Black Intraracial Violence: The Offender-Victimization Relationship

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Presentation Objectives

• To understanding that the crime and race issue is more than looking at crime statistics.

• To explain that crime statistics must be understood in a social context.

• To explore why minority group members are involved in a disproportionate amount of crime.

• To describe crime in the Black community as symptomatic of underlying social problems.
Understanding Race & Crime

Webster (2007) writes and documents a number of references:

“Talking about race and crime in the same breath invites a number of pitfalls. The most glaring of these is that the notion of 'race' does not have any scientific validity. Classifying or distinguishing humans by the races to which they are said to belong is completely arbitrary because all human groups have a common biological ancestry (Cavalli-Sforza 2001; Olson 2002). It is not possible to argue on current evidence that the distinctive behaviours of a group have a biological origin. Most of the groups to which we belong have nothing to do with biology and everything to do with culture (Rose et al. 1984; Montagu 1997; Diamond 1999; Jones 2000; Lewontin 2000).”
Race-Crime Controversy/Debate

• African-Americans are *overrepresented in the American criminal* justice system.

• There is *disagreement as to what causes this overrepresentation*.
  
  – On the one hand, it can be argued that minorities simply commit more crime than non-minorities; that there is an epidemic of Black homicide victimization.

  – *On the other hand, Black are targeted for apprehension which in part explains disparities*
    
    • Stopped
    • Arrested
    • Prosecuted
    • Force to plea bargain
    • Incarcerated
    • Branded as a “ex-felon” and vulnerable to continued discrimination
Intra-racial violence

• We know that crime in America is predominantly intra-racial not inter-racial (Dilulio, 1994).

• Intra-racial crime is not unique solely to African American, nevertheless the media and many scholars have presented it as such.

• Black-On-Black violence must be understood in a social context.
Data Source

• Official Record Research
  – Criminologists use the records of government agencies to study crime.

  – The *Uniform Crime Report (UCR)* data is collected by local law enforcement agencies and published yearly by the FBI.

  – Census Bureau data used for information about income
What do we know?
FBI Crime Statistics

- Blacks represent less than 14% of the US population.

- Blacks are responsible for more than 50% of the violent crimes.

- 82% of Whites murder victims were at the hands of White criminal offenders.

- 93% of murder victims were by Black Offenders.
  - In other words, most victims of Black violence were Black (not white)
FBI Crime Statistics

• Pattern of data for Blacks: From 1980 and 2008 (28 years) 93 percent of black victims were murdered by someone of the same race.

• UCR stated that in 2013 there were 2,245 single Black murder victims (single) that were killed by a Black (single) offenders); that represents 90%.

• Black victims were primarily
  – Males
    • young adults between 20 to 29 (Expanded Homicide Data Table 2)

• Black Offenders were primarily
  – Males
    • Most likely to be between 17 to 24 (Expanded Homicide Data Table 3)
Victim/Offender Characteristics

• African-American most likely

• Most Murders Not Interracial—intra-racial
  
  • Most Black murder victims are at the hands of an offender of the same race.

• More than ¾ of the offenders are male
  
  • Male-on-male

• 25 years of age most likely

• Majority killed by use of firearms

• Victimization rates are higher for those in the inner-city, high-poverty areas than those in suburban and wealthier areas.
“Brother, brother, brother, there’s far too many of you dying.”

—Marvin Gaye
“Black-on-Black” crime has been an issue for more than a half-century.

We can not afford to avoid the topic…we can not ignore the loss of human lives by sticking our head in the sand.
Black-on-Black Violence?

• Experts, academic scholars rather focus on race; for some the focus on “Black-on Black” violence is *something unique* to African-Americans.

• *Disparities* and disproportionate gaps (difference) exist between White and Black crime statistics.
Public Misperception & Questions

• Are Blacks innately different or psychological defected?
  
  – Is there any evidence of blacks being genetically different?

• Are black people more aggressive then other groups?

• Is this pattern of violence unique to the Black community?

• Is aggression or violence generationally passed on?

• Is there a deficit in the moral fiber?
How do we understand these differences & disparities?
The Crime & Race Issue

“There is little doubt that racism plays at least some role in the U. S. criminal justice system, and at least part of the impression that African-Americans are more violent than other ethnic and racial groups is probably due to the prejudicial handling of minorities within it. (Englander, 2003, p. 45)”
Justice is Not Applied Equally

✓ A faulty criminal justice system; bias and harsh policing in Black communities impacts *police arrest rates*.

✓ Blacks are more likely to be *treated unfairly* as they move through the court process; which certainly can *inflate the data contributing to disparity*.

✓ Blacks are more likely to be *targeted* by law enforcement (Hacker, 1992);

✓ Police are more likely to engage *in racial profiling*.
Theories and Explanations
Social variables linked to crime

• Poverty
• Social Class
• Unemployment
• Family disorganization
• Single parenting
• Lax parenting
• Drugs and addiction
• Social deprivation
• Educational drop out rates
Explanations

• There is **no one theory** that completely explains criminality.

• *Many endorse:* The **Sociological models** emphasize the individual’s social characteristics or the social environment interacting with the person, rather than that individual's biology, personality, or developmental history.
Perspectives on Blacks & Crime

• Oliver (1989) points out that there is *little consensus* as to the high rates of violence among Blacks and provides a brief summary snapshot of various viewpoints:

• Powdermaker (1943) and Dollard (1937) attributes much to *racial discrimination* and displaced aggression.

• Frazier (1949) and Moynihan (1965) focus on social disorganization and inadequate family socialization.

• Wolfgang & Ferracuti (1967) suggest that there is an adherence to the norms of a *subculture* of violence.
Perspectives on Blacks & Crime

• Heilburn & Heilburn (1977) postulated that *impulse control is lacking* consequently more acting out.

• Grier & Cobbs (1968) in their book “Black Rage” focused on inner *anger and rage* that is often displaced.

• Poussaint (1983) looking at misguided aggression displaced and Black *self-hatred*.

• Williams (1984) focused on *poverty* and deprivation

• Wilson (1985) attributes Black violence and crime to be a by product of *white supremacy and racism*.
Making a positive difference in our community

What needs to be done?
WHAT CAN BE DONE?

• Take a stand against crime;
  – We are in this *(problem solving)* together.
  – Demand community and police to be accountable

• Community must unit:
  – Police, organizations, and residents

• Proactive community policing
WHAT CAN BE DONE?

– The **economy needs to improve** significantly, so that **employment opportunities** are available to the black community.

– **The education system** in this country needs to improve so as to be able to give poor black kids a chance at improving their lives.

– Business **Investments in manufacturing** (i.e. opening factories) in areas of poverty are usually the best way to increase employment in that area.

– Provide **incentive** for business to invest. i.e. tax breaks.

– Encourage **purchasing housing** and ownership where people can take interest in pride in their community.

– Volunteerism - physically and emotionally investing in the community.
What Can Be Done?

1. Individual (grass roots) efforts
   1. In Oakland: “Men of Influence” *(show the clip)*
   2. In LA: “Making peace with Police” *(LA Times)*

2. Organizations
   1. Prison outreach efforts
   2. Staying connected with offenders upon their release
   3. Share & disseminating information of effective models

3. Community policing: a proactive model Vs. Traditional models.

4. Improving fairness in the *criminal justice system* at all levels.
Community Policing
Reactive Versus Proactive Policing

• Most common activities of a modern police force are still reactive.
  • Police react after a crime has occurred
  • Investigation and arrest are the focal points

• This traditional policing approach
  • Does not stop crime from occurring
  • Does not address the causes of crime


Proactive Community Policing

- Community oriented policing:
  - a strategy that focuses on **building social ties**;
  - **working closely** with members of the community.
  - It is proactive

- promotes a community base partnership with residents and organizations
  - that problem solves public safety issues.

- Community Policing has been used effectively in the last 150 years in various cities.

- It uses the media to assist with publicizing concerns and solutions that will impact the community.
Things that make you go humm...
Criminal Justice System

• Michelle Alexander (2013) in her book “The New Jim Crow” asserts that Blacks have been under a system of racialize social control:
  – Slavery
  – Jim Crow
  – Mass incarceration
    • Mass incarceration
    • The criminal justice system targets Black at all levels

• Alexander promotes looking the unfair laws, discriminatory policies, that perpetuate disparities and disproportionality.
Appendix
Expanded Homicide Data Table 6

Murder

Race, Ethnicity, and Sex of Victim by Race, Ethnicity, and Sex of Offender, 2013

According to the FBI UCR 2013, the following table presents data on the race, ethnicity, and sex of victims and offenders. The data is segmented by race of victim and race of offender, including sex and ethnicity where applicable. The table includes categories such as White, Black or African American, Other, Unknown, Male, Female, Hispanic or Latino, Not Hispanic or Latino, and Unknown. The data is organized in a tabular format with columns for Total, White, Black or African American, Other, Unknown, Male, Female, Hispanic or Latino, Not Hispanic or Latino, and Unknown. The table also notes that the ethnicity totals are representative of those agencies that provided ethnicity breakdowns, and not all agencies provide ethnicity data, therefore the race and ethnicity totals will not equal.

The table further specifies that it is based on incidents where some information about the offender is known by law enforcement; therefore, when the offender age, sex, and race are all reported as unknown, these data are excluded from the table.

1 The ethnicity totals are representative of those agencies that provided ethnicity breakdowns. Not all agencies provide ethnicity data, therefore the race and ethnicity totals will not equal.

2 Includes American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.

NOTE: This table is based on incidents where some information about the offender is known by law enforcement; therefore, when the offender age, sex, and race are all reported as unknown, these data are excluded from the table.
## Murder Victims by Age, Race, and Ethnicity 2013

### Data Table 2

#### Murder Victims
by Age, Sex, Race, and Ethnicity 2013

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<th>Female</th>
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<th>White</th>
<th>Black or African American</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>Hispanic or Latino</th>
<th>Not Hispanic or Latino</th>
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### Notes

2. Includes American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.

3. Because of rounding, the percentages may not add to 100.0.

4. Does not include unknown ages.
Uniform Crime Report  
Victims age by offense category 2013

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Offense Category</th>
<th>Total Victims</th>
<th>10 and Under</th>
<th>11 - 15</th>
<th>16 - 20</th>
<th>21 - 25</th>
<th>26 - 30</th>
<th>31 - 35</th>
<th>36 - 40</th>
<th>41 - 45</th>
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<th>56 - 60</th>
<th>61 - 65</th>
<th>66 and Over</th>
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<td>130,835</td>
<td>345,676</td>
<td>539,315</td>
<td>482,097</td>
<td>433,812</td>
<td>367,694</td>
<td>366,208</td>
<td>353,941</td>
<td>317,334</td>
<td>248,699</td>
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<td>157,745</td>
<td>202,029</td>
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<td>38,421</td>
<td>20,770</td>
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<td>Human Trafficking Offenses</td>
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<td>Crimes Against Property</td>
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<td>293,240</td>
<td>259,004</td>
<td>267,078</td>
<td>267,842</td>
<td>252,480</td>
<td>210,278</td>
<td>159,352</td>
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<td>1,015</td>
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<td>Burglary/Breaking &amp; Entering</td>
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<td>46,561</td>
<td>47,637</td>
<td>46,057</td>
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<td>31,290</td>
<td>57,892</td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>1,317</td>
<td>2,837</td>
<td>2,903</td>
<td>2,906</td>
<td>2,747</td>
<td>3,160</td>
<td>3,504</td>
<td>3,568</td>
<td>3,264</td>
<td>2,845</td>
<td>6,755</td>
<td>2,103</td>
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<td>1,709</td>
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<td>72,546</td>
<td>66,342</td>
<td>61,667</td>
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<td>58,940</td>
<td>60,233</td>
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<td>45,383</td>
<td>34,176</td>
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<td>111</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>657</td>
<td>140</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extortion/Blackmail</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>Fraud Offenses</td>
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<td>610</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>11,010</td>
<td>21,514</td>
<td>20,863</td>
<td>20,474</td>
<td>19,356</td>
<td>20,577</td>
<td>20,266</td>
<td>20,390</td>
<td>17,899</td>
<td>14,728</td>
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<td>4,595</td>
<td>23,113</td>
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<td>146,600</td>
<td>136,115</td>
<td>125,758</td>
<td>109,381</td>
<td>112,240</td>
<td>110,698</td>
<td>103,222</td>
<td>85,689</td>
<td>64,031</td>
<td>113,295</td>
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<td>286</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>7,028</td>
<td>20,134</td>
<td>20,101</td>
<td>18,432</td>
<td>16,397</td>
<td>16,120</td>
<td>15,733</td>
<td>14,365</td>
<td>11,430</td>
<td>7,911</td>
<td>11,970</td>
<td>3,439</td>
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<td>718</td>
<td>3,672</td>
<td>13,050</td>
<td>15,314</td>
<td>10,756</td>
<td>7,916</td>
<td>5,729</td>
<td>5,240</td>
<td>5,110</td>
<td>4,710</td>
<td>3,211</td>
<td>1,953</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>607</td>
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<td>Stolen Property Offenses</td>
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<td>451</td>
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<td>2,874</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>2,712</td>
<td>2,966</td>
<td>2,479</td>
<td>2,058</td>
<td>1,497</td>
<td>2,545</td>
<td>3,484</td>
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</table>

¹This table includes only individual (person) victims and does not include business, financial institution, government, religious organization, or other victims. Victims are counted once for each offense type to which they are connected.
Expanded Homicide Data Table 3
Murder Offenders by Age, Sex, and Race 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14,548</td>
<td>9,485</td>
<td>1,138</td>
<td>3,925</td>
<td>4,729</td>
<td>5,486</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>4,077</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent distribution</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 18(^2)</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>633</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 22(^2)</td>
<td>2,938</td>
<td>2,691</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1,038</td>
<td>1,803</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 and over(^2)</td>
<td>9,200</td>
<td>8,101</td>
<td>1,073</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4,386</td>
<td>4,486</td>
<td>232</td>
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<td>128</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>747</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>3,970</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Because of rounding, the percentages may not add to 100.0.
2 Does not include unknown ages.
References
Reference


Reference


