

Call for Contributions: RiotStats

“While those in the Middle East have marched in the hope of positive change, Britain's violence has been almost nihilist, focused on looting and a quick burst of the sort of publicity and power inner-city youth feel they have long been denied.”

Reuters, 9th August 2011

“The roots of these appalling events are many and tangled, but for the moment let's just focus on one: the way Britain's educational establishment has cringed helplessly in the face of a gang culture that rejects every tenet of liberal society. It's violent, it's sexist, it's homophobic and it's racist. But it is broadly tolerated by many people in the black community, which has lost control of its teenage youths.”

Daily Telegraph, 8th August 2011

“The problem is that we live in a society where capitalism itself has become rampantly feral. Feral politicians cheat on their expenses, feral bankers plunder the public purse for all its worth, CEOs, hedge fund operators and private equity geniuses loot the world of wealth, telephone and credit card companies load mysterious charges on everyone's bills, shopkeepers price gouge, and, at the drop of a hat swindlers and scam artists get to practice three-card monte right up into the highest echelons of the corporate and political world.”

David Harvey, 12th August 2011

“Justice will be done and the people will see the consequences for their crimes.”

David Cameron, 9th August 2011

An epidemic has just swept through Britain. Powerful rhetoric, from the usual and not-so-usual sources, is appearing across the nation. Radical Statistics is looking to turn its focus on the England Riots for a special issue of the journal in November 2011. From all sides of the political spectrum there has been outrage; outrage at the actions of a feral, nihilistic youth, outrage at the lenient way in which this underclass is mollicoddled by the state despite their deficiencies, and outrage at the reactionary hyperbole accompanying the rioting.

Have rioters sacrificed their eligibility for welfare payments and subsidised housing? Are they part of a sick society that have been pampered for too long and be British values the hard way? What will become of them now? Are we ignoring the political classes that have been pampered for too long? Were the riots as bad as we are led to believe? Were they worse? Why should we care? Is this just an English problem? Is this just an Afro-Caribbean problem? Is this just a Metropolitan Police problem?

With so many questions, we cannot hope to answer them all. We hope that contributors can give our members some answers, or, at the very least, point out the bullshit. Focusing on context in which statistics are being used to mould public opinion and a collective narrative, we are seeking contributions from a range of individuals from a variety of schools of thought and political allegiances. If you feel that you could contribute with a detailed analytical article, a short communication, a signpost to the work of others, or even just a letter of a few hundred words, please send contributions to editors@radstats.org.uk.

Radical Statistics does best when it lays bare the shaping and context of statistical analysis by powerful groups and conventional wisdoms, and provides research for campaigns to counter highly-resourced orthodox opinion. With a broad readership, encompassing all the social sciences and a variety of professions, we are particularly interested in cogent, well-researched analysis accessible for the layman.

Note: Following the call above made in November 2011, editors have had some response but are keen to receive further contributions. Please get in touch if you want to discuss a paper that you could submit. The deadline is under revision.

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