Equality works: how one race equality centre conceptualises, articulates and performs the idea of equality in Scotland

Abstract
This thesis focuses on the Centre for Education for Racial Equality in Scotland (CERES), based in Edinburgh, which was funded by the Scottish Executive and Scottish Government to develop several programmes to promote equality in education. Drawing together the disparate approaches to anthropology of organisations, the methodology has included both a focus on a small core group of workers as well as the flow of the materials produced throughout a larger network. Rather than conduct fieldwork at various locations as network or policy studies emphasise, I chose to work for two years with CERES due to their geographic and creational centrality to the 'mainstreaming equality' initiative. Beginning at a time when questions of identity in Scotland flourished as a result of devolution, increased immigration and the UK publication of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the mainstreaming equality projects signify the Scottish Executive’s attempt to uphold its duty of promoting race equality. CERES managed three of the seven funded mainstreaming equality projects. The production of these resources contributes to a campaign through which the Scottish Government has worked to reformulate understandings of what it means to be Scottish. This is achieved by drawing upon the myths of a new and egalitarian Scotland in order to displace the myth that there is no racism in Scotland. Within this context, the research’s central questions revolve around this creation in the stages undertaken at CERES. Examining the Centre’s daily tasks, this research demonstrates that although commissioned to contribute to the same overall initiative, the way in which CERES depicts equality is ultimately very different than the approaches developed within the government. The materials created by CERES, which unlike One Scotland, do not include national symbols, have engaged with the complexities of equality and discrimination more than the media campaigns yet have had a smaller audience. Once the idea is developed it encounters further manipulation, both physical in the case of teaching tools and ideological in working to make the identities included reflect Scotland through statistics and discussions of subjects already embedded in the national curriculum. From the vantage point of the creation process, this ethnography contributes to the anthropology of organisations and highlights the legal and policy negotiations undertaken across various levels of governance.

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