

# Ethnicity & crime

The background is a solid light beige color. In the bottom right quadrant, there are several overlapping, wavy, light grey lines that create a sense of movement or depth, resembling stylized waves or a decorative graphic element.

# Changing perceptions

- Pre-1970s – African-Caribbeans seen as law-abiding
- 1970s onwards seen as troublemakers
- Pre-11/9/2001 – Asians seen as generally law abiding
- Post 9/11 – changing images, especially of muslim youth

Higher rates of crime? Or Racist system?

# Offending

- Official stats: (2000) arrest rate: whites – 26:1,000; blacks 113; asians 37
- Majority of offences intra-racial (BCS, 1992; Lea & Young, 1993)
- Higher figures for white on minority crime
- Victimization studies tainted by stereotypes
- Self-report study shows similar rates for diff. groups (Graham & Bowling, 1995)

# Sentencing

- African-Caribbeans less likely to be given bail
- More likely to plead & be found not guilty
- BUT tend to receive harsher sentencing
- Asians more likely to plead not guilty
- More likely to be found guilty but less chance of imprisonment

Bowling & Phillips (2002) – presence of direct & indirect discrimination

# Policing

- Mayhew et al (1993) – crime carried out by young males from poor backgrounds – both factors imply over-representation of ethnic minorities
  - Arrest rates reflect truth
- Scarman Report (1981) – police attitudes reflect society
- Reiner (1992), Holdaway (1983), Graef (1989) – “canteen culture” includes racism
- Macpherson Report (1999) – institutional racism

# Left Realist approaches

- Lea & Young (1993)
  - Police practises racist
  - But higher crime rates among young African-Caribbeans
    - Result of economic & social marginalisation
    - Creation of subcultures

# Marxist approaches

- Hall et al (1978)
  - crisis of capitalism, economic & political unrest
    - Need for social control
      - Need for justification – use of moral panic

BUT – is crisis on-going?

- Scraton (1987), Gordon (1988) – race as a “problem”
  - “Cultures of resistance”

BUT – intra-racial crime?

- Romanticising crime? – Lea & Young

- Bourgois (1995) – East Harlem, New York
  - Social & economic exclusion
    - alternative economy
    - “street culture of resistance” – spontaneous rather than organised