

Racial profiling



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This paper is going to review recent studies on racial profiling and critiques many of their methods. I will be using the conflict theory to review a number of ways that may explain racial disparities in the rates of crimes. Also I will be using conflict theory to review how it affects people in society. It addresses the major problem of inequality that exists in society today. Racial profiling in America is where those in authority use race factor when arresting citizens. Racial profiling occurs when the police target someone for investigation on the basis of that person's race, origin, or ethnicity. It has led police agencies across the world to start collecting information about traffic and pedestrian stops. The controversy over this is that all assumptions are race based. One example of this research states that police face the use of race to make decisions during traffic and pedestrian stops. The public is concerned that these decisions reflect racial prejudice, and racism. Many researchers continue to defend these profiles, saying that they are based of accurate facts (Hersezenhorn, 2000; Kennedy, 1997; Taylor & Whitney, 1999). Other experts have tested the accuracy of these profiles, and still have argued that even if accurate, all decisions based off race is inappropriate (Harris, 1997, 1999a; Kennedy, 1997). There are two meanings to racial profiling. " Hard" racial profiling uses race as the only factor. E. g. an officer sees a black person and pulls him over for a search and pat-down. " Soft" racial profiling is using race as one factor among others in criminal suspiciousness. E. g. a report says that a Jamaican drug lord is driving a Jeep, so troopers pull over black males who are speeding in Jeeps. Even though the driver was speeding, the reason the officer pulled him over instead of the other cars, was due to his race. Minorities are usually the ones affected by racial profiling. According to the public, the war on drugs immediately

became a war on minorities. There is evidence for racial profiling. One is anecdotal, which is a limited value. The other is statistical, which research is entirely worthless. Any evaluation of the evidence for the use of race profiling in policing must keep the contexts distinct. Today, skin color makes you a suspect in America. You are more likely to be stopped, searched, be arrested or imprisoned. Racial profiling does not only exist in crime but in our society. People are segregated by race and ethnicity. A certain race may think that they are wealthier than others. They also believe that they have more power and education than other races. This creates a conflict between different races and ethnic groups. Class rank also conflicts when it comes to racial profiling. Upper class ideally has more power than middle and lower class. Thus, resulting in a group conflict. Lower and middle class want equal protection and power. Whites are usually in the higher rank, and blacks are in lower ranks. Stereotypes also fall into the category of racial profiling. When we see someone who is black we automatically assume they are African. When we see someone who is Hispanic we automatically assume their Spanish. When we see an Asian person we automatically assume their Chinese, and when we see a white person we assume their American. It's the little things like this that are considered racial profiling. Most of us don't think that it's bad but someone could take it offensively. Another way we use racial profiling is when we meet people. When you see a nice dressed white male you assume he's wealthy and intelligent. When you meet a black male, who is not dressed as nicely, you assume he's a thug, or has dropped out of school. The saying " Don't judge a book by its cover" not only works for books but for people as well. The labor laws state that no one should be turned down for a job due to disabilities or their age. Shouldn't this be the

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same with race, ethnic, and skin color? In conclusion racial profiling still exists in the United States because we allow it too. It must be stopped, before crimes go up. We should not make decisions off skin color or ethnic backgrounds. We've come a long way and everyone should be seen as equals. Even though racial profiling exists in crimes and police stops, we should make an effort to change this. There are other ways to go about making an arrest or sentencing someone to jail. Skin color, ethnic background, and religion should not be factors when deciding to arrest or pull someone over. I believe that if we make an effort to let everyone know that racial profiling is still happening today we can make a difference to prevent it.

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