

# Racial minorities, minority ethnic groups, and sentencing in america

[History](#)



Racial Minorities, Minority Ethnic Groups, and Sentencing in America. In the 1950s, there were a significantly large numbers of prisoners and suspects mostly incarcerated on the basis of race or color. Unfortunately, the trend continued from 1950 up to the 21st century. The prisoners and the suspects are from the minority racial and ethnic minorities. According to Walker (Walker, 130), ethnic and racial controversies persist to be the center of the major challenges facing the police force of United States. For example, 1991 there was a prominent incidence that went down between the police and an African American civilian known as Rodney King. The police chased Rodney at a high speed and when they caught up with him they brutally beat him. A civilian on the highway took the video of the police beating Rodney. The video tape found its way to the major broadcasting stations and was aired to the public. Despite the airing of the video tape, the police officers involved were cleared of the charges. Clearing of these officers brought about riots that in Los Angeles until the officers were convicted for abuse of civil rights by the federal court. In 2005, police officers from New Orleans fatally shot African American civilians. The New Orleans police department had cleared the officers who shot the civilians and closed down the case. The federal government only brought this case in 2010. Clearly this shows that there is a major difference between the major ethnic groups in United States. Walker (walker, 133) makes an observation that in 2001, the police fatal shootings had a significant difference in some major cities. Some cities were eight or seven times higher than other cities as reported by the Washington Post. The black community comprises of about fifty percent of the jail population and more in blacks are represented in the confinement

institutions (Walker 150). Most of the suspects are confined for drug abuse, break-ins and illegal holding of fire arms. Some of these suspects are not guilty when they are arrested but rather because they are from the African American Community. When the black civilians are arrested they are denied bail. Most of the African Americans are remanded before trial, which may affect the results of the investigations. The reasons for arresting suspects are attributable to various factors that exist in the American justice system. The major factors causing conflicts between the police and ethnic communities from colored races is the fear of empowerment of various the ethnic communities. Civilians tend to report crimes to the police if they believe that the police will be more willing to work with them to change the evils of the community. The ethnic groups that report to the police believe that they hold some powers in the political government. The community with no political or government power will normally shy away from reporting crimes. The political power and cohesion with the community affects the way the police deal with different ethnic groups. Walker (133) notes that the poor treatment of ethnic groups which are powerless in the American society extends from their economic and political discrimination. Another factor that leads to differential treatment of various ethnic groups by the police is the blanket reliance on prior records held by the police departments and the justice system. Police will normally react in different ways when dealing with various communities. These records unfortunately tend to victimize the black community more hence their high likelihood of incarceration. The African American and Hispanic communities have been associated more with violence and drug abuse. The police will always focus their objectives for

fighting crimes by making operations such as traffic crackdowns on drug traffickers; gang activities and people being out of place. All these operations are targeted towards the ethnic minorities in, particular the black community. The police are more likely to act in a retaliatory manner, engage in beating and shooting when dealing the minority groups perceived to be the faces of crime (Walker, 154). Social classes also make a difference in the attitudes of the police and way the police deal with each community (Walker 136). The attitudes of the police are more likely to be negative against racial minorities and ethnic minority. The community has associated the African Americans and the Native Americans such as Hispanic communities and Indians with poverty. Police perceive the African Americans living in major cities of the United States with low income status to be the reason behind a rising wave of crimes in the cities. The middle class and low income earners from major cities in the United States argue that race affects the way the police deal with civilians. The white middle class living in the city on the other hand argue that the police treat them better regardless of the their class. The young women and adults tend to have a positive relationship with the police unlike men. At times the police will neglect some crimes because they do not have adequate resources to deal with such crimes in the Native American lands (Walker 141). Riots have always seemed to work in the face of the justice system. However, the justice system in the United States needs to change in order to accommodate every citizen irrespective of race or color. Proactive steps need to be taken to ensure problem oriented policing and community policing. The police departments and the justice systems need to respond to the concerns of the community by laying down laws that

will reduce the misconduct and corruption of the police officers (Walker 168). Everybody in the police department should be made to adhere to the law on employment discrimination upon employment without exception. The death penalties should be revised to reduce the impact they have on ethnic minorities and racial minorities. Works Cited. Walker, Samuel. , Cassia Spohn & Miriam, Delone. *The Color of Justice: Race, Ethnicity, and Crime in America* . Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2009. 5th Ed. Print.