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Black Criminal Stereotypes and Racial Profiling

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The racial stereotyping of criminals has been an enduring and unfortunate feature of American culture. However, following the civil rights movement, the linkage between Blacks and crime was galvanized. The stereotyping of Blacks as criminals is so pervasive throughout society that "criminal predator" is used as a euphemism for "young Black male." This common stereotype has erroneously served as a subtle rationale for the unofficial policy and practice of racial profiling by criminal justice practitioners. This article details the theoretical elements contributing to the development of Black criminal typification to understand how this has been used to justify racial profiling.

Keywords: *Black typification of crime; racial stereotype; race; crime; racial profiling*

It may be more important to understand the images of crime conveyed by a society than the actual dynamics of crime (Scheingold, 1984). In American society, a prevalent representation of crime is that it is overwhelmingly committed by young Black men. Subsequently, the familiarity many Americans have with the image of a young Black male as a violent and menacing street thug is fueled and perpetuated by typifications everywhere. In fact, perceptions about the presumed racial identity of criminals may be so ingrained in public consciousness that race does not even need to be specifically mentioned for a connection to be made between the two because it seems that "talking about crime *is* talking about race" (Barlow, 1998, p. 151).

The impression that crime is a problem disproportionately attributable to African Americans is not a completely new phenomenon, however (Hawkins, 1995). In describing evolving perceptions of Blacks throughout our nation's history, Marc Mauer (1999) explains that Whites have long viewed criminal behavior as an inherent characteristic of Blacks. Randall Kennedy (1997) explains that the reputation of Blacks has been "besieged" by beliefs about predispositions toward criminality that can be traced back to the enslavement of Africans in the United States. Throughout American history, Blacks have been consistently stereotyped as criminals (Drummond, 1990; Russell, 2002). Although the association of crime with Blackness may have existed for some time, Mauer explains that it was not until the 1970s and early 1980s that the popular stereotype of the young Black man evolved in the eyes of many from a petty thief or

276

rapist into that of an ominous criminal predator, or what Katheryn Russell (2002) has argued is the widely recognized "criminalblackman." Though Blacks have often been portrayed as physically threatening (Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002), the current Black stereotyping of criminals is an unusual phenomenon (Mauer, 1999; Russell, 2002). The evolving criminal image of Blacks appears to be of a more threatening nature than what Mauer says had been previously considered a general criminal tendency, taken for granted as a "biological flaw" of African Americans.

Also within the past few decades has been the emergence of the controversial law enforcement practice of racial profiling. This practice, in which officials target racial minorities in criminal investigations in an attempt to increase the likelihood of uncovering illegal activity, may be a consequence of prevailing stereotypes about the race of criminals. Some of the assumptions on which these criminal justice practitioners base their investigations could be the result of a true disparity in criminal involvement. However, most of the factors contributing to the endorsement of racial profiling are most likely rooted in inaccurate and often discriminatory information.

If Scheingold's (1984) assertion about the importance of understanding the images of crime conveyed by a culture is indeed true, it follows that an analysis of the current representation of American crime as an overwhelmingly Black phenomenon is needed. Although a "general white stereotype of African Americans as less controlled, and so more violent or more prone to crime than whites" (Higginbotham, 2002, p. 147) may be adding to the public's conception of criminality, several more specific issues may have influenced this hypothesized condition as well. This article will evaluate the various factors contributing to the criminal stereotyping of Blacks because this perception has regrettably provided a justification of sorts for racial profiling by law enforcement and officials in other criminal justice institutions. These broadly accepted stereotypes are also the reason the public has not more vehemently opposed these measures.

Blacks and Crime

It is likely that the foremost contributor to the formation of the public's association between Blacks and criminality is the sheer number of Blacks represented in crime statistics and the criminal justice system. We would expect that if Blacks were disproportionately involved in criminal activity and consequently overrepresented as convicted criminals by the criminal justice system, they would be perceived as being more involved in crime and criminal justice measures than are others. Of course, we know that Whites compose the greatest percentage of criminals and convicts (U.S. Department of Justice, 2003, 2004). Although most crime is actually committed by Whites, the common perception is that the majority of it is perpetrated by Blacks (Gilens, 1996).

Perceptions of Black Crime

The public association of criminality with Blackness has been referenced in a limited amount of research. One study shows that Blacks are more likely than other racial or ethnic group to be characterized by Whites as violent, more likely to abuse drugs, and more likely to engage in crime than are Whites (Sigelman & Tuch, 1996). A General Social Survey question in 1990 showed that 54% of Whites believe that Blacks are prone to violence. In 1991, the National Race Survey showed that a clear majority of both Whites *and* Blacks agreed with the statement "blacks are aggressive or violent" (Sniderman & Piazza, 1993). In support of these findings, other research indicates that the public generally associates violent street crime with Blacks (Hawkins, 1987). Moreover, the results of a more recent study corroborate the prevalence of this belief because it found that a majority of Whites characterize Blacks as aggressive (Hurwitz & Peffley, 1998). Other nationwide research has shown that the public perceives that Blacks are involved in a greater percentage of violent crime than official statistics indicate they actually are (Chiricos, Welch, & Gertz, 2004; Welch, Chiricos, & Gertz, 2002).

The United States does not appear to be alone in its receptiveness to the image of a young Black man as a criminal threat. Research in Canada has suggested that the "racialization of crime" directly affects the quality of justice received by Blacks in that country (Henry, Hastings, & Freer, 1996). In that study, a survey was administered to a random sample of Canadians that revealed a strong and widespread belief that Blacks are crime prone. Nearly half of the respondents believed that a relationship exists between race and criminality, and, of those, 65% thought that Black people committed more crimes than other racial or ethnic groups. Another similar study of this hypothesized relationship has shown that race and crime stereotyping have been observed in other countries and that both foreign and domestic typifications may be grounded in beliefs about the causes of crime and who is likely to become criminal (Hawkins, 1987).

Actual Black Involvement in Crime

Blacks are indeed involved in a disproportional amount of crime in general and violent crime in particular (Blumstein, 1982; Harer & Steffensmeier, 1993; Tonry, 1995; Wilson, 1987). In fact, for violent crimes such as robbery and homicide, there have been times when Blacks were arrested in absolute numbers that surpassed those of Whites (Flanagan & Jamieson, 1988; Young, 1985). In more recent years, however, although Blacks did not surpass the actual number of Whites in nationwide arrests, their presence in these statistics has been greater than their representation in the general public. For example, although Blacks compose approximately 13% of the U.S. population, in 2002 they accounted for 38% of arrests for violent crimes and nearly 30% of arrests for property crimes. Juvenile arrest statistics indicate that during the same year, Black youth accounted for approximately 43% of arrests for violent crimes and 27% of arrests for property crimes (U.S. Department of Justice, 2004). Researchers have suggested that crime

committed by African Americans may be especially salient not only because it exceeds what would be expected based on the racial composition of the country but also perhaps because the violent crimes that tend to be most fearsome are the ones that are most disproportionately perpetrated by Black males (Kennedy, 1997; Stinchcombe et al., 1980).

War on Drugs

The well-known war on drugs of the 1980s was a powerful contributor to the typification of criminals as Black. This well-researched war on drugs, initially waged in the early 1980s by the Reagan administration, had a significant impact on the Black population by funneling much of it through the criminal justice system as a result of the passage of strict crack cocaine laws (Austin & Irwin, 2001; Currie, 1998; Mauer, 1999; Miller, 1996; Reiman, 1998; Tonry, 1995; Wilson, 1987). Crack was generally recognized as a relatively inexpensive drug that was predominantly used by impoverished racial minorities. The pervasive dialog regarding this war conveyed the message to the public that the problem of crack cocaine, previously thought to be common only to minority communities, was suddenly spreading to a very anxious White America (Chiricos, 1996).

Americans were already familiar with cocaine before the war on drugs, however. Prior to the so-called "crack epidemic," powder cocaine was prevalent in White communities, with little acknowledgement from law enforcement (Reeves & Campbell, 1994). It was only when this drug was transformed into a relatively affordable and accessible variety that began to be used predominantly by Blacks that it became a prioritized target of policy makers and the criminal justice system. This helped to promote punitive policies that have hit the Black population especially hard, as Tonry (1995), among others, has noted:

> Urban black Americans have borne the brunt of the War on Drugs. They have been arrested, prosecuted, convicted, and imprisoned at increasing rates since the early 1980s, and grossly out of proportion to their numbers in the general population or among drug users. By every standard, the war has been harder on blacks than on whites. (p. 105)

National crime surveys indicate that most racial and ethnic groups consume illegal drugs at approximately similar rates (Katz, 2000). Specifically, Whites account for almost 75% of the nation's illegal drug users, and Blacks account for about 13%, which is consistent with their representations in the greater U.S. population. Blacks, however, account for about 75% of the nation's drug prisoners, which reveals the extreme disparity manifest in the national crackdown on the drug problem (Katz, 2000). The sale and use of crack cocaine, which is typically used by racial minorities, carried with it heavier criminal penalties than those associated with other illegal drugs such as powder cocaine, which has been used more often by Whites. This has resulted in a highly disproportionate number of Blacks who have been criminalized because of their drug use (Austin & Irwin, 2001; Mauer, 1999; Miller, 1996; Reiman, 1998; Tonry, 1995).

The suggestion has been made that the war on drugs may have been more appropriately referenced as a war on Blacks or a war on Black drug use (Tonry, 1995). Because of the overrepresentation of African Americans who are processed through the criminal justice system directly resulting from the war on drugs, they have been depicted as the primary source of this country's drug problem. The consequence is that many may have come to associate Blacks with drug use and drug use with Blacks. The consumption of illicit drugs, therefore, may be a very specific racially typified phenomenon. In addition to being illegal themselves, drugs are frequently related to other types of crime, such as robbery and assault. This fact reinforces the association of Blacks with crime and crime with Blacks.

Blacks and Punishment

The reality that the criminal justice system encounters and processes a number of minority offenders that far surpasses their representation in the general population may corroborate the common notion that being Black equates to criminality. One possible source of the racial stereotyping of criminals may be the prolific presence of Blacks in the American court system. Studies on race and sentencing have shown that young Black males are sentenced more severely than are members of other racial or ethnic groups (Crawford, Chiricos, & Kleck, 1998; Mauer, 1999; Miller, 1996; Steffensmeier, Ulmer, & Kramer, 1998). Research on the treatment of defendants in court proceedings shows that prosecutors sometimes take advantage of and perpetuate racial stereotypes by characterizing Blacks as particularly prone to violent criminality, which results in higher conviction rates (Higginbotham, 2002). It is reasonable to expect that prosecutors will persist with this kind of practice if it produces more successful outcomes for them. When the public sees such a large portion of those convicted and sentenced by criminal courts are Black, the message conveyed is that Blackness and criminality are inextricably related.

It would appear that whatever racial differences may exist at the level of behavior may be somewhat amplified by differences at the level of incarceration and other forms of criminal sanctions.[1] It is widely recognized that a disproportionate number of Blacks are under some sort of correctional supervision (Currie, 1998; Katz, 2000; Mauer, 1999; Miller, 1992, 1994, 1996; Tonry, 1995; Wilson, 1987). Almost 25% of Black men ages 20 to 29 are under some form of correctional authority (Austin & Irwin, 2001). Blacks are almost 7 times more likely to be incarcerated than are Whites, which means that the odds that a Black man will do time at some point in his life are 1 in 3, and for Whites it is 1 in 25 (Katz, 2000). Encountering some sort of criminal punishment from the justice system has become something of an expectation for many young, urban Black men (Bridges, Crutchfield, & Simpson, 1987; Hagan & Albonetti, 1982; Miller, 1992). The threat of being incarcerated has become an almost expected part of life for Blacks because, statistically, many minority males will be

punished by the criminal justice system at some point during their lives (Austin & Irwin, 2001). It is clear that "the confluence of issues of race and class with the prison system have become a fundamental feature of the national landscape" (Mauer, 1999, p. 3). Not surprisingly, awareness of this statistical fact has been a catalyst for recent dialogue and policy concerning racial profiling by law enforcement officers (Kennedy, 1997; Miller, 1996).

Jerome Miller has conducted several studies of the criminal justice system in various cities over the past decade. One in particular showed that 56% of young Black men were under correctional supervision in Baltimore on any given day, and 42% in Washington, D.C., were in a similar situation (Miller, 1992). He explains that the "get tough" policies are taking an exceptionally heavy toll on Black men, their families, and their communities. Extracting such a substantial percentage of individuals from already struggling minority communities is certain to have a disrupting impact on many who remain noninstitutionalized (Rose & Clear, 1998). The implications for the Black community and the nation as a whole are quite troubling when the criminal justice system processes more Blacks than colleges do (Austin & Irwin, 2001; Miller, 1996).

Media Portrayals of Blacks and Crime

Aside from the actual involvement of Blacks in crime and the criminal justice system, other potential contributors to the profiling of criminals as young Black males may be various media sources. The media provide readily accessible depictions of criminality, which may help to shape perceptions about crime and subsequent justice practices. Research aimed at examining the racial content of televised newscasts in Chicago found that they commonly portray accused Black criminals in scowling mug shots or in video clips being led in handcuffs by White police officers (Entman, 1990). In fact, it is well established that there is a disproportionate amount of the media coverage devoted to violent crimes for which Black males are more likely than others to be arrested (Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002; Surrette, 1992; Young, 1985). Thus, "the image of violent criminals as young black males is routinely reinforced" (Young, 1985, p. 475).

In recognition of this, one study argues that Blacks are "demonized" by the faces chosen to depict criminality in crime news stories (Gerbner, 2003). The presumption of this connection has been corroborated by Anderson (1995), who observed,

> Crime news in America's cities portrayed an apparently endless parade of young black men under arrest, on trial, or headed for prison; it did not take too long for the automatic, barely conscious association of blacks with crime to become an assumption of urban life. (p. 52)

These images are so widespread that it would not be surprising if much of American society has subconsciously come to accept the visual portrayal of Blacks as criminals

in contemporary society. A recent analysis of *Time* and *Newsweek* cover stories over several decades has supported this contention (Barlow, 1998).

The media and those who are captured on film, such as politicians and government leaders, frequently link race and crime, which reinforces a criminal image for the public's consumption (St. John & Heald-Moore, 1995). This development has seemingly increased in recent years and is apparently well-received by American voters. The "racial politics" conveyed by media is not a new phenomenon and has been employed to gain constituent support at various points in this country's history. This was particularly true following the 1960s, pursuant to concerns about Blacks and the strengthening civil rights movement (Barlow, 1998).

The "get-tough" advertising rhetoric of politicians, conservative and liberal alike, aspiring to elevate partisan popularity, frequently manipulates the fear and indignation of citizens by conjuring fright-inducing images. Among the most iconic of those images were photographs of Willie Horton, the Black prison inmate who committed rape while out of prison on work furlough. Images of Horton were included in political advertisements sponsored by George Bush's campaign to disparage his opponent, Michael Dukakis, for his purported permissive and "liberal" stance on crime. The message conveyed was that this young Black man, and presumably any young Black offender like him, was responsible for the violent crime in the United States (Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002; Jamieson, 1992; Mendelberg, 1997). This image was intended to serve as the visual representation of a criminal predator for fearful Americans (Tonry, 1995).

More recently, images of John Allen Muhammad, the convicted Washington, D.C., area Beltway sniper killer, and his young companion, Lee Boyd Malvo, received a great deal of media coverage and consumed substantial political energy, stirring public demands for governmental action. To the initial surprise of law enforcement, these serial killers turned out to be young Black men. Their photographs ubiquitously appeared in nearly every news medium available for months following the October 2002 attacks. And with one of them having the name Muhammad, avoiding the association of race with their criminality would likely be difficult for even the least likely to stereotype. It was unnecessary for politicians, in this circumstance, to make any comments about the race of these perpetrators in reference to these sniper shootings because it was a connection that would be made by the public simply because the photographs of these two offenders were shown everywhere. One result of this situation is the possible generalization about Black men as fearsome violent criminals, despite the reality that this type of serial predatory violence is actually relatively rare among Blacks in the United States (Katz, 1988).

Researchers readily acknowledge that the impact of media images can be extremely powerful (Mauer, 1999). Media studies have found,

> Amongst other kinds of ideological labour, the media construct for us a definition of what *race* is, what meaning the imagery of race carries, and what the "problem of race" is understood to be. They help to classify out the world in terms of the categories of

race. The media are not only a powerful source of ideas about race. They are also one place where these ideas are articulated, worked on, transformed, and elaborated. (Hall, 2003, p. 90)

Because media presumably have the power to help construct the meaning of race in our society, it is apparent that they play a significant role in defining Blacks as criminals as a result of the way they are often presented to readers and viewers. For many, this "visual representation can be assimilated to a larger, undifferentiated group, in this case the stereotype of a dangerous black male" (Entman, 1992, p. 350).

Research on media influence has concluded that Blacks are indeed more likely to appear as criminally threatening on local television news, suggesting that this may encourage the social construction of threat in relation to Blacks (Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002). Two empirical studies on Blacks and crime in the media, which encompassed 55 days of observing local television news in Chicago, found that many news stories feature Blacks in a negative light. The research discovered that Blacks are often portrayed as threatening and are frequently depicted without using a name, which serves to denote personal identity (Entman, 1990, 1992). In defining this practice as a component of "modern racism," Entman (1992) asserts that

prejudice is fed by a tendency to homogenize, to assume there are no significant differences among individual members of the outgroup. When blacks are not given a name in a picture, it suggests the visual representation can be assimilated to a larger, undifferentiated group, in this case the stereotype of a dangerous black male. (p. 350)

This aspect of modern racism, then, can be understood as a crime-specific form of racial prejudice and discrimination.

It is plausible that the *manner* in which Black suspects appear may be more influential in terms of how the public perceives Black criminals than how *often* Blacks appear as criminals. Chiricos and Eschholz (2002) reviewed eight studies assessing the representation of Blacks in local television news coverage and found that, for the most part, Blacks and Whites were depicted as criminals at nearly similar rates. Their own analysis of Orlando television news showed that although African Americans were not overrepresented among alleged criminals on local crime news, Blacks who appeared on television in any role were more than twice as likely to appear as criminal suspects than Whites. That is, when Blacks and Whites were shown in local television news stories, Blacks were much more likely than their White counterparts to be portrayed as criminals as opposed to police officers, role models, news commentators, or other positive figures. These researchers termed this the "criminal typification of race." In addition, they found that the criminal typification of Blacks in television newscasts occurs 2.4 times more often than the criminal typification of Whites. A qualitative analysis of the Orlando newscasts indicated that Blacks are often represented in more threatening contexts than Whites. Specifically, Blacks were more often shown in mug shots or as having victimized a stranger or someone of a different race. Thus, the

qualitative aspects of race and crime in a news story may be as consequential as the frequency with which Blacks appear as criminals in helping to shape public perceptions about race and criminal threat.

The equation of race and crime has also been developed at the level of celebrity. It has been hypothesized that the recent media focus on Black athletes accused of committing crimes, such as Kobe Bryant, Mike Tyson, Ray Lewis, Jason Williams, and Allen Iverson, is serving to reinforce the perception that Blacks are more menacing than criminals of other races. Apparently, the "demonization" of Black men by the media as violent rapists and murderers is well documented by scholars interested in film and rap music as well (Dines, 2003). Black men in the entertainment industry who have recently encountered criminal allegations, such as Sean "Puff Daddy" Combs, 50 Cent, R. Kelly, and "Snoop Doggy Dogg" may have also strengthened the association that many make between Blacks and crime.

Although several media-inspired "moral panics" have stirred public fear about race and crime, few have been more prominent and long lasting than media depictions pertaining to violence and the war on drugs. Among the features of these portrayals are dramatic increases in the sheer numbers of media reports and images of urban minority problems spreading to White suburbia (Chiricos, 1996). In referencing crime media coverage of the nationwide crackdown on drugs, Tonry (1995) stated,

> Newspapers, television, and movies regularly portray trafficking in cocaine and crack as characteristic of inner-city minority neighborhoods. Any mildly informed person in the late 1980s knew that the major fronts in the drug wars were located in minority neighborhoods. (p. 105)

Along these lines, media reports also communicated that these same communities were the prime targets of the drug war.

To assess the hypothesized Black stereotyping of crime among the public, one study in particular sought to learn about public perceptions of different types of criminals (Mauer, 1999). At the University of California, Los Angeles, researchers conducted an experiment in which participants viewed all crime stories broadcast on television newscasts. In some of these stories offenders were identified, and in others they were not. The research found that even in the instances in which references were not made to criminal suspects, 42% of the viewers recalled that they saw one. In two thirds of these cases, the viewers recalled that the suspects were Black (Mauer, 1999). These findings underscore the ease with which crime is racially typified.

The Racial Hoax

Another possible contributor to the practice of racial profiling is the use of the racial hoax. The mere existence of racial hoaxes, which are false allegations of involvement

in criminal activity based on the race of a fabricated perpetrator, offers support for the notion that Blacks have been stereotyped in criminally coded ways. Racial hoaxes are usually employed to deflect attention away from the individual making the accusation, who is typically the actual criminal in many of these circumstances. Not surprisingly, the use of this decoy has had the most direct and consequential impact on the Black community because the racial hoax has most frequently referenced a nameless Black offender (Russell, 1998, 2002).

The supposed purpose of specifying the race of an invented offender is to exploit preexisting notions about racial proclivities for committing crime to add a component of believability to the false accusation. This highlights the unfortunate state of much of "the public's prevailing view of crime—that Blacks run amok committing depraved, unprovoked acts of violence against Whites" (Russell, 2002, p. 354). A practice called "inferential racism" has been identified as one source that sustains the persistence of the racial hoax by depicting

> apparently naturalized representations of events and situations relating to race, whether "factual" or "fictional," which have racist premises and propositions inscribed in them as a set of unquestioned assumptions. These enable racist statements to be formulated without ever bringing into awareness the racist predicates on which the statements are grounded. (Hall, 2003, p. 91)

Therefore, the phenomenon of Black typification of crime must exist at some level for the racial hoax to be at all compelling.

Several recent examples of individuals using racial hoaxes to provoke a misdirected search for a falsified Black predator have elicited a fair amount of media coverage. A total of 67 incidents of racial hoaxes between 1987 and 1996 were identified by Russell (1998), though not all received equal media coverage. The incident that has probably received the greatest amount of attention is the situation involving Susan Smith's 1994 killing of her two children. To misdirect the investigation, Smith told emergency operators and both state and federal law enforcement officials that she had been carjacked by a young Black male while her sons were in the car. This elicited widespread concern and offers of assistance to this supposed White victim of a ruthless Black crime. It was a couple of weeks after the report that Smith admitted to having murdered her own children by drowning them in her vehicle.

There were several other memorable racial hoaxes involving White accusers and fictional Black criminals in the 1990s. These include Robert Harris, who hired a hit man to shoot and kill his fiancée but claimed that the perpetrator was an armed Black man in camouflage (Russell, 1998). In another instance, Jesse Anderson told the police that two Black men had stabbed him and his wife, resulting in her death, only to have investigators discover later that Anderson had killed her (Russell, 2002). In addition, Miriam Kashani, a woman claiming to have been raped on a college campus by two young Black men, later admitted that she had made up the story to heighten rape awareness

among the student body (Russell, 2002). In all of these instances of individuals using a racial hoax, there was no apparent reason to have identified the suspect as Black except to capitalize on society's fears and anxieties about a racialized criminal type.

The use of the racial hoax exploits preexisting ideas about the involvement of young Black men in crime, but it also propagates it by further providing violent and threatening examples of unknown threatening Black criminals. This point is well expressed by Russell (2002), who notes, "Not only does the hoax perpetuate the existing lore regarding the Black male as criminal, it also helps to create it" (p. 354). The more racial hoaxes are used, by accusing fictitious Blacks of committing falsified crimes, the more the racial typification of crime is solidified in the public psyche.

Conclusion

The current recognizability of the image of a young Black criminal has been the result of various representations of crime. Contributions to this relationship that many identify between African Americans and criminality include actual involvement in crime, especially crack cocaine violations and violent offenses. Blacks do account for a disproportionate amount of crime arrests and are disproportionately convicted and incarcerated. But public estimates of Black criminality surpass the reality. The media perpetuate ideas linking race with criminality, which have also been reinforced by political agendas. The temporary efficacy of using a racial hoax to mislead law enforcement and the public has capitalized on and strengthened views about race and crime.

All of these phenomena have served to solidify the stereotype of the young Black man as a criminal threat among the public in contemporary American society, which then fuels the practice of racial profiling by criminal justice officials. The prevalent typification of Blacks as criminals seems to justify law enforcement tactics that exploit race in criminal investigations. Only when criminal justice personnel recognize that the sources of these stereotypes are flawed or based on discriminatory practices themselves will the rationale for maintaining the unofficial policy and practice of racial profiling of criminals be negated. When the association between race and criminality ceases to be compelling, it will be apparent that racial profiling serves no useful purpose.

Note

1. This issue has been met with much controversy since Blumstein (1982) argued that the disproportional incarceration rates for Blacks are directly attributable to their greater involvement in crime as measured by arrest rates and, presumably, criminal activity. Tonry (1995) agrees that the primary reason that rates of incarceration are substantially higher for Blacks is that Blacks commit more imprisonable crimes than do Whites. However, Tonry argues that this is not the case for sanctions for certain drug crimes, as these punishments target Black users rather than Whites, who use the same drugs in different forms. Therefore, Black drug users are likelier to be incarcerated than are White drug users simply because of the specific form of drug consumed.

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