

Sample essay on driving while black

[Sociology](#), [Community](#)



Not everyone will agree with me that social profiling exists in our society today. As a nation we have walked a long hard road on matters racism and many consider it a thing of the past. But that is not true considering some of the happenings we see in our society with regard to a rough and unfair treatment that black drivers receive on the highways. When looking at this issue of “ driving while black” one cannot afford to assume that black men are discriminated against because of the way in which they are treated. It is a common happening for black males of middle ages to be labeled.

Everything they do seems to be wrong even when they are abiding by the laws and regulations of this country. Being a young black male behind the wheel has become a nightmare for many of them because they are always suspected of breaking the law anywhere and anytime. Being black influences the way the police will handle a driver when making any investigation or inquiry on our roads.

The rigorous searches and over stopping of minority drivers can be blamed on many things but the chief culprit is the social conditioning theory which proves the fact that the law enforcement agents, have been conditioned over time, to think that African American males are more prone to engaging in criminal activities more than any other racial group in the United States of America. There are a lot of legal factors which have made society to believe that young black males stand a higher chance of committing crimes hence the ill treatment they receive at police stops all the time. History has always given human beings a hint on how they should behave because of past happenings which make people think of a possible after math. His is what makes young black males be put on the position of law breakers until one is

proven guilty. But this does not mean that this is often the case because there are young black males who turn out to be law abiding and therefore different from a majority of them who are found guilty most of the time. It is therefore imperative to take to account the fact that past acts, history and statistics have huge roles that they play in the obvious generalization of young black male as offenders until they have been proven otherwise. Racial profiling targets all races in one way or another but the minority groups seem to feel the brunt more than the majority groups. It is thought to target blacks more than any other population for reasons that are always generalized or mere speculations. The issue of "driving while black" becomes more complicated because now the target group is the black minority. By using race as a sole factor for incriminating a person is tantamount to breaking the law more especially on the part of law enforcers. But then this is a common phenomenon that cannot be brushed aside as hearsay or mere speculations. When looking at the US Department of Justice racial profiling is seen to be instigated by the police on lines of race and when this subject is put in that context, it goes without saying that young black men are one among other many target groups (Meeks 12). They are a target of much of the searches on cars on the highways not because they are citizens and that it is normal to search them but because they are blacks and that they might be on the wrong side of the law.

Everyone regardless of their background and race is supposed to be subjected to the same procedures whenever questioning is done. This questioning is in all aspects of life not necessarily limiting it to the police stops. It has become common practice these days that a black man mostly

within the ages of sixteen and twenty five becomes a suspect in the eyes of the police. At investigatory stops, a black man who is twenty five years or less has 28% likelihood to be stopped and frisked than a white man of the same age because their likelihood is 12. 5% (Epp & Maynard- Moody 8). This makes them culprits all the time unless one is proven beyond reasonable doubt not to be wrong. It is against this background that it becomes apparent that the law does not serve all Americans equally because there are those who are better placed than others because of their skin color and many other things that define racial profiling.

Black males are not seen as average law abiding human beings. Instead, they are seen as thugs who are out to break the law. Black males are branded as people who do not have a purpose in life and whoever came up with such assumptions is yet to prove them right. Everything that is done wrongly is always blamed on them until it is proven otherwise. Why would a police force or society brand a certain group of people as such? It does not necessarily mean that if a couple of black men commit crimes then the rest of the population commit the same crimes. Just like any other social groupings, there are those people who are considered bad because of their actions. But this does not mean that when one or two of them are bad the whole group is bad (Geiger 84). The same rule applies to the black community in the United States of America. There may be a couple or a dozen of thugs among the black community but this does not mean that the entire citizenry of the black community are thugs or something close to that. In such cases, justice seem to cut one way, it is meted harshly on a section of the population.

It is sad that there are places where it has been proven beyond reasonable doubt that the police manhandle young black drivers. In Cincinnati for example, Police had the tendency of stopping and searching young black men and that they confiscated their money and most of the dollars that were seized never reached the police station (Davis 17). There is no better proof to show that young black Americans are on the receiving end when it comes to mistreatment by the police. Being black is criminal enough to put one on the wrong side of the law. To make matters worse is the fact that whenever their possessions are seized, they never reach the police station. The police, therefore, take whatever they get on them and out of their selfishness and lack of accountability, do not do what the law expects them to do. What then can someone say concerning the position of young black drivers, that they are the bad ones in all aspects of the word!

What else could make a young man be suspect all the time if not being of a certain race that is branded as not good enough? Black men always stand the risk of driving their cars (Zachery 98). This means that they are not supposed to be driving these cars in the first place. This is denying them their rights which entitle them to own property. They have the highest probability of being stopped at police check points even when they have broken any laws. Other young men from other races especially the white dominant are not affected by this common practice directed to blacks.

Whatever makes the police do these to a given group of people is tantamount to racism which is against the spirit of nationalism and democracy which America has preached over the years. The founding fathers of our nation will be a frustrated lot if they arose today and saw what

is happening today. This is like taking America back to the 18th and 19th century at the time when there was slavery.

Discrimination on racial grounds has gone beyond the roads. The young black male is a threatened species in all aspects of life. Today, it is a sin to walk while black, run while black, stand while black, sit while black, ride a bicycle while being black or just being black (Zachery 98). Some people think that by always checking the young black men is a strategy of reducing crime because of the constant checks. These checks are believed to make these young men to always abide by the law and do what is right to avoid being caught and prosecuted. But then why is the same thing not applied to the other races. It may be true that many young black men have been caught using or even trafficking drugs, some have been caught mugging and committing other petty crimes but this does not make all of them muggers and drug users and traffickers.

There are common vices such as alcoholism which are common among young black males. Many of them have been found on the wrong side of the law by being caught driving while drunk. But this should not make the law enforcement agencies think that all of them do that. There are a lot of other young black males who abide by the law and who do not use alcohol. They should not be treated like they do. It cannot be assumed that because there are a lot of other white young males who drink makes the entire population drunk while driving. Just like every other person, everyone should be subjected to the same treatment because it is not certain that because one belongs to a given race then they are bound to do some things just like the rest of the population. According to Bruce Carruth and Stephene Valle, as a

matter of public policy, no racial group should be branded and that everyone else should be subjected to the same exercises at the police stopovers (119).

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