are intimately connected. Understanding the needs and interests of BME Britons reveals why the current respect agenda is too narrowly focused. We think our alternative policy framework for thinking about respect should improve the lives of BME Britons. It is also more likely to create a 'culture of respect' that would benefit all citizens of the UK.

Michelynn Laflèche
Director of the Runnymede Trust
March 2007

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Summary

This paper considers the role of respect in policy design. In our view the role of black and minority ethnic Britons has not figured deeply enough in the respect agenda, but that simply highlights a more general point. Many 'mainstream' government agendas fail to consider the impact of policies on black and minority ethnic people who are instead treated as being a separate issue deserving special policy consideration. While it is of course important that government ensures that discrimination is outlawed – and indeed this government has made much progress towards that goal – black and minority ethnic people (and indeed other disadvantaged groups) may be better served by being more centrally engaged in important policy debates.

The review begins with some general comments on policy in the introduction and why there should be 'agendas' for effective policy delivery. Section 2 considers the philosophical discussion on respect, especially two influential distinctions between different conceptions of respect. While philosophical argument cannot usually lead directly to specific policy proposals, the distinctions provided in the second section explain how and why respect can respond to the needs of BME people, especially by highlighting the importance of social justice for protecting human dignity. They also provide the parameters for how to think about respect as a justification for policies more broadly, including those under the heading of 'anti-social behaviour'.

In the third section we address these and related issues, focusing on the government's *Respect Action Plan*.[1] Then in section 4 we turn to how respect could be more expansively understood to develop fair and effective policy, especially for black and minority ethnic groups. Commitment to a race equality agenda reveals why respect should be more emphatically linked to social justice and indeed a culture of human rights. Section 5 provides a more general framework for thinking about how respect should guide policy, namely by protecting recognition respect, fostering civic virtues, and ensuring the social bases of self-respect. In the conclusion we emphasize that this enhanced respect agenda could provide fairer and more effective policies not just for BME Britons, but for all citizens.

1 *Respect Action Plan* (hereafter RAP) (2006).

1 Introduction: The Role of Policy Agendas

When designing policy, governments typically have overarching agendas. If these sometimes appear as window dressing or 'spin', there are good reasons why governments try to link their aims with broader brushstrokes or on the basis of a wider social vision. First of all, government agendas bring coherence and consistency to the development of legislation and policy across departments that may not have any obvious connection. Of course some pieces of legislation and policy are pursued independently for their good effects or obvious need, but for a government to be effective, it needs to ensure that its policies do not undermine each other, even in unexpected ways. One way of ensuring that policies are effective, consistent and beneficial is to provide an overarching set of principles to guide government action.

Historically speaking, government agendas have typically been linked to the ideological proclivities of the parties in power but also influenced by contemporary considerations. Consider four examples: the postwar Labour government development of the NHS and similar initiatives; Harold Wilson's 'white heat of technology'; Anthony Eden's attempted assertion of British influence during the Suez crisis; and Margaret Thatcher's endorsement of market forces over social justice. While all of these agendas bear some imprimatur of the party that affirmed them, they were influenced by historical trends; they also were strategies for responding to particular party

strengths – as well as perceived weaknesses.

Labour governments have often been concerned about seeming too leftwing or unfriendly to market forces. Under the current government, such concerns are obvious in understanding two of its major policy frameworks or agendas. First is the idea of 'choice', which is in many ways an affirmation of the capacity of the market to respond to human preferences better than state control. The value of choice is also clearly linked to the importance of individuals living the sorts of lives they want, free from blatant government interference but at the same time responsible for the consequences of those choices. If the choice agenda immunizes Labour against criticism that it is opposed to the market, it also aligns it with common-sense thinking on the importance of individual moral responsibility.[2]

'Choice' has perhaps attracted the most attention as a Labour policy framework, but it is not the only agenda that guides the current government. From social justice to foreign policy there are a number of additional policy frameworks that also deserve attention. This paper, however, focuses on a more recent overarching agenda of current government policy, namely 'respect'. Although the main policy area in which the idea is applied concerns 'anti-social behaviour', respect plays a wider role in government thinking, particularly what emanates from Downing Street. For example, the Number 10 website has a number of speeches headlined under the banner 'respect', including the Prime Minister's speech on returning to power for a third term on 6 May 2005.[3] In that speech respect was connected to law and order but was more expansively understood to require 'bring[ing] back a proper sense of respect… whether it's in the classroom, or on the street in town centres on a Friday or Saturday night'.

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In the third section of this document we discuss the government's framework for understanding respect and in sections 4 and 5 we consider how the idea can and should inform any government's policies, but especially how the needs of BME Britons should be emphasized in using policy to foster a 'culture of respect'. Basic human dignity and respect are central to a race equality strategy and for achieving social justice in Britain more widely. However, we begin with a summary of philosophical thinking on the issue that outlines the conceptual issues at stake for any coherent 'respect agenda'.

2 There are strengths and weaknesses to this approach, and more research should focus on how the government's choice policy actually delivers important public goods. See Weekes-Bernard (2007) for an analysis of the impact of school choice on ethnic segregation.
3 Blair (2005a).

2 Philosophical Understandings of Respect: Two Distinctions

Respect has long been considered a cornerstone of ethical theory. Indeed, Kantian moral theory views 'respect for persons' as the first proposition of morality. Thinking about how respect can and should inform policy, in this section we focus on two separate distinctions. These not only clarify important philosophical claims about the nature of respect, but also provide a guide for analysing current government policy and indicating how we would like to see the respect agenda rethought and extended.

2.1 Evaluative respect versus recognition respect

The first distinction we draw is between evaluative respect and recognition respect.[4] Evaluative respect is perhaps more familiar in ordinary discourse and is captured by the idea that people deserve respect on the basis of their attributes or behaviour. When we think about whether others are owed respect, we often evaluate their various actions and qualities and make differential judgements on whether we think a person is actually owed respect. So, for example, we respect scientists and doctors more than criminals because we think the former have qualities deserving of our respect while the latter do not.

As we explain in section 3, the Government's respect agenda is almost exclusively attuned to 'evaluative'

4 Darwall (1977) makes this distinction, though his terms are 'recognition' and 'appraisal'. The term 'evaluative' is used by Hudson (1980). For a good discussion, see Dillon (1994b) and especially Dillon (n.d.).

respect. It was concisely, if simply, captured on the original government website and in chapter seven of the Action Plan: 'Respect cannot be learned, purchased or acquired; it can only be earned'. But the idea of evaluative respect has deeper roots in the ethics of philosophers including Aristotle, who believe that certain 'virtues' should be cultivated: if we care about individuals leading good lives, we should concern ourselves with the substantive qualities that in fact make those lives good. Although virtue ethics focuses more on the qualities that make a person morally good, we can say that virtue ethics urges us to 'respect' the virtuous or morally good person. An important difficulty then arises: what qualities and actions are in fact virtuous? How can we evaluate behaviour if there are different views about the qualities to be fostered? We address this matter in the context of ethnic and cultural diversity below, but to simplify matters, evaluative respect can be encapsulated in the common adage that we should praise the virtues of saints and condemn the vices of sinners.

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But the idea that we should 'evaluate' various human beings and judge whether or not they deserve our respect is, for some, not central to moral theory, and potentially insulting. When moral philosophers consider respect, they typically have in mind a different notion than evaluative respect. Stephen Darwall has called this 'recognition' respect,[5] a central concept of Kantian moral theory. Kant's moral philosophy is often presumed to require treating everyone with equal concern and respect. His 'categorical imperative' – to treat everyone such that your behaviour can be universally willed as a general rule – is Kant's way of explaining what it means to treat people with equal concern and respect.

These somewhat difficult notions may be summed up by the idea that we must always show 'respect for persons'. Whether or not someone is talented or morally deserving, or indeed if they are a criminal, they are owed basic respect just in virtue of being a human being. That is to say, it is wrong to treat people in humiliating and disrespectful ways, even if they have committed wrongs. Philosophers sometimes capture this idea by saying that humans are ends in themselves or that they have intrinsic value, and that it is a violation of the moral law to treat them in ways that deny them that status.

This can be called 'recognition' respect because we should give appropriate recognition to persons as moral agents regardless of our evaluation of their behaviour and qualities. As Darwall clarifies: 'To say that persons as such are entitled to respect is to say that they are entitled to have other persons take seriously and weigh appropriately the fact that they are persons in deliberating about what to do'.[6] Here, as is common in contemporary moral theory, 'persons' is a moral category towards whom we must show due consideration and respect.

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In making this distinction between evaluative and recognition respect, is one conception more important or valuable than another? Furthermore, whatever the philosophical or moral merits of evaluative and recognition respect, practically minded readers may wonder whether either is more relevant or likely to be effective in designing policy. We address these questions below, but our basic position is that *an effective and beneficial respect agenda must always aim to protect recognition respect*. Black and minority ethnic people are particularly aware of how racists have denied them basic respect in the past and continue to perpetrate hate crimes and racist violence; they are therefore perhaps more cognizant of the value of human rights and other policies for protecting human dignity. At the same time, because democratic governments require and aim for citizen participation, they *must also foster a civic form of evaluative respect*. But providing a

5 Darwall (1977).
6 Darwall, reprinted in Dillon (1994a: 183).

Multiculturalism and Respect

People disagree about which actions and beliefs deserve our evaluative respect. The fact that a society comprises a number of different cultural or ethnic groups is often thought to make agreement on what we should respect even more difficult. Some have even suggested that 'multiculturalism' implies that various cultures have different conceptions of right and wrong, and not simply different styles of clothing or ways of preparing food. This becomes even more challenging if behaviour or belief is not merely *different,* but *conflicting*.

At the same time, the diversity of views about what matters in life is a necessary consequence of allowing individuals to choose how to lead their own lives. Conflicting cultures are therefore not the only source of differential evaluations of what we should value or respect. Free-market libertarians and free-love environmentalists disagree about the best way of living an individual life, but they also probably disagree about what a good society would look like.

In response we have interpreted evaluative respect in a more civic way, and we don't see why people of different cultures or faiths have any problems lining up with those values.[i] An example explains why consensus on a 'thicker' notion of evaluative respect can be difficult in multicultural society but also why it isn't necessary. For many Britons, being a good neighbour or friend involves going to the pub and having a few drinks. As in *Eastenders*, the pub can even become a central place for social gatherings in a community. But for many Muslims, alcohol consumption is negatively evaluated, and many parents would be upset if their children socialized in a pub. Of course it isn't necessary to drink alcoholic beverages at a pub and there are many teetotallers outside the Muslim faith. But the key point is that different standards of evaluative respect can lead to different sorts of social gatherings and so people can be excluded not because of discrimination but because they don't want to participate in a particular practice.

Though such dilemmas can be real and cause feelings of isolation, they shouldn't be exaggerated. What really matters is that citizens participate as equals in the public sphere and in public debate, and it is hard to see why going to the pub or not going to the pub is a necessary part of civic engagement. Government shouldn't endorse one set of values or beliefs unless it is obvious that those values are required for good citizenship. And in most cases multiculturalism therefore raises no serious difficulties: people of all backgrounds can and do accept the values of reciprocity and civic engagement.

There are two clear exceptions, both of which can be explained by the concept of respect. First, no individual or group of individuals can deny basic recognition respect to others. The most blatant forms of this may be violence against the person (including racist violence) but there are other ways that some citizens deny the moral worth of others, for example racism, sexism or homophobia.

Second, it is possible that some beliefs go against the grain of the evaluative respect required for civic engagement. Such cases are few in number, but some examples are those who believe that their religion prevents them from voting in democratic elections or who aim for a theocratic or aristocratic Britain. There may be some citizens whose ideals prevent them from participating more widely, but as long as they are a small minority and don't violate the rights of other citizens, democrats shouldn't spend needless energy focusing on their actions and beliefs.

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i Bhikhu Parekh argued this point for BME communities in Britain in the aftermath of the publication of *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain* (CFMEB 2000).

suitable standard for what is truly valuable is no easy task for government. Before turning to the question of how respect has informed policy – and how we think it should inform policy – we need to address another important philosophical distinction, namely self-respect and respect for others.

2.2 Self-respect and respect for others

Both evaluative and recognition respect are ways of showing respect for others. If we emphasize evaluative respect, we should actually respect those we deem to be good persons. We have evaluative respect when we identify worthy qualities and actions in others and respect the persons who have those qualities.

Respect for others is part of the meaning of recognition respect. When we say that morality requires us to show respect for persons, we obviously have in mind the appropriate actions and attitudes towards others. An individual who only 'recognizes' the respect owed to himself or to a particular community fails to show respect for persons and thereby acts immorally. As Darwall puts it, 'the fact that he or she is a person places moral constraints on our behaviour'. This raises the question of how respect should guide our behaviour[7] and whether or not we can undermine our *own* status as a person when we fail to behave in ways that affirm the value of respect.

The idea of self-respect is widely discussed in public discourse, but it also has an important literature in moral and political philosophy. A common way of understanding the above point is to link it to the discussion on 'recognition' respect. If we behave in ways that are hypocritical or servile, we fail to respect our own basic moral qualities or fail to respect our own intrinsic worth. According to Dillon: 'self-respect requires us to act only in ways that are consistent with our status as moral beings and to refrain from acting in ways that abase, degrade, defile or disavow our dignity'.[8]

Some may find this thought puzzling. Many people, including liberal philosophers, think it is important for individuals to make choices about their own lives. We may make mistakes and indeed harm ourselves, but it is important that we ourselves make the choices about what constitutes a good life rather than having it imposed on us by others. The question then becomes: If liberal morality emphasizes the importance of living a life of one's own choosing, can it also place limits on the content of that choice? If our choices fail to show respect for others or indeed ourselves, are such choices of no (moral) value?

Here the distinction between 'evaluative' and 'recognition' respect becomes somewhat fuzzy. The idea of 'recognition' respect captures the important truth that human beings have fundamental worth that should prevent them from being treated in certain ways: human rights may then be thought of as one way of protecting the inherent dignity that all persons share. But it is not simply others who fail to treat each other with due regard: persons can behave in ways that are contrary to their own dignity. Yet if that is the case, we must attend to people's actual behaviour to ensure that they exhibit appropriate respect for themselves as well as for others. And that seems to require us to evaluate which actions best realize the respect for autonomous persons that Kantian theories identify as the source of morality.[9]

These are tricky questions, and they only become trickier when we think about what public policies should be developed to respond to the necessity of respect. One important reason is that we need to be wary of dictating to others how to live their own lives. This concern is exacerbated when it is the state that tells people how to live their lives, a point we expand upon below. The government should not, however, shy away completely from evaluating 'uncivic' behaviour; in education policy, for example, government might be more proactive and daring in fostering civic virtues that we can all respect. (see box on education). But before turning to the role of respect in policymaking, let's consider how an influential moral philosopher has linked the concept of self-respect to more explicitly political considerations, a discussion that suggests how and in what way BME citizens may require policies to enhance their self-respect.

2.3 Rawls and self-respect

John Rawls's work is the most influential contribution to political philosophy in the postwar period. We cannot summarize his important liberal egalitarian vision here, but it is worth discussing his understanding of self-respect. For Rawls, a just society requires that every individual has certain basic goods, among which are political liberties and human rights. Significantly, Rawls includes the 'social bases of self-respect' as something 'every rational man is presumed to want' whatever his 'plan of life'.[10] It is important to underscore that Rawls focuses on the *social bases* of self-respect (and not self-

7 Darwall, in Dillon (1994a: 192).
8 Dillon (1994b: 15).
9 For an interesting interpretation, see Korsgaard (1996).
10 Rawls (1971: 62).

Migrant Communities in Britain

Runnymede has produced a number of 'Community Studies'. These have focused on less visible minority ethnic communities that are often ignored in BME research. Extracts from our recent studies of the Vietnamese and Bolivian communities indicate how the issue of 'respect' is important in these communities and why it may be helpful for thinking about policy design.

Confidence and Participation in the Vietnamese Community

Having the confidence to access conventional institutions was reported to provide a challenge for many Vietnamese in Britain. Black and minority ethnic groups have been found to be less likely to seek advice from public agencies than their white counterparts, and the Vietnamese community is no exception.[i] Among the community organizations consulted, all agreed that it is more common for people in the Vietnamese community to rely on their informal familial and community networks for help and advice. Ms Tran described the demeanour of the Vietnamese when confronted by the unfamiliar and intimidating institutional systems in Britain:

> *Vietnamese people tend to be reserved and shy coming to the building, and if they have to sign in, they don't want to come... they rather come to the restaurant and see me in the restaurant.*

'Shyness' was often brought up as a barrier to participation and engagement in interviews with members from different community organizations. This shyness created a difficulty for first-generation Vietnamese trying to use the standard British institutions to seek help and support. Among the community organizations interviewed, this inability to access mainstream services or provide written proof of their needs severely inhibited the organizations from advocating on their behalf. As Mr Lê commented, 'that is a disadvantage, that people in the community don't make themselves known to the wider society, so the funders don't think there is a need.'

Lack of confidence in navigating these services means more demand for services provided by Vietnamese organizations, which have difficulty sustaining them. This lack of confidence inhibits access to what should be conventional services and participation in other aspects of British society.[ii]

Skills and Subsistence Among Bolivian Migrants

Deskilling was also mentioned as yet another source of frustration and feeling of debasement. Many of the interviewees were highly educated but found it impossible to find a job suitable to their skills. While immigration status was certainly a strong factor, it was by no means the only one. Some speculated that even if they had full administrative permission to work in Britain, inconsistent Home Office immigration policies could change their situation at any time, thus making them unemployable in employment sectors requiring skills and dedication: 'I have the commitment. But the Home Office doesn't have the commitment with my company. If tomorrow, the Home Office say "I don't want to give you visa. So what?" It's not good for the company. So the company doesn't want us' (Marcela). In this respect, interviewees felt that being Bolivian per se is the source of the predicament of deskilling, and irregular immigration status is an unfortunate side effect...

...20 working hours are unrealistic in meeting simple subsistence needs in London. Furthermore, a number of interviewees were of the opinion that the 20 hour limit, along with a volatile visa situation, made them virtually unemployable in any line of work that required dedication, thereby ruling out work suitable to their skills or level of education...[W]hen Hernando states that 'if you are Bolivian, it doesn't matter if you are a genius. You are a Bolivian. And that's it. It's a legal matter. No more. I cannot work,' he is acutely aware of the intricate relationship between his nationality and his immigration status.[iii]

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i Bagwell (2006: 52).
ii Text extracted from Sims (2007a: 6-7).
iii Text extracted from Sveinsson (2007).

respect itself) as the relevant question for political philosophy. What does he mean by this?

While Rawls argues that 'unless our endeavours are appreciated by our associates it is impossible for us to maintain the conviction that they are worthwhile', this does not require that others find our endeavours valuable regardless of their content. Instead, 'it normally suffices that for each person there is some association (one or more) to which he belongs and within which the activities that are rational for him are publicly affirmed by others'.[11] As Dillon helpfully summarizes: '[S]ince self-respect is vital to individuals' ability to pursue and fulfill their life plans and since its bases are social, just institutions and policies must be designed to support rather than undermine self-respect'.[12]

In section 4, we say something further about how these Rawlsian insights have important implications for disadvantaged groups including black and minority ethnic people. The argument is that when individuals are for whatever reason lacking the social relationships that enable basic self-respect, the government should adopt policies to raise their standing. For example, a group may be so badly perceived by others that no individual member is able to participate as an equal in the public sphere or in public institutions. Or they may find that the group in which their self-respect is affirmed is so narrow that they still lack the self-esteem to engage in wider public discourses.

'[S]ince self-respect is vital to individuals' ability to pursue and fulfill their life plans and since its bases are social, just institutions and policies must be designed to support rather than undermine self-respect'.

Rawls's view provides a way of thinking about the relationship between evaluative and recognition respect. On the one hand, he insists that everyone has a right to basic self-respect and so clearly implies that it is a universally objective value for all individuals. To treat persons with equal concern and respect (i.e. recognition respect) is to allow (and perhaps enable) them to act in such a way that realizes self-respect. At the same time, however, people have different capacities for and different conceptions of the substance of self-respect and according to Rawls we can't be required to respect those conceptions of the good life that we find odd or objectionable. What is required is that everyone has some social relationship in which the value of their projects is affirmed, an argument that explains why Rawls talks of the 'social bases' of self-respect and not simply self-respect itself.[13] Such social bases can and should be an aim of government policy given the detrimental consequences of low self-respect.

2.4 Pluralism, respect and policy

This, then, points to an important difference between contemporary liberal theories that attend to the importance of 'pluralism' and the sorts of 'virtue' theories we summarized above. For thinkers such as Rawls, the opportunity and capacity for individuals to choose more or less freely necessarily results in a pluralistic society. That is to say, in a liberal society, individuals will come to endorse different ways of living or what Rawls calls 'different conceptions of the good'. This means that it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to articulate a precise account of the virtues that constitute a good life with which all citizens will agree. Agreement on 'evaluative respect' is similarly complicated: if a liberal society results in different conceptions of the good, individuals will then deem different qualities and actions as morally worthy and so any overarching conception of evaluative respect will be unobtainable.

As we argue below, this conclusion is too fatalistic. Although the government must accept reasonable pluralism and not dictate the sorts of lives its citizens should lead, it cannot remain wholly agnostic about what behaviours and values are endorsed by different individuals. It is important that we show respect for each other, tolerate reasonable pluralism and don't prejudge each other on the basis of arbitrary differences. But if we think that cuisine or clothing choices or the existence of multiple cultures more generally are signs of uncivic behaviour or values, we stretch the concept of civic engagement too far. While we should encourage more socially engaged lives that contribute to overall human welfare, we can't assume there is only one mode of living that ensures it or that ethnic diversity undermines it (see box on multiculturalism).

The above discussion shows why a government agenda driven by 'respect' must be aware of the

11 Rawls (1971: §67).
12 Dillon (1994b: 37).
13 It also explains why Rawls's argument is not as 'atomistic' or ignorant of structural social inequalities as some critics assume.

complications that arise from the distinction between 'recognition' and 'evaluative' respect. If a democratic government must always ensure that citizens are treated with due consideration and respect, it also minimally requires citizens not to engage in acts that trample the respect and self-respect of others. This will require some evaluation and indeed endorsement of certain sorts of action and the rejection of other sorts; but it also suggests government responsibility to enable individuals to realize evaluative respect, affirm recognition respect and to try to ensure the social bases of self-respect. Crucial in this package is the continued affirmation of human rights and a commitment to social justice, ideals that should be more closely allied with our thinking on respect. Let us now turn to how the current respect agenda meets these criteria before considering whether other sorts of policies need to be considered in advancing an ethically attractive and coherent 'respect' agenda.

3 The Government's Respect Agenda

In January 2006 the Labour Government launched its 'respect agenda'. As mentioned above, the concept had already been addressed in Tony Blair's 2005 post-election speech, and it clearly has strong support from Downing Street. Indeed the Prime Minister's speech in Watford in September 2005 indicates the emphasis he has placed on the concept of respect, at least since he was shadow spokesperson on Home Affairs:

> *But we have called this agenda Respect, and it is something that has been very close to my heart for a long time, before I became leader of the Opposition, never mind Prime Minister, and what it is about is really this, it is about how we change not just the law, but the culture of our country to put the law abiding majority back in charge of their local communities. Antisocial behaviour, in particular violent crime, remains at the top of the public's concerns, and rightly so, from petty vandalism and binge drinking, through to serious drug and gun crime, there are aspects of life today in Britain that are completely unacceptable.*[14]

This quote also highlights another important feature of the respect agenda, namely the focus on criminal law and in particular anti-social behaviour. Of course the Prime Minister also affirms that 'respect' is wider than these issues, and so to understand the Government's understanding of Respect, we now analyse the 'Respect Action Plan' published in January 2006.

3.1 Summarizing the Respect Action Plan

The Respect Action Plan is divided into seven substantive chapters, four of which focus on young people and parents. Indeed, much of the Plan focuses on the relationships between parents and their children and how values of respect are no longer instilled in a 'small minority' of troublesome families. The Plan cites evidence that a mere 2.7% of pupils accounted for nearly 50% of unauthorized school absences[15] and that 85% of people in Britain believe that poor parenting is the primary cause of decreased respect in society.[16] Other chapters focus on strengthening the community and the enforcement of 'community justice' but the first chapter, 'Respect and the Case for Change', explains the understanding of respect at the heart of this agenda.

Government defines respect as 'an expression of something that people intuitively understand. It relies on a shared understanding and clear rules and is strengthened by people acting together to tackle problems and improve their lives.'[17] This definition is unfortunately vague, but in articulating the conditions required for respect, a clearer picture emerges of respect as dependent on 'a shared commitment to a common set of values, expressed through behaviour that is considerate of others'.

The Action Plan emphasizes that most people do in fact share these values; indeed it claims that for most Britons 'the values and behaviour that support respect are automatic and part of the habits of everyday life…The majority of people are considerate of others and do their utmost to bring up their children to behave in a similar way.' At the same time, however, there is concern that the 'values necessary to support respect are becoming less widely held – and that…has led to an increase in

14 Blair (2005b).
15 *Respect Action Plan* (RAP), p. 13.
16 RAP, p. 17.
17 This quote and those in the following three paragraphs are from RAP, p. 4.

disrespectful and anti-social behaviour.'

The government admits that the 'causes of disrespectful behaviour are harder to pin down' though they mention 'broad economic and social trends' that have changed 'family structures' as well as the 'decline in the social influence of the Church,…trade unions and other community organizations'. Significantly, the report denies that ethnic and cultural diversity have been a primary cause, but notes that 'with out [*sic*] a shared framework of respect and rules, people can be susceptible to the argument that differences in culture and lifestyle are undermining community cohesion'.

Having said that it is hard to identify causes, the Action Plan does mention factors which are associated with the key problem of anti-social behaviour, namely parenting, schools, 'community factors' and 'individual factors'. By 'community factors', the document means 'living in deprived areas' and one of the strengths of the document is its emphasis that people in such areas are more vulnerable to crime and what is called 'anti-social behaviour'. Indeed, the government accepts that general policy measures to improve the lives of the most disadvantaged communities can have an important impact on respect, including better educational opportunities for young people.

Having explained the government's understanding of respect, what sorts of policies does it suggest? Many have already been developed and will be familiar, especially anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) but also parenting classes and other measures to tackle truancy, exclusion and poor behaviour in schools. There is also a range of penalties proposed for the minority of persistent offenders, including parents; as the document notes, over 50% of ASBOs are given to adults. Finally, and more ambitiously, the document aims to 'create cultural change'[18] by which they seem to mean that anti-social behaviour is sanctioned more effectively and so decreases for the more disadvantaged members of British society.

3.2 Evaluation of the Respect Action Plan

One important feature of the Action Plan is that it actually presents a number of policies that were already developed when the plan was written. The Labour Government has consistently emphasized its commitment to improve educational opportunities for young people. At the same time, they have been anxious not to be seen as 'soft' on crime, and policies such as ASBOs were developed many years before the respect agenda. So we should be careful in assuming that there is always an obvious and straightforward link between the policies recommended in the action plan and the respect-based justification provided for them in this document.

Nevertheless, the Action Plan insists that its policies are driven by a commitment to respect. We should therefore consider how respect is understood in terms of the philosophical discussion in section 2. In this assessment of the Action Plan, we focus on anti-social behaviour not only because it is probably the most familiar theme, garners the most media attention, and has the most prominence in a variety of government documents and statements, but also because it is an important topic that hasn't been given proper analysis. Furthermore, the plan places a clear emphasis on 'behaviour', in particular anti-social behaviour. Even when positively defining respect, the government focuses on certain 'rules' and 'considerate behaviour'.

This is clearly a conception of *evaluative respect*, especially where the document states that 'respect cannot be learned, purchased or acquired; it can only be earned'[19] or the general headline of the report, namely 'give respect, get respect'. Such respect is 'evaluative' because the individuals in question are deemed to have poor behaviour and so are undeserving of our respect. According to this document those who don't 'give respect' can hardly expect other citizens or indeed the government to treat them with respect. The plan implies that these individuals undermine our social fabric and that we are right to refuse to grant them (evaluative) respect since their actions and behaviour are blatantly disrespectful and often wrong. As we punish and socially sanction criminals for their wrong behaviour, so too should we deny respect to those whose actions are unworthy.

If this sounds unattractive, many have emphasized that the individuals in question are themselves showing disrespect for others: those who make their neighbours' lives unliveable can hardly be viewed as respectful of others. But this sort of language is actually unhelpful for understanding the issues involved. While it is indeed true that we can deny respect to those whose behaviour seriously contravenes acceptable social behaviour, this cannot be construed so widely as to include any behaviour that some individuals happen not to like. For example, the BBC reports that some people find kebab eating on the streets to be 'disrespectful'[20] but it is hard to

18 Most explicitly on page 7.
19 RAP, p. 30.
20 The BBC's site on respect is a good general one.

Students and University Life

Our community studies project is also examining communities of space or region. For example, we have recently completed the first stages of research on university life experiences in the University of London.[i] The idea of 'respect' comes through in many of these interviews, two of which we extract below:

A: **That's the first step, in any society or culture, even if we're foreigners, or not British we still need to respect the British culture, language, because we are living in their country. Even if it is multicultural, even if I go somewhere and I see things British people are doing that I might not like, I still go with them. Even though I'm Iranian and Middle Eastern I'm not going to do the things that you do, it's their life, it's their country and it's their culture. And they are doing a lot to accept other people, its not easy for them, I don't think it's easy for any culture to accept other cultures inside of them and greet them like the British are doing. I chose Britain as a country to study, I came here two years ago because I knew that I was going to be respected, so since I knew that I was going to be respected, I knew that I had to respect them as well...**

I know lots of Iranians that don't have British friends, and it doesn't make sense, if you come here to study then you should expect to go into that culture and explore... and lots of people I know think like this, and it is the case of luck that when you approach a British person it's just luck if they accept you for the first time then you'll be accepted in the rest of the groups that you go to. But if you don't, then you'll have this perception on your side that British people won't accept me. And British people feel the same way as well. If they have one Asian or Middle Eastern person approaching them and they don't like him, then they say that all of them are like him. That's the whole problem, the generalization of cultures.

B: **...In my building there's a lot of Asians and I have Asian friends but we don't tend to hang out, and I think you're right there are cliques. So the Asians have their own culture, and they're second generation immigrants and their parents placed their culture on them - they've been socialized into that community. So the Asians, they go to that shisha place because it's their culture - they don't like drinking, or they don't drink. I have a great deal of Muslim friends and they don't drink, it's their culture. Whereas you go into [student bar] and everyone in there is white. You've got some people who aren't white, but they sound white because they've been socialized in white culture. You know X? He grew up around Brick Lane in that culture and he doesn't socialize with the white kids so much. I think it's a culture thing rather than a race thing, it just happens to coincide with race....**

I think everything does revolve around drinking. I don't know about the Muslim society, but if you join a sport clubs then every social is drinking. Some people may not want to join a society because you don't have an interest in certain things, but really drinking seems like one of the main options. I know that in the first term we had a friend in our circle who was white, but she was Muslim. And she would have problems because we would always go to the pub and she would come but because people drink she would feel uncomfortable. And when people had a couple drinks and she was stone-face sober and everyone else was off their face she didn't know what to do and so she would leave. She's left the university because she didn't get on socially. There wasn't a lot for her to do. She didn't feel comfortable, she didn't feel comfortable with other Muslims because she was white and she felt rejected. And even in Mosque not many people would talk to her.

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i Unpublished interview material from the University life experiences project (Sims 2007b).

see how that is true unless they vandalize the pavement with their rubbish or otherwise cause a genuine nuisance that prohibits others from walking outside. To deny respect to individuals because of their behaviour, the behaviour in question must actually be disrespectful, where disrespectful is defined as failing to recognize that every human being has a right to decent treatment or where publicly important values are undermined.

3.3 Why the Respect Action Plan needs to distinguish between evaluative and recognition respect

The Action Plan cannot provide a more precise discussion of respect because of its failure to make the distinctions suggested in the second section, especially that between recognition respect and evaluative respect. The Action Plan's discussion of behaviour should attune our thinking in terms of evaluative respect. When we say that people don't deserve our respect, we can only mean that they don't deserve our evaluative respect. What we can't say is that some individuals, even criminals and murderers, don't deserve our recognition respect. Indeed, the very use of the term 'deserve' is inappropriate in thinking about recognition respect: showing respect for persons as moral agents simply means that there are certain ways of

What we can't say is that some individuals, even criminals and murderers, don't deserve our recognition respect.

treating them that are wrong, and whether or not they 'deserve' our respect obscures matters. The confusion is deepened by the statement that respect 'can't be learned, purchased or acquired'. This is a false choice if we are discussing *recognition* respect. Of course it can't be learned, purchased or acquired, but neither is it 'deserved' except in the sense in which *all* moral agents deserve to be treated with equal concern and respect. This simply means that *all* persons deserve recognition respect and that we aren't faced with a choice of thinking that some people can 'learn, purchase or acquire' respect while others 'deserve' it. We cannot deny recognition respect to anyone.

Denial of recognition respect is, indeed, what is most objectionable in the most extreme forms of what has been called anti-social behaviour. Those who deny that they must treat others as deserving equal concern and respect are essentially denying that they have moral duties to other humans. The case of perpetrators of hate crime or racist violence perhaps clarifies this point. Many have noted the incoherence of such views where the perpetrators demand that they be treated with respect even as they refuse to respect others. Here too the distinction between evaluative and recognition respect is useful. When we say to an offender that we are denying them respect for failing to respect others, what we in fact are saying is that we are denying them evaluative respect for their failure to treat others with recognition respect. This in no way entails that we are denying them (the perpetrators) recognition respect. This, of course, must actually be true. If we begin to deny that criminals or perpetrators are owed a basic dignity and respect we lose the moral authority to condemn their behaviour. It is of course also true that it is typically ineffective baldly to condemn offenders (without also developing policies to rehabilitate them), but it is also morally wrong to fail to treat them with equal concern and respect. At the same time we must intervene to stop and punish perpetrators because when we see others abused and fail to intercede we can become complicit in an action that fails to treat victims with equal concern and respect. This suggests the by now familiar point that many forms of anti-social behaviour are actually already criminal, including of course the violent *crime* mentioned in the Prime Minister's speech, but also drug-dealing and destroying or damaging property.[21]

Perhaps the government is focusing only on evaluative respect, even among the perpetrators of crimes. That is to say, according to the Respect Action Plan, anti-social behaviour is more about failing to abide by rules and show societal consideration or respect for authority than about denying the basic dignity of human beings. Indeed, that latter phrase sounds far too high-minded to be uttered by a dissolute teenager or an irresponsible parent. Instead, anti-social behaviour should be defined as a denial of evaluative respect to those who are in fact owed such respect; 'yobs' seem to think that other people have no qualities that they should respect. In bemoaning the loss of respect, Roger Scruton has said:

> *Children are encouraged to think that they are the equals of their parents, their teachers and people in authority…They are not taught to address adults correctly or to defer to adult opinion. …The respect-free playground leads to the respect-*

21 See Isal (2006: 10) and Chakrabarti (2006).

> *free adult community... news programmes, chat shows and interviews are conducted entirely without deference towards the knowledge, culture or social standing of the people who appear on them…The purpose of interviewing some public figure is not to gain instruction but to catch him out; the purpose of discussing some difficult issue is not to resolve it but to generate a heated exchange. It is regarded as wholly permissible to make personal remarks and ad hominem arguments, and the normal titles to respect, such as knowledge, expertise and high office, are deliberately brought down to a level where they can be laughed at.*[22]

Scruton may be upset at the loss of 'deference' that the government claims has nothing to do with its respect agenda, but it is worth thinking about the implications of his argument even if we don't hold his more conservative views. Scruton clearly believes that certain qualities or action do indeed deserve respect, and we may be inclined to agree with him in the case of 'knowledge, expertise and high office'. Whether or not we endorse Scruton's particular qualities, his quote captures the key insight of evaluative respect: we should respect some things because they are indeed objectively valuable and worthy. We might then think that the Respect Action Plan – and indeed any plausible government respect agenda – should focus on evaluative respect and leave the concept of 'recognition' respect to moral philosophers or, at a pinch, to constitutional and human rights lawyers.

It is of course tedious for the government to distinguish continually between 'evaluative' and 'recognition' respect. And it is a distinction unlikely to register with the general public for being overly complicated. In section 4, however, we suggest some ways of ensuring that the difference between these forms of respect does not get lost. If we only ever discuss 'evaluative' respect and deny that some part of the citizenry is owed respect then we are in danger of failing to respect all as moral equals, a chance that no democratic government can happily take. For governments committed to social justice, ensuring that its citizens are treated with basic dignity is absolutely fundamental, further explaining why a commitment to human rights should have been included in the action plan and ought to be included in respect policy in the future.

3.4 The focus on behaviour: why self-respect matters

The Action Plan's focus on behaviour would also be strengthened by distinguishing between respect for others and self-respect. Perhaps because the latter concept is viewed as part of a selfish 'me first' attitude, it is forgotten how being told that you are a worthless, talentless individual not only often undermines self-worth, but is also morally objectionable. We cannot simply endorse people's self-conception where these are deluded or abhorrent, but government must always affirm the dignity of persons partly because it contributes to the value of self-respect. Furthermore, by helping communities along the lines suggested in the Action Plan, the government ensures that what Rawls calls the 'social bases of self-respect' are in fact realized by all of its citizens.

This leads us from the point that we may deny evaluative respect to perpetrators of anti-social behaviour to the observation that those who perpetuate it are failing to show adequate self-respect *to themselves*. Individuals who debase themselves by acting on desires they know will harm others and cause themselves injury cannot have a happy sense of self-worth, and if they think they do we may rightly ask if they aren't mistaken. Social psychologists often note that criminals have a low sense of self-worth. While that cannot justify their behaviour it does indicate how important the concept of self-respect is in dealing with perpetrators. If we can enhance the social bases of self-respect for vulnerable people, we might limit the amount of anti-social behaviour in the future. Paraphrasing the famous words of a one-time shadow Home Secretary, we need to be 'tough on the causes of crime'.

At the same time, those who live in communities afflicted by anti-social behaviour may have poor self-respect. Again following Rawls, those who have no or few social connections in which the value and worth of their life projects is affirmed find it difficult to participate as equals in public debate. This is because they are denied the social bases of self-respect by those who undermine communities and make it more difficult to live in civil society. These may be extreme examples, but the common observation that perpetrators fail to show (evaluative and recognition) respect to their victims is not the end of the issue. Fair and cohesive communities require social networks that enable individuals to live a good life and

22 See BBC news website (2006a).

Citizenship and Education

'We should not, must not, dare not, be complacent about the health and future of British democracy. Unless we become a nation of engaged citizens, our democracy is not secure.'
Lord Chancellor, 1998 (from Citizenship Foundation website)

The idea of 'citizenship education' stems from the recognition that democratic governments must promote certain sorts of actions and behaviours. More specifically, democracy requires an engaged citizenry if it is to maintain its legitimacy and more 'publicly minded' individuals are therefore better for democracy's success than apathetic ones. Those who demonstrate appropriate civic attitudes towards their fellow citizens are then due evaluative respect if we wish to maintain our democracy. If individuals cease to be concerned with public issues, governments may not show consideration for their views and so instilling civic attitudes in young people becomes an important and valid aim of government policy.

In response to these and other issues, citizenship was introduced into the curriculum in 2003 following the Crick report[i] commissioned by then Education Secretary David Blunkett. While there is some concern about its teaching stemming from teachers' skills,[ii] resources and indeed some schools' commitment, a number of government reports indicate why citizenship education can be important for fostering respectful behaviour.[iii]

Teaching basic information about our legal and political status as citizens is of course necessary and important. However, citizenship education needs to go beyond this factual information, and encourage students to be more engaged in public life but also to participate more in their community. As the *Diversity and Citizenship Review* (DCR) emphasizes, citizenship should be taught as a full subject in its own right and not merely as a 'bolt-on', but the ideals of participation and engagement should also become more widely disseminated through a school's ethos.[iv] The Citizenship Foundation endorses both these recommendations, and helpfully distinguishes between three aspects:

1. **'distinctive content': facts about politics and the law; understanding concepts such as justice;**
2. **'distinctive focus': on everyday topical issues that concern young people as citizens rather than private individuals;**
3. **'distinctive approach to learning': active involvement including debates in the classroom and participation outside school.[v]**

Since so much good research has been written on these topics, we focus here on what the above review terms 'education for diversity':

> *whilst we need to understand and celebrate the diverse cultures and backgrounds of the UK's population, we also need to acknowledge what brings us together as active citizens and agents of change...concepts of citizenship are deficient without a substantive understanding of diversity*[vi]

As the DCR recognizes, this also links to the value of 'community cohesion' wherein understanding of and participation in one's polity requires that we all experience and appreciate the worth of equal citizenship. We endorse the recommendation of a 'fourth strand' of citizenship on modern British cultural and social history that doesn't shy away from difficult topics but engages pupils in real-world concerns that matter to them (see DCR Appendix for lesson plans). This is a concrete way to enhance evaluative respect for all young people and is more likely to lead to a 'culture of respect' in the long term.

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i Advisory Group on Citizenship (1998).
ii But for a possible resource see our guide for assisting teachers in promoting race equality: Runnymede Trust (2003).
iii See, e.g., Ofsted (2003).
iv See (DCR): Ajegbo, Kiwan and Sharma (2007).
v See Citizenship Foundation website.
vi DCR, p. 21.

experience self-respect and these are also undermined by anti-social behaviour. Responding to the causes of crime by raising the self-respect of potential perpetrators may have more wide-reaching effects, namely strengthening and protecting social networks. In the process, we may all experience real benefits in terms of enhanced self-respect and indeed greater respect for and in our communities.

3.5 Expanding the focus of respect

This section has evaluated the government's current thinking on respect, in particular its focus on anti-social behaviour. Explaining the government's respect agenda in greater detail helps us understand why the policies it pursues might (or might not) be an effective remedy for achieving their aims. Within that framework, we have suggested why the philosophical distinctions in section 2 are of more than academic interest. Distinguishing between different kinds of respect would ensure that the justification of policy is more coherent; also that policy aims are more clearly specified. Even accepting the focus on anti-social behaviour, a respect agenda can and should be clearer about specifying why policies will in fact achieve a greater level of respect. But that requires greater clarity about the various conceptions of respect.

If the justification of a policy is to combat those who disrespect others and to create a 'culture of respect', it is important that it actually does so.

As it stands, however, the Respect Action Plan is not only vague about the definition of respect but overly focused on anti-social behaviour. This is not to say anti-social behaviour is unimportant, but instead that a respect agenda must be broader to achieve the aims suggested by the concept of 'respect' as a justification. If the government recognizes the need for improved opportunities, it is not only because young people would behave in a more respectful fashion, but also because it would enhance their self-respect, lead to greater recognition respect for everyone and also encourage young people to 'earn' evaluative respect (see box on citizenship and education). If the justification of a policy is to combat those who disrespect others and to create a 'culture of respect', it is important that it actually does so. And in thinking about respect as a justification for combating anti-social behaviour, it is important to emphasize that we are talking about evaluative respect, the respect we accord people for their qualities and actions, and not recognition respect, the respect that everyone is due simply in virtue of being a person. Here the importance of race equality and human rights again come to the fore, and we think a respect agenda would benefit by focusing more centrally on these ideals. When policies are administered they should not, even inadvertently, lead to a denial of recognition respect to some citizens. This is not simply a question of the government's attitude, but that of other citizens. If some citizens interpret a policy in such a way as to undermine the respect owed to their fellow citizens, that consequence must be tackled by good policy design too.

In the next section we expand the discussion to include what it means for black and minority ethnic people to be treated with respect. This leads to a more general discussion about how the concept of respect can and should guide policy in section 5. A key argument is that race equality goals elucidate why social justice and human rights should be at the heart of a respect agenda. We conclude by suggesting why black and minority ethnic concerns should be more centrally addressed by a respect or indeed any policy agenda.

4 Showing Respect for BME Britons: Designing Fair and Effective Policy

Responding to and trying to discourage anti-social behaviour must be a central part of government policy, especially where such behaviour seems to be increasingly blighting the lives of disadvantaged people in Britain. One of the more graphic pieces of evidence of its prevalence was the mock 'shooting' of David Cameron by a young person when the Leader of the Opposition was visiting an estate in Manchester. When journalists talked to the young man and his friends, they didn't know who Cameron was and articulated their ambitions as making as much money as possible and owning a nice car.[23] For many observers their

23 The teenager was arrested on a drug charge the next day and had been 'tagged' following earlier offences. This suggests that existing criminal law can tackle some of the problems associated with 'anti-social behaviour'. See BBC news website (2007).

behaviour, encompassing daily drug use and school truancy since the age of 13, encapsulated what is wrong with young people in parts of Britain today.

[W]e believe that a more balanced respect agenda, distinguishing between evaluative respect and recognition respect and also aiming to ensure self-respect, can respond to anti-social behaviour as well as deliver other goals.

Such cases are deeply dismaying. In turning our attention to other arenas of policy we do not wish to minimize their frequency or impact on those living in the most vulnerable areas. Indeed, we believe that a more balanced respect agenda, distinguishing between evaluative respect and recognition respect and also aiming to ensure self-respect, can respond to anti-social behaviour as well as deliver other goals. In the previous section we indicated how we believe a respect agenda can and should respond to anti-social behaviour, and so we now turn to why we think the concept can be expanded in other areas. In particular, the inequalities that continue to face black and minority ethnic people throughout Britain could be tackled through some consideration of respect. The key thesis is that policies should (1) show respect for persons and (2) foster respectful civic virtues, but that this may also require (3) policies to raise (BME) self-respect.

4.1 BME Britons and respect as a policy justification

The central wrong of racism is the denial that black and minority ethnic individuals are morally equal with whites. Racists typically deny 'recognition' respect to black and minority ethnic individuals and so fail to show respect for persons. One of the original aims of antidiscrimination legislation was to ensure that blacks and Asians were in fact treated with equal concern and respect, and we should commend those foresighted enough to have passed such legislation. There are now indeed far fewer individuals who fail to show basic recognition respect to black and minority ethnic Britons, but the apparent increase in BNP vote share[24] demonstrates that the ideal of moral equality is still not affirmed by all Britons. We also know that hate crimes and racist violence haven't been eliminated, and those acts should be more widely seen as violations of recognition respect.

Racism has not been eliminated in British (or most other) societies. Statistical evidence continues to reveal differential educational results for some minority ethnic groups, though it must be recognized that some groups are doing very well. More relevant to this discussion is the overrepresentation of black and minority ethnic Britons in the criminal justice system. Whether it comes to being stopped, questioned, cautioned, pleas, conviction rates or prison terms, black Britons in particular are overrepresented at every stage of the criminal justice system.

Awareness of this fact was one of the two key foci of our report *Equal Respect*,[25] a study of anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) and their impact on BME populations. Unfortunately, the major finding of that report is that data on ASBOs are not adequately kept. This is unsatisfactory for at least three reasons. First is the general point that policies need to be adequately assessed in order to be effective. Whatever the aim of a policy, its actual impact and delivery must be appropriately monitored. How else can we evaluate whether the policy is in fact achieving its aim?

Whatever the aim of a policy, its actual impact and delivery must be appropriately monitored. How else can we evaluate whether the policy is in fact achieving its aim?

Second is that when a particular community are known to be already overrepresented in the criminal justice system, the policy design should take that into account. This is *not* to say that policies must always impact every community equally; rather they should be tailored so that their impact is in fact fair. There is little evidence that ASBOs were developed in a way that considered how they might impact different communities unfairly. Perhaps the best example is the lack of evidence that ASBOs are being used to tackle racist violence. According to the only existing survey, while a significant number of offenders are in fact guilty of racist harassment, this offence does not typically figure in the

24 Especially in the 2006 local elections, although historically such success has not translated into General Election vote share. The Daily Telegraph (2006) claims BNP vote share may be at 7%. Prior to the election, Margaret Hodge, MP suggested that one in five might vote BNP. See BBC news website (2006b).
25 Isal (2006).

Welfare and Dependency

As the debate on parenting heats up, single mothers have again become a focus of government policy. This is further evidence that government has difficulty remaining 'neutral' in terms of evaluative respect. More specifically, many assume that citizens in a democracy should contribute to the common good. Given that we all benefit from living in society, we seem to have duties of reciprocity to ensure that we 'give back' to our communities, and many interpret reciprocity as including an obligation to work.

Two different interpretations of evaluative respect guide policies that encourage single mothers to work. First is that such mothers are a bad role model for their children and second is that they benefit and don't give back to society. Both interpretations are vulnerable to obvious criticism, particularly the idea of single mothers as bad role models. If part of the aim of parenting is to raise healthy, confident, independent and responsible adults, that obviously requires adult supervision and indeed role models. Many single mothers only 'choose' not to work in the sense that they are particularly committed to and good at ensuring their child's welfare. The idea that an absent mother working in a minimum wage job is a better role model for a child than a present mother in receipt of benefits is dubious.

Reciprocity cuts both ways in the debate on single mothers joining the workforce. Although we all benefit from society and so have obligations to reciprocate, many citizens - and not just single mothers - clearly fail to fulfil those obligations. Furthermore it simply isn't true that single mothers give nothing back to society. Raising a responsible child who will contribute to society in the future is no small benefit for all of us; we should be wary of the notion that a mother's (or indeed anyone else's) reciprocity is only discharged through labour market participation, particularly if such labour is enforced low-pay work.

Discussions of welfare often raise the problem of 'dependency'. The idea is that welfare recipients lack self-respect and that others view them as undeserving of (evaluative) respect. But as long as citizens don't deny recognition respect to welfare recipients, many seem to think we can legitimately disrespect 'lifestyles' in which government benefits provide the only means of income and the only way of ensuring basic human needs. Of course this assumes that welfare recipients choose to live a certain 'lifestyle', but even if that were true, it's not always obvious that those receiving benefits lack self-respect.

The government also needs to be wary that the very act of distributing benefits can be humiliating. If a citizen is required to demonstrate that they have sought and failed to gain employment, they are in effect asked to admit that they have no skills or talents to earn a living - a claim that may be deeply hurtful to their self-esteem.[i] Identifying oneself as 'disabled' was once similarly humiliating though the disability rights movement has provided a more positive interpretation of being 'differently abled'. Needs-based benefits then raise a significant dilemma: being required to tell the government of a particular failing in order to be granted benefits can undermine self-respect and cause others to view beneficiaries as less deserving of their respect. At the same time, the government must provide such benefits to instantiate basic recognition respect so that everyone's basic needs are met. While the concept of respect provides some guidance in thinking about welfare dependency, it also shows why the issues involved are far less straightforward than they initially appear.

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i Jonathan Woolf has written on this topic at some length; see Woolf (1998) and Woolf and de-Shalit (2007); see also Anderson (1999).

application of an ASBO. That is to say, the sorts of orders actually applied to such offenders refer to their other offences, not the racist element.

Third, and last, is that under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act the government is legally obligated to monitor policy. Not monitoring ASBOs for the impact on BME individuals is a breach of the law. We have discussed these issues at greater length in our report Equal Respect, and we haven't concluded that ASBOs can never be an effective policy. Rather, we recommend better evaluation of the application of ASBOs and their effects. In all these ways, it is far from clear that ASBO policy is doing the most it can to foster a culture of respect, particularly in relation to respectful attitudes towards black and minority ethnic Britons. Since we have addressed these concerns at greater length in that report, let us clarify the different ways in which respect can be understood as a justification for policy, beginning with recognition respect.

4.2 Racism and recognition respect

Above we observed that the most overt forms of racism, denying the moral equality of some category of persons, are a denial of recognition respect. We must therefore continue to support measures that recognize the worth of all humans. In a liberal democracy, the rights that are conferred on every citizen are perhaps the most important example. The very idea of 'human rights' is not simply a legalistic construct, but a way of showing – in practice – respect for persons. If antidiscrimination legislation is typically required to instantiate those rights for members of disadvantaged groups, particularly those belonging to minority ethnic groups, we should not forget this central role for human rights.

Furthermore, to maintain its democratic legitimacy, a state must respect the basic worth of every citizen. The origins of liberal democratic theory can be found in the idea of a 'social contract' in which the legitimacy of the state lies in its protecting the value of individuals, even as those individuals agree to accept the authority of the state. This has since been buttressed by the idea that human rights are a particularly important component of democratic legitimacy. Both liberal morality – in recognizing the worth of persons – and liberal democratic theory – where its legitimacy derives from the consent of the governed – place high value on recognition respect and on human rights as instantiating that value.

So any respect agenda must affirm the value of human rights. While we understand the idea that 'rights come with responsibilities', even those who are 'irresponsible' should have their basic rights upheld, even where that requires measures that seem to protect criminals. In particular, preventive detention and stop and search powers need to be used circumspectly. When groups begin to feel humiliated and disrespected this is not bad merely for their sense of self-worth. Rather, there can be a real danger that they are not being treated as equals by the state, and in the past BME individuals and migrants have been particularly vulnerable to such differential treatment.

> The state must exercise caution in making judgements about people as a matter of policy because of its enormous power to influence citizens; this power is so pervasive that the state must always ensure it upholds the importance of recognition respect.

Current government policy on refugees and asylum-seekers suggests that government is not alive enough to this danger. According to the recent Criminal Law Review, human rights laws are going to be reviewed to ensure that they do not 'restrict the delivery of the Government's approach to asylum and immigration'.[29] The review identifies four key strategies for immigration policy, including to ensure that documents such as the UN and EU conventions on Human Rights 'facilitate the Government's approach'. But human rights or human rights law cannot be a mere tool to facilitate other policy goals, however desirable such goals might seem. Ensuring basic dignity and respect should not be thought of as a middle-class or lawyer's contrivance but as the first requirement of morality. As we explain further in the next sub-section, government actions can be more likely to undermine such respect, even if that is not their intent, and some groups can be particularly vulnerable. We already know that asylum-seekers have poor health outcomes,[30] suffer an unacceptably high number of early deaths,[31] and are the target of some sections of the press.[32] We appreciate that responding to the challenge of migration in an increasingly globalized world is no easy task, but questioning the application of human rights – a

29 PMSU (2007: 74).
30 See Kelley and Stevenson (2006) and the good bibliography therein.
31 Athwal (2006) documents the deaths of 221 asylum seekers and migrants over seventeen years.
32 See Berkeley et. al. (2006).

standard that protects every human's recognition respect – is surely no way to advance a culture of respect or indeed social justice in the UK.

4.3 The impact of government on respect

As this case suggests, the problem is deeper when it is the state that isolates particular individuals for being unworthy of its respect unless they show respect to the state. Historically, the liberal state has been the guarantor of individuals' basic dignity and worth, especially the worth of weaker sections of society where that has been undermined by more powerful groups. Conversely, the state's judgements are uniquely influential in being the most powerful institution and indeed the most significant agent for imposing social sanctions. When I decide that my neighbour is a lazy layabout this of course impacts on his well-being, especially if I broadcast my feelings throughout the neighbourhood. But when the state decrees that an individual is undeserving of our respect the consequences are far greater. Even if the state doesn't mean that an individual deserves our contempt or lacks basic dignity, other citizens may adopt such an attitude on finding out that the state has conferred a bad reputation on some part of the citizenry. The state must exercise caution in making judgements about people as a matter of policy because of its power to influence citizens; this power is so pervasive that the state must always ensure it upholds the importance of recognition respect.

> If anti-social behaviour undermines a 'culture of respect' so too do practices where individuals of certain backgrounds are judged not on their qualities or actions but on the basis of pre-judgements about what people of that group are qualified to do.

If this all sounds hypothetical and alarmist, that is partly because citizens are capable of making up their own minds. In modern democracies, regular voting typically ensures that the state is accountable and that governments change. But the idea that the state can alter citizens' viewpoint towards their fellow citizens has been and remains sadly prominent in a number of non-democratic states, perhaps most explicitly in the case of Nazi Germany. Whatever the extent of latent or explicit anti-Semitism in German society, it was clearly ratcheted up when the state sanctioned anti-Semitism in its policies. We have indeed made moral progress in liberal democracies by condemning forms of racism that overtly deny recognition respect to a category of citizens, but that simply highlights just how important human rights really are. A 'respect agenda' should not shy away from and indeed should affirm the importance of human rights for realizing recognition respect which is, after all, a basic requirement of morality. Especially because minority ethnic groups are more vulnerable to having such recognition respect denied to them, especially by racist violence and hate crimes, they are perhaps more aware of the value of human rights as an important protection than other groups are.

4.4 Racism and evaluative respect

Today such racism that derives from a denial of recognition respect is increasingly unacceptable in liberal democracies including Britain. Where black and minority ethnic individuals in Britain and elsewhere are unfairly disadvantaged it is often because they are presumed to have less competence or talent or are otherwise stereotyped. Government has become increasingly responsive to the idea that its policies and practices may be stereotyped, though the Macpherson report's discussion of institutional racism[33] unfortunately seems to have been sidelined. Outside of government, the most significant cases of prejudicial judgments are the many cases in which employers ignore or don't take seriously the job applications of BME candidates.

Extending Scruton's comments, we might say that the particular qualities and talents of BME Britons are not appropriately evaluated. This is not to say that BME candidates are never taken seriously, nor that racist practices are wholly pervasive; rather, there are often (unstated but implicit) assumptions about the sorts of skills and talents that black or Asian or other ethnic groups are 'suited for' and this prevents people from making a true 'evaluation' of individuals.[34] Significantly, then, evaluative respect is not limited to behaving in ways that accord with rules of social interaction. It must be understood more expansively to include all those evaluations of persons that fail to take into consideration their actual qualities. Only then can a

33 Macpherson Report (1999).
34 Similar assumptions about the competences of women partly explain the continued gender bias in the workplace.

'culture of respect' be fostered in Britain.

This is another reason why anti-discrimination law can be interpreted as part of a respect agenda. Ensuring that employers read and fairly assess individual CVs is a way of affirming 'evaluative' respect. If anti-social behaviour undermines a 'culture of respect' so too do practices where individuals of certain backgrounds are judged not on their qualities or actions but on the basis of pre-judgements about what people of that group are qualified to do. There are many such examples, but Michele Moody-Adams gives a good summary example:

> *Consider a college mathematics professor who unreflectively continues to accept unfounded preconceptions about the intellectual capacities of Black students. How might such a professor respond to a Black student's expression of confusion on some point in her class lecture? Coming from a white student, such a confusion would probably be viewed as a simple error, or even as a request for help. But this professor is likely to interpret the Black student's comment as though it were evidence of basic intellectual weakness.*[35]

This partly explains how an (evaluative) respect agenda framed in terms of the 'public' can admit positive action as well. Let's use the example of blacks in South Africa or Dalits (former Untouchables) in India to make the point clearer. Here the issue is that people of a certain group are unable to participate as equals in public institutions and public debate because others fail to respect any member of their group. There is much more to be said about how to enhance 'evaluative respect' and to ground it as a justification for policy. In the final section we make some suggestions for doing so, particularly by focusing on 'public' or 'civic' virtues. As a way of framing those questions, we now consider the final aspect of respect raised in section 2, namely the value of self-respect for policy justification.

4.5 Racism, self-respect and the importance of public participation

Philosophers concerned with social injustice have often used Rawls's discussion on self-respect as a springboard for thinking about the topic. One famous example of how social norms impact on self-respect in a way that is relevant for justice is the study used in the ground-breaking desegregation judgment of the US Supreme Court, *Brown v Board of Education* (1954). The evidence that black children preferred white dolls and associated them with good qualities while they failed to identify with black dolls was arguably as significant in the judgment as legal argument. Similar interviews with African-American young children in 2006[36] have demonstrated that such bias has not been eliminated.

So while social views about the (lack of) talents and skills of minority ethnic individuals is bad for denying them evaluative respect, it is also extremely harmful to their own sense of self-worth. Individuals from disadvantaged groups are typically denied the social bases of self-respect. If individuals of a particular group only feel a measure of self-respect from their co-members where everyone else in society publicly denigrates them, the social bases of self-respect are still lacking, even though they ostensibly meet Rawls's requirement that there is 'some association' (but only one) in which the value of their activities is affirmed.

Rawls responds to this challenge by emphasizing the value of equal liberty and its relationship to self-respect; as he puts it:

> *[t]he account of self-respect as perhaps the main primary good has stressed the great significance of how we think others value us. But in a well-ordered society the need for status is met by the public recognition of just institutions…The basis for self-esteem in a just society is not then one's income share but the publicly affirmed distribution of fundamental rights and liberties. And this distribution being equal, everyone has a similar and secure status when they meet to conduct the affairs of the wider society.*[37]

Many commentators have taken this sort of argument as a good explanation of why certain inequalities, particularly racial inequality, are so harmful to democratic politics (though Rawls himself doesn't pursue this line of argument). On the one hand, their voices are ignored on prejudicial grounds; while on the other, such sentiments in dominant groups prevent them from being fairly employed in public institutions or of even applying for such jobs.[38] In such

35 Moody-Adams (1992–3), reprinted in Dillon (1994a: 281).
36 See Davis (n.d.).
37 Rawls (1971: 544, emphasis added).
38 Some individuals don't even think of *applying* to such as Oxford and Cambridge in Britain or Harvard and Yale in the United States, regardless of their capacity to gain admission or succeed there. This obstacle to equal opportunities is not limited to minority ethnic students. For an evaluation of the US, see Delbanco (2007).

Positive Action

Why or how does every member benefit when some individuals get an increased chance of a job or position through measures such as positive action? In what follows we suggest four benefits that every group member receives from positive action, including enhanced respect.

Equal Opportunity: **In a society where individuals are unjustly disadvantaged, there is an unfair distribution of benefits and burdens. That is to say, some individuals are unfairly denied the chance to demonstrate their talents and skills (or have their skills and talents unfairly discounted), while others unfairly benefit by being presumed to be better placed for a job than members of disadvantaged groups. The main way that preferential policies respond to this unfairness is because the individuals who get a job or position can serve as *agents of integration*.[i] Such individuals transmit knowledge and skills to their fellow group-members who have little experience of what works in job or university applications and examinations. In order to clarify this and the following benefit, we now explain how 'what we know' is compromised in a racist or sexist society.**

Where societies are patterned by unjust forms of disadvantage, it is difficult for people to understand what it is like to be a member of a disadvantaged group. In general we have a tendency to view the world based on our own experience, and to evaluate evidence and reasons partly on the basis of what fits our individual experience. This is not to say that we can never understand the interests and needs of others, but that it is difficult for elites to understand the needs of the voiceless, an issue hardly limited to minority ethnic individuals.

Participation: **The importance of participation is perhaps the most important justification for preferential policies. All individuals should have the opportunity to participate in public institutions and the public sphere. The most obvious example is Parliament. In a democracy, however, any institution with a public role must be responsive to the needs of every citizen. The reason why preferential policies enhance the opportunity of all members of disadvantaged groups is linked to the above claim about epistemology. When members of disadvantaged groups participate in important public institutions, their actual interests and needs are represented. Again, this is not a broad claim that only Asians can represent Asians, but that in a society permeated with unjust disadvantage it is difficult for politicians to get access to the knowledge necessary for all citizens to participate as equals in public institutions.**

Respect: **There is a further way to explain why preferential policies enhance the capacity of all citizens to participate in public institutions. When the rest of society sees people with disadvantaged backgrounds take on important roles in public institutions, every member's standing or respect is increased. Public officials and public institutions no longer view members of certain groups as having limited or no competence to do certain sorts of tasks. Even if I myself reject my group, my job application may not be considered fully because of prejudicial views of the competences of various groups. The idea here is that 'people like her can do that job'; an example might be how Trevor MacDonald's success as a newsreader makes it more likely that white Britons will think that black Britons have equal competences. A more forceful variant of this claim is that it is more important for blacks and Asians to have publicly important roles than for them to be represented in the Olympic teams or football or as successful shop managers.**

Value of Political Liberties: **A just democracy requires that all individuals have equal access to important political liberties. According to Rawls, we also require certain social relationships to provide us with the self-respect necessary to realize the 'fair value' of political liberties.[ii] In a racist society, however, members of disadvantaged groups cannot achieve the fair value of such liberties because dominant groups deny them the social bases of self-respect. The argument may be intricate and complicated but the underlying idea is intuitively plausible: when we don't feel that society includes us as equals because of the colour of our skin or our gender then the value of our political liberties is less than that of our co-citizens.**

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i Anderson (2002).
ii Rawls (1971).

circumstances, even those who wish to dissociate from their group or who dislike their group are still denied basic respect because of the prejudicial attitudes of individuals in majority or more powerful groups in society.[39] In a previous Runnymede report we explained why this could justify positive action for BME individuals.[40]

39 The cases of South Africa and India indicate why many questions of 'minority rights' are actually questions of the legitimate claims of disadvantaged groups, some of whom may actually be a *majority*.
40 Khan (2006).

5 Policy Guidance for a Respect Agenda for All

Let us now be more explicit on how we would like to see a respect agenda framed. There are three different foci for an agenda seeking to foster respect for all citizens, including black and minority ethnic people. As suggested in the second section, these are (1) protecting recognition respect, (2) fostering (civic) evaluative respect and (3) ensuring the social bases of self-respect. The second and third aims may seem more difficult but in the various boxes in this review we indicate how we think this can be done and in this section we provide a more explicit justification for why our vision of a respect agenda is coherent, potentially efficacious and ethically attractive. In a word, a respect agenda must ensure a commitment to justice, explaining why black and minority ethnic people – but also disadvantaged communities throughout Britain – should be at the centre of that agenda and central to the design of policy that makes that agenda a reality.

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[A] respect agenda must ensure a commitment to justice, explaining why black and minority ethnic people – but also disadvantaged communities throughout Britain – should be at the centre of that agenda and central to the design of policy that makes that agenda a reality.

5.1 Protecting recognition respect

For protecting recognition respect, human rights and what we have previously called a 'human rights culture'[41] should be emphasized as a basic minimum. This is required not only because democracies must uphold the rule of law, but also because the importance of recognition respect is morally fundamental and indeed part of the basis of democratic legitimacy. It is hopefully clear enough why showing respect for persons is a requirement of government as well as individual behaviour, and also why black and minority ethnic people are more vulnerable when it is violated. This idea may be summarized as follows: *policy must always protect the recognition respect that is due to all citizens*. Only then can we talk of a 'culture of respect' or indeed of a just society.

5.2 Fostering civic virtues as evaluative respect

As we have already suggested, the role and scope of evaluative respect is a more difficult question. We noted that virtue ethics can run in to trouble when it comes to specifying *which* qualities and actions are those that make up a good life. If there is significant disagreement on this question, it is then difficult to see how government could design effective policies for fostering evaluative respect without causing a great deal of controversy regarding what sort of life is in fact the best one to live. Indeed, many liberals find the idea that the *state* should be in the business of cultivating personal virtues frightening.[42]

This, perhaps, explains the government's more narrow

41 CFMEB (2000); see also Khan (2004).
42 Though not all. Raz (1986) has argued for what in philosophy is called *perfectionism*, namely the idea that certain practices and ways of living and practices are better than others, where 'better' means that they better contribute to the value of personal autonomy. Perfectionist philosophers believe that individual autonomy (or some other concept) is of such value that government policy should always seek to promote it. The standard criticism of perfectionism is that it fails to appreciate the reasonable pluralism that marks liberal democracies. Indeed, perfectionism seems to require greater uniformity in the sorts of lives that people live.

Respect and Gun Culture

The problem of 'gun culture' has been highlighted by the deaths of young people in British cities. It has been associated with young men from socially excluded backgrounds but also with a host of other 'social problems'. Some putative causal explanations have included single-parent households, the quality of residential housing, the cheap availability of guns via eastern Europe (especially since the Bosnian war), and the impact of a 'gun culture' in the Caribbean, particularly Jamaica. Many of these putative links are extremely controversial, but the concept of ´respect´ provides some analytic guidance.

Many young people are concerned with 'respect'. Young people are often more sensitive to peer judgements and more vulnerable to peer intimidation than other forms of violence. Those who carry guns often see it as a way of gaining respect or as a status symbol. If some commentators criticize a 'ludicrous "respect" culture that sees knife-fights start because someone fails to accord due deference to another person's trainers',[i] others recognize that respect and indeed self-respect are vital for young people to make the most of their opportunities.

The Greater London Authority has teamed up with 'From Boyhood to Manhood' to combat gun violence and their 'Calling the Shots' project[ii] offers some good lessons. It tries to help young people develop their own sense of self-respect, but also explains how self-control, authority and indeed cultivating personal virtues such as integrity, humility and responsibility are so important. A good way to understand this project is that it instils in all participants the idea that recognition respect must always be fostered in caring about humanity as a whole. But it goes further: From Boyhood to Manhood rightly believes that certain behaviours and values - what they call 'core ethical values' - are the surest way for determining who really is owed evaluative respect.

This raises an interesting issue. Youth work and education have the opportunity to shape young people and so future citizens in a way that is only matched by parents. And the best work in these areas usually involves endorsing certain actions and values not simply because the youth workers or teachers think they are the best way of engaging with young people, but because they are more likely to produce confident, productive and self-aware adults concerned with the needs of others. However, as we have suggested in this review, government cannot easily endorse particular behaviour - or evaluate which forms of living are deserving of respect. But the case of gun crime shows how some important values - which Calling the Shots identifies as integrity, humility, responsibility, and respect for self and others - are required not just for a safe and healthy democratic society but for confident and ethical citizens.

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i Paxman (2007).
ii Calling the Shots website.

discussion of 'behaviour' in the *Respect Action Plan* and related documents. For government, the behaviour in question relates to following basic and relatively minimal social conventions that some Britons are currently failing to exhibit. However, there is something of a tension where the government's respect agenda speaks of building a 'culture of respect'. This obviously goes beyond merely punishing those who exhibit anti-social behaviour and suggests that certain ways of interacting are in fact better than others.

Such claims are, however, unavoidable if a liberal society is to sustain itself. While a liberal culture must show tolerance for a wide range of viewpoints, toleration is itself a substantive value that cannot be supported where the majority of people in a society believe in or practice intolerance. But even if this is true, how do we determine which qualities and actions are those that are actually relevant and which are not? If we define those qualities too narrowly, they might not be meaningful enough to realize evaluative respect, but if they are too specific we might be ruling out certain ways of living that are wholly unobjectionable.

We propose the concept of 'public' or perhaps 'civic virtues' to mediate this difficulty.[43] That is to say, the state should promote a vision of evaluative respect that encourages behaviour that is publicly minded. So, for example, behaviour of which some people disapprove but that does not impact on the capacity of people to interact as equals in the public sphere should not be legislated against. On the other hand, actions that prevent some citizens or indeed some group of citizens from participating as equals in the public realm can and should be the subject of interventionary government policy. This partly explains why policies that target black and minority ethnic people – and indeed other disadvantaged groups – are justifiable.

The argument can be summarized as follows: policies should be adopted for ensuring *civic* behaviour. The sort of 'respect' that is then required is short of those personal virtues of which the state may not be the best judge or indeed have the authority to demand of citizens. At the same time, achieving a truly respectful civic culture is no easy task and there are patterns of behaviour that clearly violate it. It is of course tricky and perhaps paternalistic for the state to modify individuals' beliefs, but a successful democracy clearly requires that most of its citizens are committed to a public forum of engagement in which they accept their interlocutors as equals.

Some examples of how a civic interpretation of evaluative respect could influence policy delivery are provided in various boxes in this review. Two good examples are citizenship education and the 'Calling the Shots'[44] project to reduce gun crime, both of which encourage young people to recognize the basic dignity of every human being. In both cases, however, the policy goes beyond this minimum and further seeks to foster civic values of tolerance, humility and fairness. To coin a term, anti-*civic* behaviour is what truly undermines a just and democratic society. The term 'anti-social behaviour' now connotes all sorts of evaluations, some of which are blatantly criminal and others of which are not obviously detrimental to a healthy democratic public.[45] We would rather tackle criminal behaviour through ordinary legal channels as a way of protecting recognition respect and fostering civic attitudes. Through its education policy and in funding projects such as 'Calling the Shots', the government can foster civic virtues in practice as a better and more likely way of creating a culture of respect.

Another way of discussing the notion of 'civic virtues' or a 'publicly minded' citizenry is to emphasize the importance of justice. In a functioning democracy, justice should not simply be a concept that is argued by lawyers and dispensed by judges. It is of course important to ensure the independence of the judiciary, but democracies can and should foster a sense of justice in its citizens. If education policy is the most obvious arena for the state's promotion of justice, government actions can also send signals to citizens that justice is (or is not) an important virtue. Summarizing the argument, the second focus of a respect agenda should be to *foster civic or public ideals as virtues that should be respected*.

5.3 Impact for BME citizens

Before turning to our third focus – ensuring the social bases of self-respect – consider how recognition respect and evaluative respect matter for BME citizens. In the first place, we again emphasize how a human rights culture is crucial for making the ideal of recognition respect a reality: if a society widely accepts the fundamental moral equality of all citizens one major source of racism is undermined. For disadvantaged groups in general the achievement of social justice can

43 Richard Sennett has influentially discussed the idea of aligning respect to civility and citizenship. For a very brief summary of his views, see the BBC news website on respect.
44 See the Calling the Shots website.
45 Some examples of the latter are ASBOs given to those with Tourette's, Aspergers, and autism; those with mental health issues, and, more trivially, banning a woman from wearing a bikini when answering her front door.

further protect recognition respect by removing the unjustified barriers to their fair participation in politics, the labour market and education. Furthermore, it is hard to see why a group of citizens would feel 'cohesive' in a society that treats them as second class citizens.

[W]here individuals are unable to participate in public institutions because they lack the confidence, or where those institutions fail to respond to their legitimate needs, civil society bodies focusing on particular ethnic groups may be necessary. Indeed, such institutions may *enhance* the public sphere by including those who previously were excluded.

Second, the focus on *civic* virtues explains why many of the tortured debates on multiculturalism, segregation and religion are overwrought. What matters for evaluative respect is the promotion of justice and participatory and public virtues, not that we all eat the same food or wear the same clothes. A civic interpretation of evaluative respect helps explain some confusion about 'segregation' and also indicates why 'self-respect' is a worthy aim. Commentators increasingly point to minority ethnic groups as 'self-segregating' and blame BME-led organizations or institutions designed to meet the needs of certain groups as being detrimental to community cohesion. However, where individuals are unable to participate in public institutions because they lack the confidence, or where those institutions fail to respond to their legitimate needs, civil society bodies focusing on particular ethnic groups may be necessary. Indeed, such institutions may *enhance* the public sphere by including those who previously were excluded. It is of course necessary to discourage 'separatism', but that is not the real history or even current functioning of most community-based organizations.

5.4 Fostering the social bases of self-respect

This leads to our third suggestion for a coherent respect agenda, namely fostering the social bases of self-respect. Black and minority ethnic Britons are more vulnerable to lowered self-respect, in part because they don't have access to the same opportunities or *social bases* of self-respect. With Rawls, we can say that distribution of fundamental rights and liberties is not equal in terms of their 'public affirmation' and so individuals do not have a 'similar and secure status', or self-respect. This means that 'respect' needs to take into account the status of various groups, especially where a society has been or continues to be characterized by inequalities. And the fact that the social bases of self-respect are an important primary good suggests that this benefit is not reliant on any substantive account of the virtues. Rather, it points to the aim of participation in public institutions and public sphere.[46]

We need not assume anything grand about the psychological connection between individual and group well-being to pursue this argument. Instead, the idea is that where other citizens view every member of my group as inferior citizens (or as citizens with particular but limited qualities), this impacts on my ability to participate as an equal in public debate and indeed to access political institutions. In such circumstances, the fair value of my political liberty is not asserted, and this argument generally follows from a Rawlsian view about the value of self-respect as a primary good.[47] It also demonstrates the connection between self-respect and a civic interpretation of evaluative respect. For members of disadvantaged communities to participate equally and be respected for their civic virtues, they must not only be respected as equals, but also have the confidence to raise their voice when their needs aren't addressed.

46 We would argue further for equal participation in civil society as well, though some may find this contentious.
47 Rawls (1971: §§67, 82).

6 Conclusion

In Britain today there is much anxiety that behaviour isn't what it used to be. For some, life in Britain hasn't just changed, it has *worsened*. In our view we should be more circumspect in making such judgments. While it is undoubtedly true that people living in some of the most disadvantaged areas of Britain are increasingly inhabiting a social world that can be terrifying and inhospitable, the idea that what is required as a solution is 'increased respect' is not adequately specified.

As we explained in section 2, there are different conceptions of respect. If we cannot always accept that people claiming 'I get no respect' are treated badly, this is because we think their particular actions are unacceptable. But if we deny them the basic dignity that is owed to all human beings then their complaint becomes legitimate and deserves remedial action as well as sympathy.

Distinguishing these two forms of respect – evaluative and recognition – helps to clarify these issues. In our summary and evaluation of the *Respect Action Plan*, we further demonstrated why that distinction is useful for thinking about how respect can – and cannot – justify policy. A second key distinction, between respect for others and self-respect, showed why anti-social behaviour is bad for the perpetrators as well as the victims. If we accept Rawls's claim that the social bases of self-respect are a primary good, we must also consider policies that ensure that the current perpetrators of anti-social behaviour have the resources to experience self-respect. That is to say, we need to design measures that not only punish perpetrators, but policies that ensure that potential perpetrators have the social bases of self-respect that might make them less likely to become actual perpetrators.[48] A culture of respect can probably only be achieved through a commitment to all three of these aims.

For BME Britons, the question of respect is critical and has often figured in anti-racist movements. Historically racism was defined as the denial of the moral status of nonwhite persons, or a denial of what we have called 'recognition respect'. In fact, in pre-democratic times individuals from the 'lower orders' were more generally denied recognition respect. This is why the regime of rights, and a human rights culture more broadly, is so important. Rights are the practical mechanism through which respect for persons is instantiated, and BME citizens are perhaps simply more aware of the protection they provide. For such rights to be effective, BME citizens have demanded and have been granted antidiscrimination legislation and the government is rightly proud that such measures have contributed to the creation of a society that more widely affirms basic recognition respect.

Examining the case of BME Britons also reveals why evaluative respect is more tricky. If it seems sensible to suggest that certain forms of behaviour are unacceptable, the actual content of what makes a person virtuous or not is more contestable. This difficulty is perhaps heightened where cultural diversity is prevalent. Which actions and beliefs are those we should commend?

Should the state really endorse one way of living? Does that mean that certain practices are wrong, even if they don't seem 'anti-social' to all of us?

The only standard for providing an answer is the admittedly thorny concept of the 'public' or perhaps 'civic' virtues. This ensures that we do not return to a culture of deference in which qualities and actions were imputed to persons simply by virtue of their economic and social status. It also insures us against the possibility that what we term objectionable behaviour is not simply based on our own conventions, and that prejudice cannot impact on the capacity of citizens to engage in public. So, different norms of food consumption or dress codes cannot be taken as examples of behaviour that require curtailment in the name of respect. But someone who fouls the pavement or street with their rubbish can be punished because of their disrespect for the public sphere or indeed their violation of public health standards. A culture of respect requires civic behaviour but also a commitment to justice, a commitment that the government should also demonstrate in the application of policy.

Ultimately a respect agenda requires policies that respect both persons and civic behaviour. Much of what the *Respect Action Plan* says can be accommodated within this framework, but a respect agenda can and should be more ambitious. In justifying any policy, it is always important that the actual measures as applied contribute to the aim demanded by that justification.

48 On working with perpetrators, see Isal (2005) and Khan (2002).

Respect requires close monitoring of policies – including those not examined in the action plan – so that they individually and collectively ensure recognition respect and emphasize an evaluative sense of respect that focuses on civically minded actions.

Our third suggestion – to ensure the social bases of self-respect – is arguably more difficult to implement as a policy goal. Such a goal is not merely a question of psychological well-being but of social justice. Some individuals find it more difficult to affirm their self-respect because of inegalitarian social structures. While we have explained why this is the case for BME Britons, it is also true for poorer white Britons. When all residents of housing estates are demonized or despised and when children from poorer areas (or indeed regions) are not expected to apply to (much less attend) Russell Group Universities, the social bases of self-respect are not fairly distributed. Middle-class children typically go to schools in which university attendance is taken as a given and their sense of self-worth consistently emphasized. It is important that government tries to find policies that do the same for all young people.

This document has outlined why black and minority ethnic concerns should not be treated as a 'side issue' or as deserving a separate policy stream. In the first place, policy design is unlikely to achieve its stated aims if it fails to 'mainstream' the concerns of black and minority ethnic citizens into a broader social policy canvas. Second, black and minority ethnic citizens are unlikely to have their needs met by policy designs that target them alone. Even where a general policy area seems not to require a 'division' of citizens into various groups, we should remind ourselves that attention to BME Britons is not part of some separatist agenda but aims to ensure that they are not badly served or disadvantaged by policy measures or that their legitimate needs are ignored. And if, as government documents increasingly suggest, current processes are not delivering fair outcomes,[49] we must consider new mechanisms for achieving social justice. Whether or not the respect-focused comments in this review are taken on board, the point that mainstream policy design needs to be more attentive to black and minority ethnic citizens is a vital one for ensuring that the state of the nation is more equitable in the future.

49 The Equalities Review (2007) for example.

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Omar Khan, a Research and Policy Analyst at the Runnymede Trust, is currently completing his doctorate in political theory at the University of Oxford. His dissertation is on the justification of preferential policies in India, the topic of a previous Runnymede Briefing Paper. Omar has published many articles on political theory and British political history for Runnymede over the past 6 years and has spoken on topics including multiculturalism in various settings in the UK and Europe.

RUNNYMEDE

The Runnymede Trust
7 Plough Yard
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