



COLLEGE OF
LIBERAL STUDIES
THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA



DISPROPORTIONATE MINORITY CONTACT IN THE OKLAHOMA JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

**Paul Ketchum: University of Oklahoma
(Liberal Studies)**

**B. Mitch Peck: University of Oklahoma
(Sociology)**

**Sebastian Davis: University of Oklahoma
(Outreach)**



Theories of Overrepresentation?

- ▣ 1. *Differential Involvement*- Higher crime rates committed by minority youth are the result individual traits or choices either 1) independent of social problems or 2) attributable as a result of social problems.
- ▣ 2. *Differential Treatment*- which suggests that minorities receive disproportionate punishment for crime

What Causes DMC?

Differential
Involvement

Differential
Treatment





Based on the DMC Study, We Know

- The degree of minority overrepresentation differs dramatically from location to location
- Subtle stereotyping influences perceptions of minorities
- Overt racism still exists in some police actions



Table 01. Summary of Police Reports that Ended in Arrest or Ticket/Citation.

	Arrests	Citations
Lawton (N=6,063)	32.7	67.3
Tulsa (N=20,352)	47.5	52.5
Oklahoma City (N=33,932)	32.8	67.2
Combined (N=60,347)	37.8	62.2

NOTE: Numbers are percentages.



Table 02. Summary of Police Reports that Ended in Arrest by Race and Location.

Race	Lawton N=6,063	Tulsa N=20,352	Oklahoma City N=33,932	Combined N=60,347
White	24.3	39.3	22.5	29.2
Black	42.3	57.4	38.4	46.4
Native American	54.2	57.6	42.1	49.4
Asian	25.8	26.7	7.1	14.7
Other/Don't Know	44.1	54.0	39.9	40.4

NOTE: Numbers are percentages.



Table 03. Odds of Arrest for Race Groups Compared to Whites by Location.

Race	Lawton	Tulsa	Oklahoma City	Combined
	N=6,063	N=20,352	N=33,932	N=60,347
Black	2.12	1.98	2.14	2.06
Native American	3.41	2.43	2.50	2.57
Asian	1.04	0.68	0.30	0.62
Other/Don't Know	2.11	1.63	2.26	1.84

NOTE: Numbers are odds ratios comparing the odds of being arrested versus cited compared to Whites. Models are adjusted by gender and age.

Hugenberg & Bodenhausen 2003

“If stereotypes color something as basic as face perception, then the downstream consequences may be considerable. Perceptions of hostility may determine not only the perceiver's behavior toward another person, but also, in the manner of the classic self fulfilling prophecy, the target's behavior toward the perceiver. Perceived hostility will at best promote avoidance- or worse, may foster reciprocation”.

White, Female, Court

I mean starting at the very bottom, basic with the police who have the first initial interaction, I mean what we were talking about earlier was poverty being an issue, police kind of target certain areas and those areas are predominantly ones that are targeted. So if you're starting even at the very basic with the police patrolling those areas more and paying more attention to minorities and having the whole stereotypes, because they do, you know the whole joke of driving while black, it's not really a joke, you know. I mean, I think that, yeah, especially on the police level. ***Of course, they'll never admit it, but it's straight out discrimination in my opinion.***

White, Male, Court

I think it has some bearing. I mean, I think that there are instances where there are some police and law enforcement that are overtly racist and they're targeting – you know, those populations. I think we've gotten good at looking at the police reports and looking [at] what's there. You can kind of read between the lines and see what's going on. But I would say that plays a small part. I don't think it – I don't think it's a huge problem.

White, Male, Court cont.

I: So, if you're reading between the lines and see, like, somebody jay-walked or something and then that caused like a search and all that stuff...

R: ...right. Yea, it turned into from a – we see a Black male with hoodie and high crime rate and we stop and talk to him. You're like whoa – wait a minute. You know, and then it turns into they're searching him and then they find drugs – well, hold on here. So a lot of those – we kind of – no, we're not filing that.

White, Male, Police

- R: In some cases, yes. As I said, when you have your own parents, the parents jump on (sic) their own children into gangs, that can create a problem and then it creates problems in schools.
- I: Are there any particular races that you see this happening or is it kind of even across the board?

White, Male, Police cont.

- R: Well the races that I deal with primarily are the Hispanic, Mexicans. A lot of them, or some of them I should say, are here illegally, improperly documented, however you want to look at that, and they have a different set of values from old Mexico than we have here. And that includes even the Hispanic culture that is from here, they have a different, in many cases they have a different set of morals than those coming here. The gang violence, I don't know. I think it still comes from the parents. If the students continue to get in trouble, in many cases, I still believe that it comes from the parents not caring and not taking responsibility. And that shows on the students, that will show on everything.

White, Male, Police, Lawton

Yes, I think that's still a factor to this day that, and I think you really have to be, but the ones that continue their education, and you know, and that's what I love about our police department we're always doing training, we're not just you get hired and you go out on the street and you arrest people, we're doing all kinds of stuff, which lets people know this still does happen, you know, racism, I hate to say it, but there are police officers, there are racist police officers on my police department. There are. I know how they act and how they talk to people out on calls when you go from dealing with a white person, to Hispanic, to black, you can see their demeanor, and I think to me the people, even if they sometimes chew out somebody more, but the guys that are prior service military, and they know the culture. Like if they wear their hat sideways doesn't mean they're a gang member. Rap music doesn't make you a gang member, you know, those are things that you learn in the military that they pound into your head as a commander, you know, you can't, guy keeps the tag on his hat, that's a cultural...

Two Significant Issues

- Addressing Differential Treatment requires *effective* training of police and other juvenile justice professionals.
- Accurate measurement and comparison of White and non-White juvenile crime rates

Differential Treatment DMC Training

White, Male, Police, Lawton

- R: *...but the reason we got to do the training and get training is our department already sent some officers up there and they actually walked out of the training.*
- I: Oh they did?

White, Male, Police, Lawton cont.

- R: *Yeah, cause they didn't agree with it, so I think you're always going to have the people that are set in their ways, I mean black is black, white is white, and kids are kids, and we're going to lock them up anyway, and when I went through the first DMC course, I didn't know this that our officers had been sent out. I actually sat through the course with another agency. We had 3 representatives from ours and a whole bunch from another agency and there was some old timer that had been retired from another PD, oh he was probably up in his late 60s, I mean still doing police work, and that's the way he was just set in his ways, "I'll just call 'em a turd and arrest 'em no matter what they are." I mean wasn't even willing to listen to the numbers, wasn't even willing to see...*

DMC Training

Regular review of arrest, conviction
and sentencing rates by
race/ethnicity to evaluate success



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Our study shows clear evidence
of *Differential Treatment* but
does not quantify the extent

Offending Rates are Key to Understanding the Causes of DMC

- Offending rates for non-Whites, which match higher arrest rates strongly suggest *Differential Involvement*
- Offending rates which are lower (or higher) than non-White arrest rate suggest *Differential Treatment* **and** give insight into the extent of *Differential Treatment*

Fall 2012 Research

- *Anonymous surveys of high school students*
- *Questions dealing with basic demographics and recent criminal history*
- *Control for “race/ethnicity” and “class”*

School Survey Results

The results of the schools survey will give us a measurement of recent crime, which will allow us to compare crime rates, both for specific types of juvenile crime/delinquency as well as overall, for White and non-White youths. We will also be able to better measure how class interacts with race in the juvenile justice system.