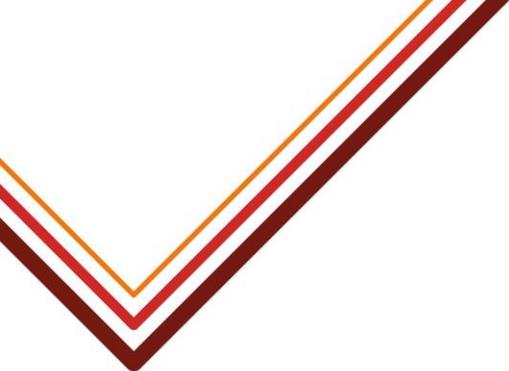




Activism

Poppy Bienias



Lesson 2: Activism in Britain

Learning Intentions

At the end of this lesson you will be able to...

- Provide examples of activism from Britain's past
- Debate to what extent these examples of activism were successful
- Identify societal barriers to activism

Key Vocabulary

discrimination

Bristol

racism

abolition

Activism

boycott

prejudice

Activist

Abolitionist

Civil Rights

Prior Learning

What do we already know?



What is an
Activist and
What do
they do?



Task

Today you are going to learn about **three examples of activism in Britain**. You are going to have a **debate** at the end of the lesson about which activist or group of activists was the most successful in your opinion, providing justifications for your choice.



Granville Sharp



The Bristol Bus Boycott



Olive Morris

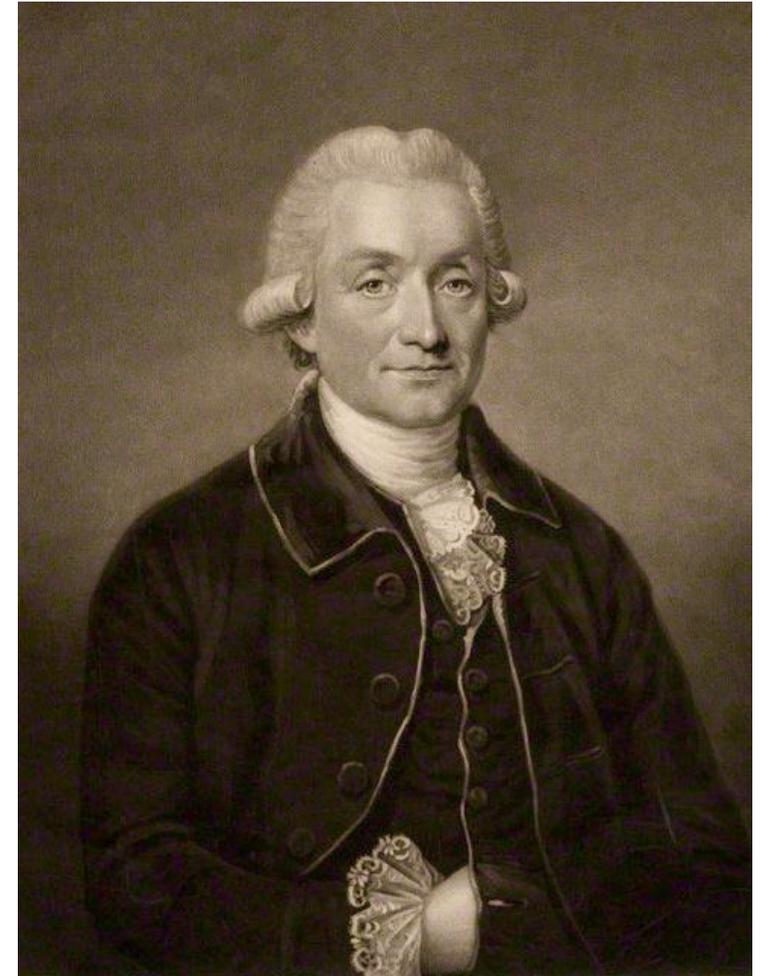
Granville Sharp

Granville Sharp was born on 10 November 1735 in Durham, England.

He was one of eight children and his father was a clergyman.

Granville Sharp befriended Jonathan Strong, a slave who had been badly beaten by his master.

When his master tried to sell him into slavery in the Caribbean, Sharp took the case to the lord mayor and Strong was freed.



Granville Sharp

Sharp devoted his time to bring an end to slavery in Britain.

In the mid-1780s, Sharp became a supporter of the Sierra Leone resettlement project, which encouraged former slaves, first from Britain and then from Canada, to settle in west Africa.

In 1787, Sharp and his friend Thomas Clarkson formed the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. They later persuaded the MP, William Wilberforce, to become their spokesman in parliament.

After the slave trade was abolished in 1807, Sharp and Clarkson continued to work for the complete abolition of slavery.



The Bristol Bus Boycott

In 1963, it was legal in Britain for someone to discriminate against others because of their race or ethnicity. This meant Black and Minority Ethnic people in Britain often faced prejudice and racism.

By 1963, there was a large, West Indian community in Bristol. Many were part of the Windrush generation, who came to Britain in the 1950s and 1960s after being promised work and a new life in Britain.

The community often struggled to find good housing, often had low-paid jobs and faced daily racism. It was common across Britain to see signs in boarding houses that read: “No Irish, No Blacks, No Dogs”.



The Bristol Bus Boycott

There was a 'colour bar' on some jobs. This is when Black and Minority Ethnic people were refused certain jobs, even though there was a shortage of workers, because of their race or ethnicity. This experience was reflected across Britain.

In spring 1963, 18-year-old Guy Bailey applied for a job as a bus conductor, working for the Bristol Omnibus Company. He was excited and full of hope for his new career on the Bristol buses. Bailey had arrived in Britain in 1961 from Jamaica. When Guy arrived for his interview, he was immediately refused the job because he was Black.



The Bristol Bus Boycott

Roy Hackett immigrated to Britain from the West Indies in 1952. Together with three other young West Indian men, Audley Evans, Prince Brown and Owen Henry, Hackett set up the West Indian Development Council (WIDC) to end racial discrimination in Bristol.

In 1962, they were joined by Paul Stephenson, Bristol's first Black youth worker. Stephenson was determined to create change.

In May 1963, Stephenson was teaching Guy Bailey at night school. After hearing about Guy Bailey's experience, the WIDC decided to organise a boycott against Bristol Omnibus Company to challenge their policy against Black and Minority Ethnic bus conductors and drivers.



The Bristol Bus Boycott

The group persuaded people not to take the bus, organised meetings, peaceful marches, sit-down protests and blockaded normal bus routes. This was a peaceful and effective form of protest. Crowds of people, of different races and ethnicities, joined the protests and were supported by well-known leaders.

The story of the Bristol bus **boycott** was reported locally and made national headlines, being reported in the newspapers and on the television.

The Bristol bus boycott was organised at the end of April and continued throughout the summer of 1963.

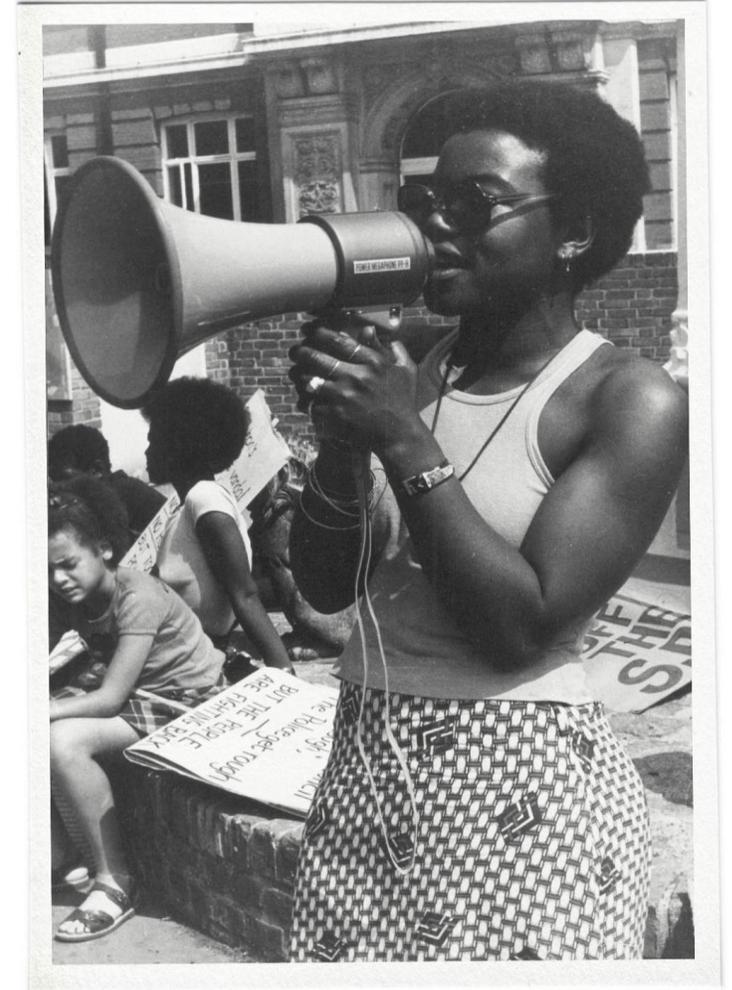


Olive Morris

Olive Morris was an important figure in terms of civil rights.

Black people didn't used to have the same rights as other people, simply because of the colour of their skin - and Olive was one of many people who worked tirelessly to change that.

She campaigned for the rights of black people in South London and Manchester, and was a founding member of groups like the Organisation of Women of African and Asian Descent (OWAAD) and the Brixton Black Women's Group.



Olive Morris

Olive Morris became involved in the British Black Panther Movement in the late 1960s. Inspired by the American Black Panther Party, the British Black Panthers had a mission to promote self-determination and challenge the British state.

She passed away at the age of just 27, but even by this age she had contributed an enormous amount to black communities across the country.



Mini Quiz *True or False?*

Granville Sharp was American

Granville Sharp's anti-slavery activism started when he befriended a slave called Jonathan Strong

Granville Sharp was involved with the Sierra Leone resettlement project

Guy Bailey, who applied for a job as a bus conductor, came from Kenya

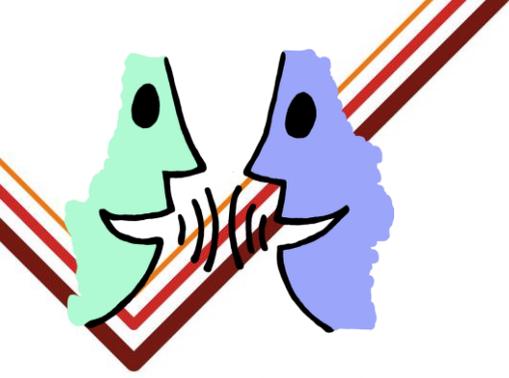
Guy Bailey was refused the job as a bus conductor as he didn't have the relevant skills

The Bristol Bus Boycott was organised to challenge policy against Black and Minority Ethnic bus conductors and drivers.

Olive Morris joined the British Black Panther movement

Olive Morris believed black and white people should have the same rights

Olive Morris died at the age of 50



Talk to your Partner...



Which activist or group of activists were the most successful in your opinion?

Why do you think this was?

Did they face barriers to their activism?

Were you inspired by the work of these activists? Why/why not?



Debate



We are going to have a **class debate** about **who was the most successful activist or group of activists.**

There will be different roles in the debate:

Main Speaker (The debate is chaired by the speaker, whose decision on all matters is final but cannot take part. The main speaker will make a statement to be debated.)

'For' Team: (This team will agree with the statement proposed by the main speaker.)

'Against' Team: (This team will debate against the statement proposed by the main speaker.)

Closing Statement Presenter: (presents the closing arguments of the class and comes to a decision on a final statement from the class.)



Rules of the Debate



- The debate is chaired by the speaker, whose decision on ALL matters is final.
- You can only speak once during the debate so ensure your point is well thought out. You have maximum one minute to make your point.
- You can ‘intervene’ as many times as you like. To ‘intervene’ you must raise your hand. Intervening is asking a question about a point being made.
- You can use notes to help you during the debate.
- If someone is breaking the debating rules, you should inform the speaker.

Further Research

Granville Sharp

Granville Sharp was born on 10 November 1735 in Durham. He was one of eight children and his father was a clergyman. At 15, Sharp was apprenticed to a London linen draper and then went to work as a civil servant. He had a variety of interests, including theology, for which he taught himself Greek and Latin, and music. He and his brothers and sisters often gave concerts together.

His interest in slavery began in 1765 after he befriended Jonathan Strong, a slave who had been badly beaten by his master. When Strong's former owner attempted to sell him back into slavery in the Caribbean, Sharp took a successful case to the lord mayor and Strong was freed. Sharp then devoted his time to forcing a definitive legal ruling on the question of whether a slave could be compelled to leave Britain. He was involved in securing the famous 1772 ruling by Lord Chief Justice William Mansfield, which reluctantly concluded that slave owners could not legally force slaves to return to the colonies once they were in Britain. This was regarded by many as effectively abolishing slavery within Britain.

As well as his campaign for the abolition of slavery, Sharp held other radical political opinions, supporting parliamentary reform and better wages for labourers. In 1776, he resigned his civil service position in disagreement with the British government's war with its American colonists.

In the mid-1780s, Sharp became a supporter of the Sierra Leone resettlement project, which encouraged former slaves, first from Britain and then from Canada, to settle in west Africa. In 1787, Sharp and his friend Thomas Clarkson were instrumental in forming the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Although Sharp and Clarkson were Anglicans, most of the other founding members were Quakers. They later persuaded the MP, William Wilberforce, to become their spokesman in parliament.

After the slave trade was abolished in 1807, Sharp and Clarkson continued to work for the complete abolition of slavery. Sharp died in London on 6 July 1813.



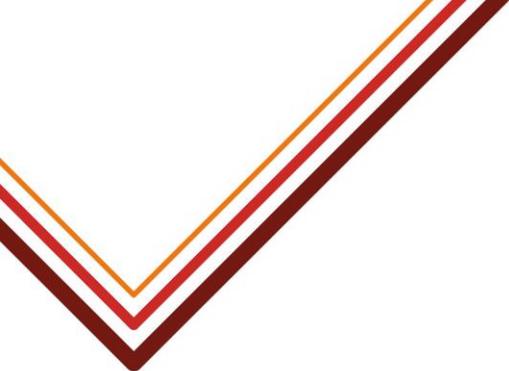
Further Research

The Bristol Bus Boycott

The Bristol Bus Boycott of 1963 arose from the refusal of the Bristol Omnibus Company to employ black or Asian bus crews in the city of Bristol, England.

In common with other British cities, there was widespread racial discrimination in housing and employment at that time against “coloureds”. Led by youth worker Paul Stephenson and the West Indian Development Council, the boycott of the company’s buses by Bristolians lasted for four months until the company backed down and overturned the colour bar.

The boycott drew national attention to racial discrimination in Britain, and the campaign was supported by national politicians, with interventions being made by church groups and the High Commissioner for Trinidad and Tobago. The Bristol Bus Boycott was considered by some to have been influential in the passing of the Race Relations Act 1965 which made “racial discrimination unlawful in public places” and the Race Relations Act 1968, which extended the provisions to employment and housing.



Further Points of Reference:

The Bristol Bus Boycott

<https://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk/article/section/bhm-heroes/the-bristol-bus-boycott-of-1963/>

Granville Sharp

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/sharp_granville.shtml

Olive Morris

<https://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/blog/black-history-month-power-olive-morris>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-53191543>