

*Los Angeles County: African American Mental Health Conference:  
“Holistic Wellness for African-Americans Families and Communities”*

# ***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**

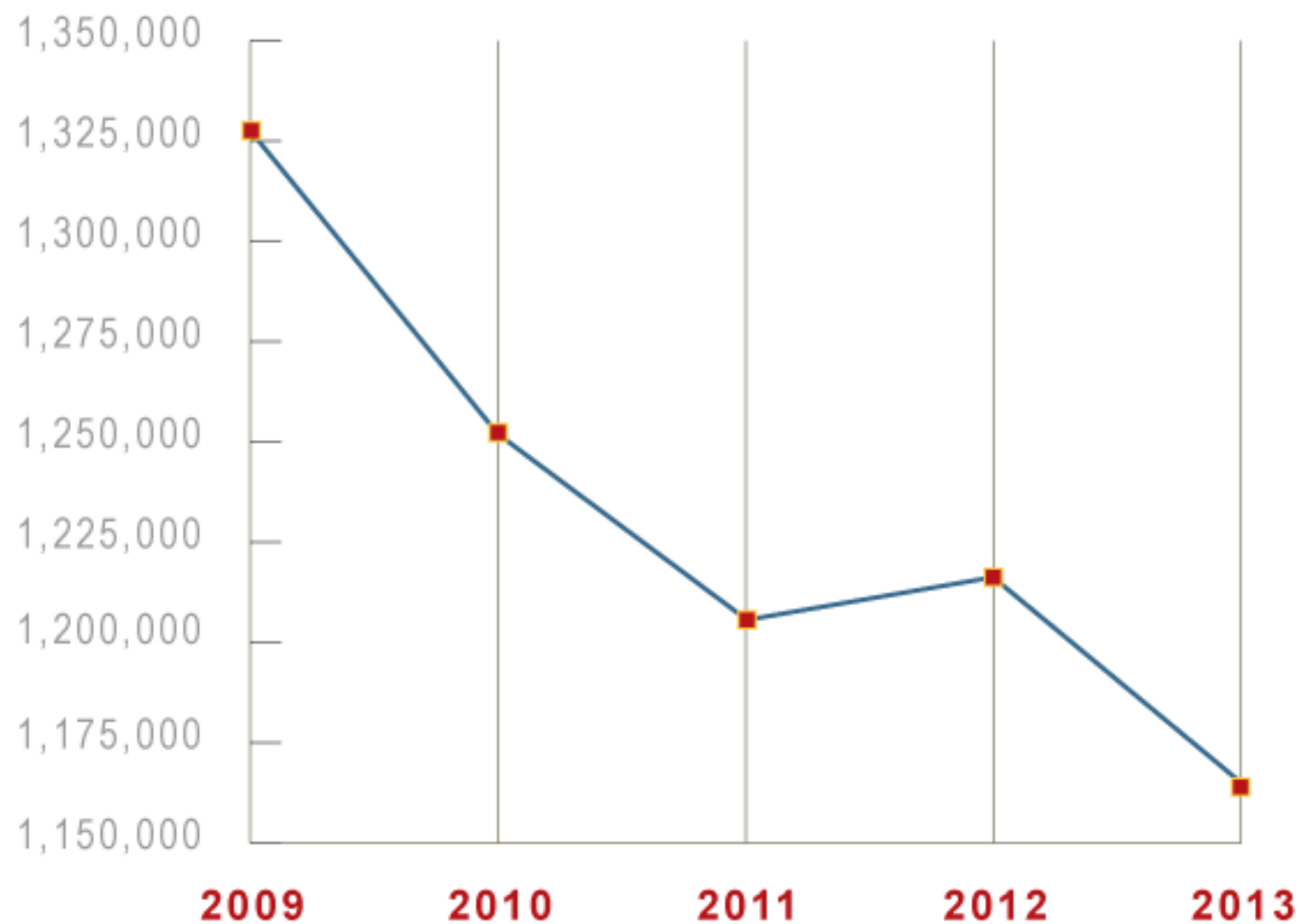
- Official Record Research
  - Criminologists use the records of government agencies to study crime.
  - The ***Uniform Crime Report (UCR)*** data is collected by local law enforcement agencies and published yearly by the FBI.
  - Census Bureau data used for information about income

*What do we know?*

## Violent Crime Offense Figure

Five-Year Trend, 2009-2013

Estimated  
number of offenses





# *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  $\frac{3}{4}$  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

*Source: National Crime Prevention Council, 2007*

# **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 racialized social control:
  - Slavery
  - Jim Crow
  - Mass incarceration
    - Mass incarceration
    - The criminal justice system targets Black at all levels
- Alexander promotes looking at the unfair laws, discriminatory policies, that perpetuate disparities and disproportionality.

# *Appendix*

# FBI UCR 2013

## Expanded Homicide Data Table 6

### Expanded Homicide Data Table 6

#### Murder

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

[Single victim/single offender]

Race of victim	Race of offender					Sex of offender			Ethnicity of offender <sup>1</sup>		
	Total	White	Black or African American	Other <sup>1</sup>	Unknown	Male	Female	Unknown	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino	Unknown
White	3,005	2,509	409	49	38	2,661	306	38	532	945	1,528
Black or African American	2,491	189	2,245	20	37	2,217	237	37	76	807	1,608
Other race <sup>2</sup>	159	32	27	96	4	142	13	4	10	63	86
Unknown race	68	25	17	3	23	38	7	23	3	14	51

Sex of victim	Race of offender					Sex of offender			Ethnicity of offender <sup>1</sup>		
	Total	White	Black or African American	Other <sup>1</sup>	Unknown	Male	Female	Unknown	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino	Unknown
Male	3,976	1,739	2,073	103	61	3,505	410	61	459	1,253	2,264
Female	1,679	991	608	62	18	1,515	146	18	159	562	958
Unknown sex	68	25	17	3	23	38	7	23	3	14	51

Ethnicity of victim	Race of offender					Sex of offender			Ethnicity of offender <sup>1</sup>		
	Total	White	Black or African American	Other <sup>1</sup>	Unknown	Male	Female	Unknown	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino	Unknown
Hispanic or Latino	588	486	87	10	5	542	41	5	439	123	26
Not Hispanic or Latino	1,891	877	928	69	17	1,708	166	17	151	1,671	69
Unknown	3,244	1,392	1,683	89	80	2,808	356	80	31	35	3,178

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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

Expanded Homicide Data Table 2

### Murder Victims

by Age, Sex, Race, and Ethnicity 2013

Age	Sex				Race				Ethnicity <sup>1</sup>			
	Total	Male	Female	Unknown	White	Black or African American	% BIK	Other <sup>2</sup>	Unknown	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino	Unknown
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,253</b>	<b>9,523</b>	<b>2,707</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>5,537</b>	<b>6,261</b>		<b>308</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>1,729</b>	<b>6,147</b>	<b>1,670</b>
Percent distribution <sup>3</sup>	100.0	77.7	22.1	0.2	45.2	51.1		2.5	1.2	18.1	64.4	17.5
Under 18 <sup>4</sup>	1,027	715	308	4	492	482		31	22	140	519	124
Under 22 <sup>4</sup>	2,603	2,086	511	6	1,005	1,507		54	37	416	1,243	315
18 and over <sup>4</sup>	11,101	8,728	2,368	5	4,986	5,738		277	100	1,577	5,588	1,485
Infant (under 1)	162	96	64	2	110	44	0.01	4	4	19	105	22
1 to 4	251	148	102	1	118	113	0.02	11	9	26	131	33
5 to 8	78	39	39	0	46	26	0.00	4	2	8	40	10
9 to 12	68	42	26	0	35	25	0.00	5	3	5	32	11
13 to 16	247	194	52	1	105	134	0.02	5	3	41	113	22
17 to 19	911	803	107	1	287	602	0.10	13	9	163	400	121
20 to 24	2,249	1,923	324	2	756	1,438	0.23	39	16	371	1,056	261
25 to 29	1,746	1,468	278	0	617	1,065	0.17	51	13	230	746	237
30 to 34	1,497	1,213	283	1	618	840	0.13	32	7	193	757	206
35 to 39	1,101	850	251	0	489	564	0.09	36	12	170	554	162
40 to 44	826	618	208	0	413	377	0.06	25	11	216	421	116
45 to 49	803	570	233	0	436	340	0.05	17	10	94	433	114
50 to 54	689	506	183	0	409	258	0.04	20	2	74	398	82
55 to 59	543	384	159	0	335	186	0.03	17	5	53	322	79
60 to 64	340	233	107	0	233	89	0.01	14	4	25	207	48
65 to 69	214	144	70	0	163	42	0.01	5	4	12	136	31
70 to 74	140	86	54	0	102	30	0.00	6	2	7	83	21
75 and over	263	126	136	1	206	47	0.01	4	6	10	173	33
Unknown	125	80	31	14	59	41	0.01	0	25	12	40	61
	6,261					1.00						

<sup>2</sup> Includes American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.

<sup>3</sup> Because of rounding, the percentages may not add to 100.0.

<sup>4</sup> Does not include unknown ages.

# Uniform Crime Report

## Victims age by offense category 2013

Victims  
Age  
by Offense Category, 2013

Offense Category	Total Victims <sup>1</sup>	Age													66 and Over	Unknown Age
		10 and Under	11 – 15	16 – 20	21 – 25	26 – 30	31 – 35	36 – 40	41 – 45	46 – 50	51 – 55	56 – 60	61 – 65			
Total	4,224,061	72,669	130,835	345,676	539,315	482,097	433,812	367,694	366,208	353,941	317,334	248,699	180,122	307,702	77,957	
Crimes Against Persons	1,289,799	62,969	97,993	157,745	202,029	166,593	140,572	108,690	99,130	86,099	64,854	38,421	20,770	23,901	20,033	
Assault Offenses	1,193,908	40,794	74,790	142,829	192,093	159,736	135,371	105,196	96,237	83,746	63,236	37,478	20,243	22,921	19,238	
Homicide Offenses	3,841	207	62	426	620	514	426	304	256	255	214	173	114	206	64	
Human Trafficking Offenses	6	0	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Kidnapping/Abduction	15,737	2,011	1,209	2,197	2,798	2,097	1,644	1,089	874	632	426	226	149	217	168	
Sex Offenses	70,144	18,860	17,870	11,415	6,488	4,223	3,119	2,096	1,748	1,454	976	540	263	557	535	
Sex Offenses, Nonforcible	6,163	1,097	4,061	874	29	23	12	5	15	12	2	4	1	0	28	
Crimes Against Property	2,934,262	9,700	32,842	187,931	337,286	315,504	293,240	259,004	267,078	267,842	252,480	210,278	159,352	283,801	57,924	
Arson	10,905	222	109	377	843	959	1,013	924	1,003	1,137	1,015	773	589	978	963	
Bribery	258	0	7	16	24	39	54	24	24	20	9	7	3	4	27	
Burglary/Breaking & Entering	511,926	1,839	2,806	23,284	54,117	53,973	51,721	45,455	46,561	47,637	46,057	40,108	31,290	57,892	9,186	
Counterfeiting/Forgery	38,031	65	57	1,317	2,837	2,903	2,906	2,747	3,160	3,504	3,568	3,264	2,845	6,755	2,103	
Destruction/Damage/Vandalism	618,656	1,206	1,709	36,510	72,546	66,342	61,667	55,922	58,940	60,233	56,148	45,383	34,176	56,130	11,744	
Embezzlement	3,788	4	6	111	188	233	303	336	364	402	410	356	278	657	140	
Extortion/Blackmail	1,520	13	76	168	183	165	122	133	137	136	107	100	51	106	23	
Fraud Offenses	224,619	610	695	11,010	21,514	20,863	20,474	19,356	20,577	20,266	20,390	17,899	14,728	30,969	5,268	
Larceny/Theft Offenses	1,249,143	4,595	23,113	93,466	146,600	136,115	125,758	109,381	112,240	110,698	103,222	85,689	64,031	113,295	20,940	
Motor Vehicle Theft	163,487	286	141	7,028	20,134	20,101	18,432	16,397	16,120	15,733	14,365	11,430	7,911	11,970	3,439	
Robbery	80,486	718	3,672	13,050	15,314	10,756	7,916	5,729	5,240	5,110	4,710	3,211	1,953	2,500	607	
Stolen Property Offenses	31,443	142	451	1,594	2,986	3,055	2,874	2,600	2,712	2,966	2,479	2,058	1,497	2,545	3,484	

<sup>1</sup>This 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

Expanded Homicide Data Table 3

### Murder Offenders

by Age, Sex, and Race, 2011

Age	Total	Sex			Race			
		Male	Female	Unknown	White	Black	Other	Unknown
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,548</b>	<b>9,485</b>	<b>1,138</b>	<b>3,925</b>	<b>4,729</b>	<b>5,486</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>4,077</b>
Percent distribution <sup>1</sup>	100.0	65.2	7.8	27.0	32.5	37.7	1.8	28.0
Under 18 <sup>2</sup>	695	633	57	5	254	410	20	11
Under 22 <sup>2</sup>	2,938	2,691	241	6	1,038	1,803	70	27
18 and over <sup>2</sup>	9,200	8,101	1,073	26	4,386	4,486	232	96
Infant (under 1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1 to 4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5 to 8	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
9 to 12	14	12	0	2	6	6	0	2
13 to 16	327	295	29	3	128	177	14	8
17 to 19	1,487	1,371	116	0	499	946	34	8
20 to 24	2,417	2,179	235	3	904	1,435	55	23
25 to 29	1,649	1,456	187	6	747	836	45	21
30 to 34	1,122	994	125	3	559	525	24	14
35 to 39	745	631	109	5	408	312	17	8
40 to 44	604	486	118	0	359	220	22	3
45 to 49	521	431	90	0	330	171	16	4
50 to 54	448	378	64	6	292	137	10	9
55 to 59	227	203	21	3	153	62	7	5
60 to 64	148	130	18	0	105	37	5	1
65 to 69	72	64	8	0	54	18	0	0
70 to 74	50	46	4	0	40	8	2	0
75 and over	63	57	6	0	55	6	1	1
Unknown	4,653	751	8	3,894	89	590	4	3,970

<sup>1</sup> Because of rounding, the percentages may not add to 100.0.

<sup>2</sup> Does not include unknown ages.

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