

addressing racism in the work place

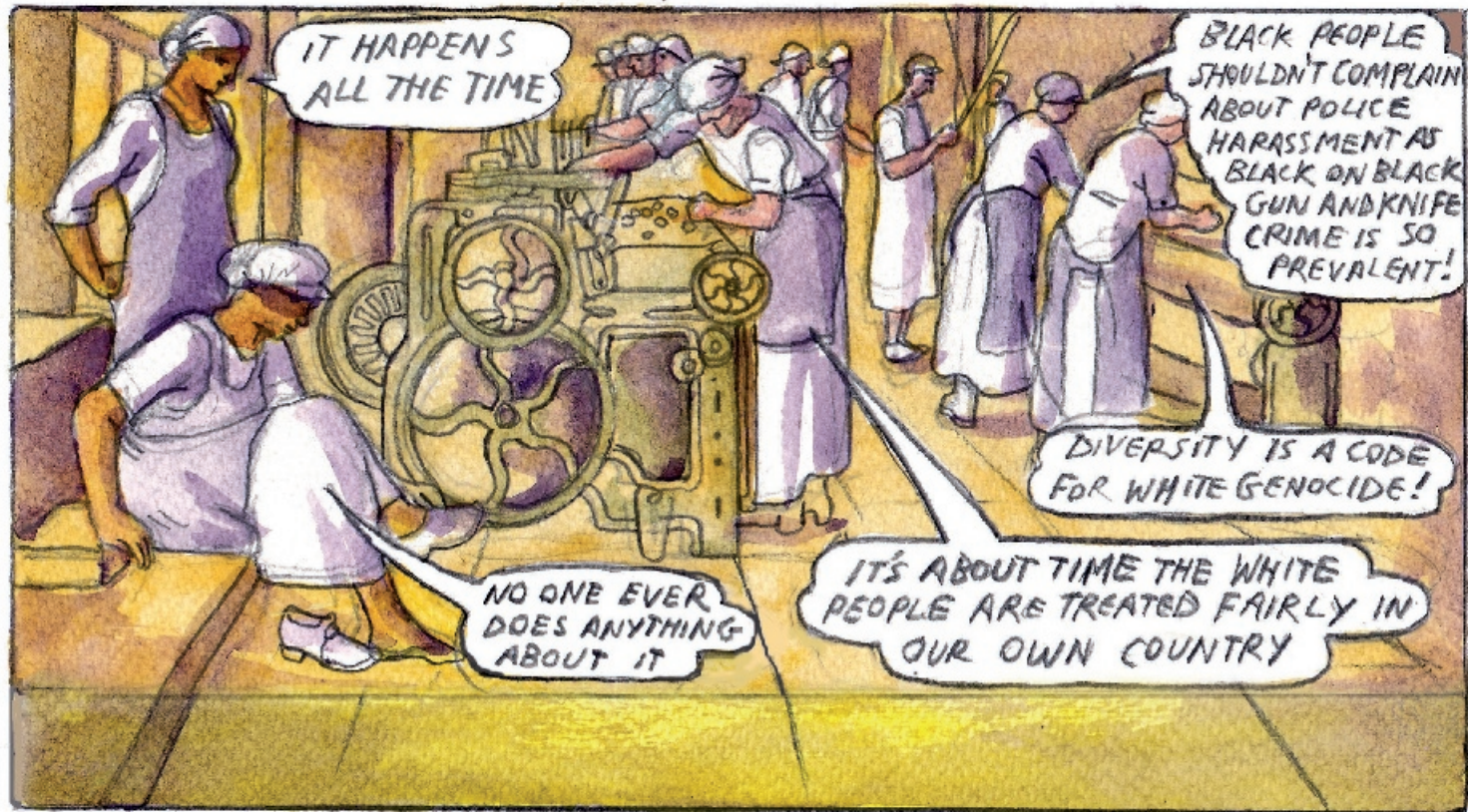


managerial
indifference
is not the answer

HI, I'M GLORIA. I WAS BORN IN THE CARIBBEAN ISLAND OF SAINT LUCIA IN 1964. I MOVED TO MANCHESTER WITH MY PARENTS WHEN I WAS EIGHT YEARS OLD. I AM NOW WORKING AT A SWEET FACTORY WHERE I AM A TRADE UNION REP.



RACISM IS A BIG PROBLEM IN THE FACTORY. OVER THE YEARS I'VE EXPERIENCED AND WITNESSED RACISM FROM COLLEAGUES, CLIENTS AND CONTRACTORS.



IT HAPPENS ALL THE TIME

BLACK PEOPLE SHOULDN'T COMPLAIN ABOUT POLICE HARASSMENT AS BLACK ON BLACK GUN AND KNIFE CRIME IS SO PREVALENT!

DIVERSITY IS A CODE FOR WHITE GENOCIDE!

NO ONE EVER DOES ANYTHING ABOUT IT

IT'S ABOUT TIME THE WHITE PEOPLE ARE TREATED FAIRLY IN OUR OWN COUNTRY

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WHY HAVEN'T YOU SAID ANYTHING BEFORE NOW?

AFTER SPEAKING WITH FELLOW WORKERS, I WENT TO SPEAK TO THE FACTORY MANAGER

I'VE REPORTED IT BEFORE AND NOTHING EVER GETS DONE. I'VE REPORTED IT TO HUMAN RESOURCES AND NO ACTION WAS TAKEN



WE HAVE AN EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY. WE COMPLY WITH THE LAW. ALL NEW EMPLOYEES HAVE TO TAKE EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY TRAINING

IT'S A TICK BOX EXERCISE TO SHOW THAT YOU VALUE DIVERSITY WHEN YOU DON'T. WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE WORKED HERE FOR YEARS? YOU ARE TRYING TO SWEEP RACISM UNDER THE CARPET

WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO? I CAN TRANSFER YOU TO ANOTHER DEPARTMENT?

WHY SHOULD I BE TRANSFERRED? IT'S NOT ABOUT ME. IT'S ABOUT THE CULTURE OF RACISM IN THIS FACTORY. AFTER THE MEETING, I MET WITH OTHER WORKERS, TRADE UNION COLLEAGUES AND MEMBERS OF THE BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC WORKERS NETWORK.

YOU'RE RIGHT, CHALLENGING RACISM DOESN'T COME WITHOUT RISK. BUT WE CAN LIMIT THOSE RISKS BY BEING PART OF THE BME WORKERS NETWORK OR BY JOINING THE TRADE UNION

TEA COFFEE

WE CAN COME TOGETHER TO CREATE SAFE SPACES WHERE WE CAN SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER BY SHARING OUR EXPERIENCES AND INFORMATION

MANAGERS STICK TOGETHER—NOTHING WILL CHANGE.

THEY'LL JUST SAY WE'RE CREATING A FUSS ABOUT NOTHING

OR LABEL US TROUBLE MAKERS OR SAY WE'VE GOT A CHIP ON OUR SHOULDERS



THE FOLLOWING WEEK, MY COLLEAGUES AND I MET WITH THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM TO DEMAND CHANGE AND TO ARGUE THAT MANAGERIAL INDIFFERENCE TO RACISM IS NOT THE ANSWER.

YOU NEED TO SET THE TONE FOR THE REST OF THE WORKFORCE BY DELIVERING A REGULAR AND CLEAR MESSAGE SAYING THAT YOU WILL ADOPT A ZERO-TOLERANCE APPROACH TO RACISM

YOU NEED TO TAKE REPORTS OF RACISM SERIOUSLY AND HANDLE REPORTS IN A SENSITIVE AND TIMELY WAY

MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS NEED TO BE CLEAR ABOUT THE ORGANISATION'S POLICIES ON EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY, ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AND ENSURE THAT THESE POLICIES ARE PUT INTO PRACTISE AT ALL TIMES



DURING THE MEETING WE DISCUSSED EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY TRAINING...

TRAINING MUST OUTLINE WHY THE RACE RELATIONS ACT WAS AMENDED IN 1968 TO OUTLAW DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT, AS WELL AS RECOGNISING THAT RACISM AND RACIAL INEQUALITY IN THE WORK PLACE STILL EXISTS ALMOST 50 YEARS LATER

YOU HAVE A LEGAL AND MORAL OBLIGATION TO TAKE THIS SERIOUSLY AND SET THE TONE FOR EVERYBODY ELSE


INTERNATIONAL SWEETS EXPO

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY TRAINING MUST BE MANDATORY FOR ALL STAFF INCLUDING MANAGERS

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY TRAINING ISN'T ENOUGH, YOU NEED A CLEAR SET OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY TARGETS AND A TIMEFRAME AND ACTION PLAN FOR ACHIEVING THESE TARGETS



A FEW WEEKS LATER WE WERE INVITED TO ANOTHER MEETING WITH MANAGEMENT WHERE THEY ASKED US FOR OUR OPINION ON HOW TO ADDRESS RACISM IN THE WORK PLACE. WE SAID THAT THEY NEEDED TO STOP LOOKING AT RACISM AS A SERIES OF ONE-OFF EVENTS...



YOU NEED TO ASSESS HOW DIVERSE THE WORK PLACE IS AS WELL AS LOOKING AT RACIAL INEQUALITY IN RELATION TO RECRUITMENT, PAY, PROMOTIONS AND THE PEOPLE LEAVING THE COMPANY

WE WANT A STAFF SURVEY LOOKING AT WORKERS' EXPERIENCES OF RACISM AT WORK AND HOW MANAGERS DEALT WITH THEIR REPORTS OF RACISM

WE NEED TO HAVE REGULAR MEETINGS THAT INCLUDE INFORMATION ON REPORTS OF RACISM

Funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, this comic is a part of series of short graphic novels and short films based on the *Race at Work* survey.

Commissioned in 2015 by Business in the Community, 24, 457 people took part in the survey, making it one of the biggest surveys of its kind. More than 2,000 participants provided comments relating to experiencing and witnessing racism at work, while more than 3,000 people provided statements on what their employers did to promote equality and diversity in the workplace. We have used these comments and statements to address some of the key issues that we discussed in the *Equality, Diversity and Racism in the Workplace* report which was published in November 2016.

Basing the characters in the graphic novels on the demographic profiles of the *Race at Work* survey participants, we have tried to quote these comments and statements directly in order to draw attention to the nature and scale of racism in workplaces today. Our aim is to highlight the impact that racism can have on people's emotional and psychological wellbeing, while also drawing attention to the difficulties ethnic minority workers face when trying to challenge racism in the workplace. In response to this, we have made direct reference to the different 'coping mechanisms' and sources of support that survey participants deployed and made use of when confronted by racism at work.

In putting these graphic novels and films together we hope that they may be of some help to people experiencing or witnessing racism at work. We also hope that they send a clear message to managers and employers in terms of how we expect them to respond to racism in the workplace, while showing employees and colleagues the impact that racism can have and what they can do to tackle it. Given that it is almost fifty years since the Race Relations Act was amended to outlaw racial discrimination in employment, one thing is clear - indifference is not the answer!

We want to thank the people across the UK who took part in the *Race at Work* survey for sharing their experiences. Without you we would not have been able to help draw attention to the nature, scale, impact and persistence of racism in the workplace. We hope we have done your stories justice.

To find out more about the graphic novels, short films and the *Equality, Diversity and Racism in the Workplace* report please go to:

<http://www.ethnicity.ac.uk/research/research-partners/race-at-work/>

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