

economic pressures on black youth increased in the 1980s, there developed a dualistic consciousness, in which resistance to white hegemony was tied to a misogynistic (woman hating) and homophobic attitude that divided the black community (Staples, 1989).

Globalization, ethnicity and 'new' forms of crime

As the 'flows' of migrants increase in an intensifying globalized world, Bosworth *et al.* (2008) argue that criminology needs to re-evaluate how it approaches issues of ethnicity and crime. They suggest that there are strong forces at work, such as the 'globalization of fear', that lead to a fear of the globally mobile classes, who are often distinguished by their ethnicity. The globally mobile are stigmatized by labels such as 'asylum seekers', 'illegal aliens' and even traffickers and terrorists. However, they suggest that traditional approaches to crime and ethnicity, by focusing on difference (the differential offending and victim rates between the British ethnic minority and whites), leads to a narrow conception of the ways that ethnicity and criminality intersect. For example, they show that 'racial profiling' does not just decide who gets stopped and searched on the street, but also influences who can enter and settle in the UK.

Globalization is producing a new 'global underclass' often located in the underdeveloped world and looking to move across borders for economic advantage (Pickering and Weber, 2006). In seeking to make those moves, they often cross the border into criminality, through illegal entry, overstaying their visa permits, and so on. The result is often 'neutralization', as they spend time in holding camps, or marginalization, as they work the grey economy. The processes of exclusion (and inclusion) that they are subjected to are highly racialized (as well as gendered and classed). The combination of worry about terrorist attack post-9/11, and the depiction of asylum seekers and refugees as 'scroungers', leads to a situation where migrants are located within a discourse of the 'criminality of the other'. Hughes (2006) argues that this results in the 'criminalization of migration', in which highly visible ethnic groups are portrayed as a criminal fifth column.

POSTMODERN APPROACHES TO ETHNICITY AND CRIME

Postmodernists are critical of all modernist theories of crime for their neglect of the poor, women and ethnic minorities. Arrigo and Young (1996) argue that, even when modernist theorists paid attention to the position of marginalized

groups, they did so in a way that effectively disenfranchised them. Arrigo and Young suggest that modernist theories tend to privilege the idea of sameness amongst criminals, as opposed to the emphasis on difference put forward by the postmodernists. This focus on the essential similarity between criminals, regardless of class, ethnicity or gender stems from the modernist belief in the metanarrative, that is, that there is only one explanation. By rejecting the idea that there is a single all-embracing truth, the postmodernists claim, they open up theoretical space to listen to marginalized groups' experiences and expressions of crime. At the centre of the marginalization of ethnic minorities by modernist theories of crime is the language (concepts, ideas and preconceptions) used to construct them. This language is so steeped in the tradition of masculine and dominant ethnic group imagery and assumptions that marginal groups are reduced to having 'essential' characteristics, which stereotype them and take away their voice.

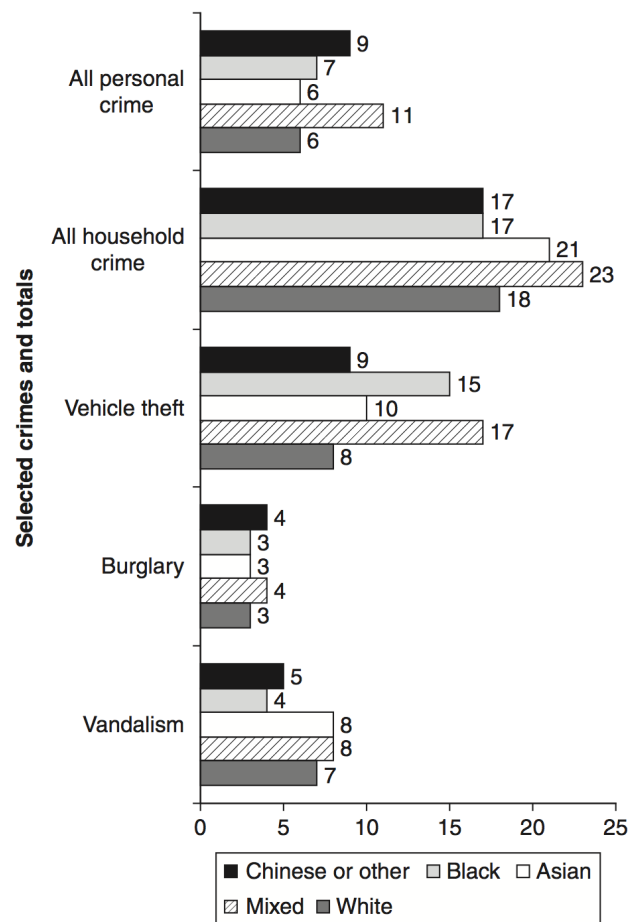
By employing topology theory, which draws heavily on the work of Lacan (1981), postmodernists attempt to bring into theoretical prominence the attitudes and opinions of those groups who have been denied a voice by modernist sociology (see, for example, Arrigo, 1995). Postmodernists are therefore concerned to allow alternative narratives to surface that include the dominant signifiers (the words or symbols that represent the key beliefs and ideas of a person or group) of the ethnic minorities. The dominant signifiers of modernist criminological discourse (ways of speaking), such as 'criminal career' or 'techniques of neutralization', have squeezed out alternative discourses, such as the experience of ethnic minorities themselves in understanding and experiencing crime. Thus while both white and black communities in the United States used signifiers such as 'fairness' and 'justice' when responding to the acquittal of the police officers in the Rodney King case (the beating of King by the officers had been captured on video) the response of each group was very different. For the black community, the acquittal was placed in the context of their historical experience of the criminal justice system in the United States, which has not always served black people well. This was not part of the dominant discourse that framed the reaction of the white community.

VICTIMOLOGY

The rates of crime committed against Afro-Caribbeans and South Asians have been shown to be higher than those against the white population (Fitzgerald and Hale, 1996). This is particularly so for crimes against households and the person. However, analysis of the statistics shows that the differentials are related to the places where the majority of ethnic minorities live and their daily

routines. Moreover, as most victims are relatively young, the age profile of the ethnic minority population is also a factor in the higher rates. Nearly half of all offences that have involved personal contact have been committed by blacks against blacks.

Item J
Table 7.4 Risk of household and personal crime by ethnicity, BCS 2004–5



Source: Jansson (2006).

Exercise 7.15

The categories used in this bar chart are the 2001 Census categories used by the BCS. They are collapsed down from a finer classification of ethnic groups, so that, for example, 'whites' includes 'British Irish' and 'other white' within it.

- ① 1. Briefly describe the patterns of risk shown in Item J.
- ② 2. Identify two ways in which sociologists have attempted to account for the apparent ethnic differences in risk.

Hall (1985) has found that black women are more likely to be attacked than white women. The explanation put forward is that the economic circumstances of black women mean they are more likely to use public transport and work unsocial hours, thus increasing their vulnerability to opportunistic attack.

While the higher rate of crimes against ethnic minorities can be partly explained by area of residence, there is also evidence that many ethnic minority victims are the subjects of racially motivated attack. Though it is difficult to prove racial motivation, and victimization surveys are not good at capturing repeated victimization over time, there is some evidence that repeated harassment of targeted ethnic minority individuals and families does go on, and has a limiting effect on the lives of those affected (Smith, 1997). This is particularly true for ethnic minorities living in predominantly white areas (Virdee, 1997).

Item K

Racially motivated crime

It is estimated that there were 179,000 racially motivated crimes in England and Wales, based on BCS interviews in 2004/5. This compares with a total of 206,000 incidents reported by the 2003/4 and 2002/3 BCS, representing a marked fall in the number of

racially motivated crimes. In terms of risk of becoming a victim of racially motivated crime, white people have a lower risk of becoming victims than people in any of the BME groups, but the risk does not vary between the BME groups.

Table 7.5 Estimated numbers of racially motivated crimes of violence, BCS 2004/5

	White	Mixed	Asian	Black	Chinese or other
Common assault	47,300	2,000	26,800	5,000	3,800
Wounding	20,300	500	1,500	1,200	1,100
Robbery	7,700	900	300	800	3,200

Source: Jansson (2006).

Exercise 7.16

Read Item K and answer the following questions.

- ① 1. What do you understand by the term 'racially motivated'?
- ① 2. How many black people were estimated to have been wounded as a result of a racially motivated attack?
- ① 3. Examine Table 7.4. What was the difference between the Mixed and the Chinese or other categories' experience of a racial common assault?
- Ⓐ ① 4. Why do you think these are estimated figures?
- Ⓐ 5. Suggest two reasons why the number of *reported* racial incidents may be less than the *actual* number.

Exam focus

1. 'Members of ethnic minorities are over-represented in crime statistics.' Discuss and evaluate this point of view.
2. 'Globalization has increased the criminalization of members of black and Asian ethnic groups.' To what extent does the sociological evidence support or undermine this claim?

Important concepts

- Stereotyping • Hate crimes • Institutional racism • Marginalization
- Neocolonialism • Reserve army of labour • Racial profile
- Criminalization of migration

Critical thinking

1. Do the changes in the way that British ethnic minority groups have been classified over the years mean that it is impossible to chart trends in their experiences in the criminal justice system?
2. How convincing do you find the concept of a global underclass that is highly racialized? Do the members of any such underclass have sufficiently similar experiences to constitute a class?
3. Have the police changed in their attitudes towards BEM individuals following the Macpherson Report? Are the police no longer institutionally racist?