Introduction and Aims
Too often issues around race and gender are paid only lip service in criminological research and teaching. Despite empirical data and theoretical writings providing evidence that both victims and offenders’ experiences of crime and criminal justice are significantly influenced by their race and gender, many mainstream criminological courses provide only a cursory analysis of these topics. This course provides a systematic examination of the impact of race and gender on criminological theory and the administration of criminal justice in the UK and beyond, looking not only at these variables separately but also at ways in which they intersect. When race and gender are shifted to being the lens of analysis through which criminal justice processes are examined, issues such as disproportionality, unfairness and the impact of social factors on crime, are both compelling and uncomfortable. Using this lens, we will examine the causes of crime, trends in offending and victimization, policing, sentencing and imprisonment. We will think critically about the concepts of race, racism and gender and how their application continues to shape the structure of societies today. We will consider how issues of increasing salience in contemporary society such as terrorism and immigration link with debates on securitization, the politics of fear and citizenship and belonging. The course will draw mainly on scholarship from the UK and USA and the two contexts will be examined comparatively – in terms of their sameness and difference, their reinforcement and mutual dependence. We will also consider, where possible, places beyond these jurisdictions in order to incorporate the breadth of criminology’s global and transnational research.

Seminar Schedule
1. Setting the Scene: Conceptual and theoretical approaches to understanding race and gender
   11th October 2016
2. Victims*
   18th October 2016
3. Offenders*
   25th October 2016
4. Policing
   1st November 2016
5. Sentencing
   8th November 2016 (2.00 – 3.30pm)
6. Imprisonment*
   8th November 2016 (4.00pm – 5.30pm)
7. Criminalization, Security and Citizenship*
   22nd November 2016
8. Race, Gender, Crime and Representation
   19th November 2016
* In each of the sessions marked with an asterisk, students will be given the opportunity to make a short presentation based on the readings, which focuses on one of the themes raised in the seminar.

**Seminars and Assessment**

This outline details the eight seminars that the course encompasses. Students are expected to come to the seminars ready to engage in discussion and for each seminar, you are expected to read all of the essential reading and if possible some of the further reading specified in this outline. The introductory paragraph to the readings for each week provides a guide to the key issues you should be considering when preparing for class. The questions for discussion are there to assist in critical reading of the materials. As you do the reading you should also formulate your own questions and raise these in the class for discussion. You will be expected to participate and address the discussion questions during the seminars. Students will be asked to partake in one of the planned 10-15 minute presentations, which have been planned for seminars 2, 3, 6 and 7.

The option will be taught as a series of weekly ninety-minute seminars. The seminars will take place on Tuesdays 2.00-3.30pm, weeks 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8. Please note that seminars 5 and 6 will both be held on 8th November at 2.00-3.30 and 4.00-5.30pm and no seminar will be held in week 6. Any questions regarding the option should be addressed to Alpa Parmar: alpa.parmar@crim.ox.ac.uk. By way of assessment, you will be required to submit one essay of 5,000 words in December 2016.

**Preparatory Reading**

Some of the following texts will provide a useful overview of the topics covered during the course:


We will also be discussing most of the articles from the special issue of *Theoretical Criminology* on race and criminology published August 2008.

For each seminar students are encouraged to look at press reports on the various issues and also to read scholarship wider than the items listed on the reading lists, should they wish.
Seminar 1: Setting the scene: Conceptual and theoretical approaches to understanding race and gender

This week we will consider the definition and concepts used to discuss race and gender. We will discuss the relevance and position of these concepts within the broader discipline of criminology and how, if at all they are affected by globalization. We will spend some time discussing how race and gender intersect, and what an intersectional approach might bring to our understanding of crime, punishment and victimization. We will also consider the influence of factors such as faith and nationality and how they provide new contours to the debate. We will think about how race, ethnicity, difference and racism connect as processes and their varied meanings in different geographical and political contexts. In connecting the concepts to criminology, we will also review how ethnic minorities and women feature in criminal justice statistics and look at the patterns of their crime and victimization.

Essential Reading

For reference look at: Statistical Overview of race and gender in the criminal justice system
Also see: http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2012/nov/22/women-criminal-justice-system-statistics-representation
Discussion Questions
1. What is race?
2. What is gender?
3. What is intersectionality?
4. What is feminism?
5. What is critical race theory?
6. What is the relevance of race and gender for criminology?
7. How, if at all, does globalization affect our understanding of race and gender?
8. What is the value of race and crime statistics? Is the current system of ethnic categorization adequate in the UK?
9. How do official and scholarly conceptions of crime differ?

Further Reading
Seminar 2: Victims

In this seminar we examine the literature on victims and consider the experiences of minority ethnic group people as victims of crime as well as the gendered nature of victimization, particularly with regard to domestic violence and rape. We explore the research on racist violence, victimization and fear. We also consider the way in which particular groups are perceived and constructed as victims of crime, whilst others are not. We will think about the new forms of victimization associated with globalization and international and transnational conflict and will explore how seeing through the lens of race and gender illuminates some aspects of victimization whilst neglecting others.

Essential Reading

Discussion Questions
1. How does victimization vary by race and gender?
2. What is the relevance of race and gender for an understanding of violence and fear of crime?
3. What about male victims?
4. Why doesn’t the literature on victimization adequately reflect the experiences of ethnic minorities?
5. What are the patterns of racist violence?
6. Is ‘hate crime’ a useful concept?
7. What are your thoughts on the policy and legal responses to racist violence and hate crimes?
8. Do theories of race and gender help illuminate transnational forms of victimization like sex trafficking?
9. Do theories of race and gender help explain how and why rape is used as a weapon of war?

*Student Presentation: Are Hate Crime Penalties Justified?
Select your own readings from the list

Or
*Student Presentation: On Rape as a weapon of war


Further reading

**Victimization and Racist Victimization**


**Gender and Victimization**


Risk and Fear of Crime

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/r237.pdf
Seminar 3: Offenders
This week we consider how offending varies by race and gender. We will examine the reporting of offences and specific crimes committed by women and minority ethnic group people. We will also consider how race and gender intersect in individuals’ experiences of offending. We will ask what the consideration of race and gender brings to a criminological understanding of offending behaviour by focusing on crimes of violence and drug offending. We look at various sources of data about crime and consider how offenders are stereotyped and associated with certain types of crime and processes of criminalization. We consider the debate about the over-representation of young black men in the criminal justice system and the differences in offending patterns between minority ethnic groups.

Essential Reading

Press reports on gun crime
http://www.guardian.co.uk/gun/Story/0,2763,869428,00.html
http://www.guardian.co.uk/gun/Story/0,2763,1349594,00.html
http://www.guardian.co.uk/gun/Story/0,2763,869434,00.html

*Student Presentation: Drugs and Crime*

Discussion Questions
1. To what extent do racial stereotypes and media images make it impossible to speak of ‘real’ rates of crime among different ethnic groups?
2. Are certain types of crime associated certain groups of people?
3. How can the over-representation of young black men in the criminal justice system be explained?
4. Which groups are under-represented in offending statistics? What hypotheses can you propose for these patterns?
5. How important is culture when trying to unpack the causes of offending? What problems arise when considering cultural arguments?
Further Reading

**Race, crime and violence**


**Gender and violence**


**Intersectional Approaches**


Seminar 4: Policing

This week we will begin to consider institutional responses to offending and victimization in light of the literature on race and gender. We will examine police practices including stop and search, arrest and custody and we will consider the role of racism and discretion in the disproportionate outcomes that we see. We will focus on the Lawrence case and responses to it and discuss the utility of the notion of ‘institutional racism’ when examining the response of the police. We will also touch upon the theories about gender and policing and whether there is an analogous institutionalization of gender stereotypes.

Essential Reading

Or

Discussion Questions

1. Is the police service institutionally racist? In what ways is racism manifest in the police organization and in the operation of its powers? Is institutional racism a useful concept?
2. What policies have been suggested to remove racism from policing and to provide equality and fairness of service? Have these policies worked and what does “success” look like?
3. Has police culture changed since the 1970s? How?
4. Is policing ‘gendered’?
5. Is there any research evidence to document the experience of minority ethnic group women with the police? What does the research suggest?
6. How are the boundaries of traditional policing changing and how does race and gender impact on this change?
7. What are the differences in the relationship between policing and race in the US and the UK?

Further Reading

Race, Racism and Policing

or


Studies Institute. Ch on ‘Race’.

Gender (and Race) and Policing
Seminar 5: Sentencing

This week, we consider the way in which the criminal justice system responds to minority ethnic groups and women once they have been arrested by for a crime and entered the justice process. We will examine the sentencing patterns and experiences of probation and parole for minority ethnic groups and women, and will ask why these topics have attracted the attention of scholars interested in difference. We will discuss the variation in sentencing of Asian and Black minority ethnic groups, consider whether religion is increasingly important within sentencing and decision-making processes in criminal courts. We will also consider how gender and race interact in the sentencing and probation process.

Essential Reading

Discussion Questions
1. Are the criminal courts a venue where justice and fairness are achieved? Or are they ‘institutionally racist’?
2. To what extent can the over-representation in prison of people from certain minority groups be explained by reference to the work of the criminal courts?
3. Are women treated leniently or harshly by the courts?
4. How might implicit bias operate in the courtroom?
5. What factors might engender change in the decision-making process and outcomes for minority ethnic groups in the courtroom?

Further Reading

*Gender and Courts*

*Race and Sentencing*


Seminar 6: Imprisonment
In this seminar we consider how the prison population is shaped by race and gender. The numbers of Black and Asian people imprisoned in the UK has been steadily rising over the years and in particular we will examine the gross racial disproportionality and the reasons for this. The imprisonment rate in US has more than quintupled over the last four decades and are the highest for Black people. We also consider the interaction of the death penalty and race and think about the overall consequences of the racialized process of incarceration in the UK and the USA. We examine race relations within prisons and their impact on those ‘doing time’. We also consider why women are imprisoned and the policy decisions that have resulted in the patterns of their imprisonment and the impact of foreign national prisoners on the overall prison population.

Essential Reading

Discussion Questions
1. Why are particular ethnic groups over-represented in prison relative to their numbers in the general population whereas other groups are under-represented?
2. What explains why racist violence and other forms of ethnic conflict are so prevalent inside prison? Is religion of growing importance in prison?
3. What does research evidence tell us about which crimes women are imprisoned for and what defines their experiences in prisons?
4. What is the importance of foreign national prisoner numbers when considering the number of minority ethnic group women in prison?

*Student Presentation: Prisons and Race

Race, Religion and Imprisonment


Her Majesty’s Inspector of Prisons (2010), Muslim Prisoners’ Experiences: A Thematic Review. London: HMIP.


**Gender and Imprisonment**

Seminar 7: Criminalization, Security and Citizenship

In this seminar we examine some of the contemporary issues facing scholars of race, gender and the sociology of crime. We will pay particular attention to issues of migration, citizenship and concerns about security and consider how responses to terrorism and border control have reconfigured understandings of criminality and modes of governance in racialized ways. We look broadly and theoretically at the way in which these developments have impacted on multi-cultural living and difference and how they have raised questions about citizenship and belonging. We examine processes of criminalization and think about if/how the race, crime and gender nexus has shifted. We ask what the implications are of going beyond dominant conceptions of racism as a colour coded phenomenon to bring into view other modalities of racism that increasingly shape the criminological landscape.

Essential Reading

Discussion Questions
1. What evidence is there to suggest that Muslim or Asian groups have been criminalized following the US and UK terrorist attacks? What impact (if any) did the attacks have on the perception of British Asians?
2. How have concerns about (in)security had an effect on multicultural society?
3. Can human rights and perceived threats to security be balanced?
4. Is it important to incorporate religion in contemporary criminological analyses?
5. How does gender feature in the new paradigms of (in)security?

Further Reading

The Securitization of Race


**Immigration, Citizenship and Crime**


Post-Colonialism and Cosmopolitanism
Seminar 8: Race, Gender, Crime and Representation

In the final seminar of the course we will draw on representations of race, gender and crime in visual media and consider the role of images in creating, reproducing and contesting relationships between race, gender and crime. We will examine film and photography as part of this seminar to explore how surveillance and the capacity to ‘capture’ can function to ratify commonly held perceptions, or what we already ‘know’ in relation to race, gender and notions of who belongs. We will also watch part of one of the documentary pieces (or another chosen during the course) and discuss the issues raised in a class discussion.

Reading

Documentaries
The House I Live In (2012) by Eugene Jarecki
The Grim Sleeper (2014) by Nick Broomfield