

Black Community of Tuscaloosa & The Afro-American Association

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BLACK COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

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COMMENTARY

Why is the Brother a Criminal?

A recent article entitled "Crime, Criminal Justice, and the Black Community" by Lee Brown of Howard University concluded that "the problem of crime among Blacks is directly related to the socio-economic conditions that exist in our society. More specifically, it is directly related to racism. The racism is reflected in our criminal justice system-police, courts, and corrections." Heretofore explanations of the high incidence of criminal behavior on the part of Blacks has been attributed to such racist theories as a Black cultural precolivity to offend, to a lack of moral dexterity on the part of Blacks or to some generic defect which makes most Black people burglars, rapists and murderers. To say the least, Brother Brown's theory is more plausible and certainly well documented.

Brown relates the high incidence of Black criminal activity to a lack of power in the Black community. Blacks are on the lower spectrum in respect to power. Consequently, Blacks do not influence the definition of what is criminal; Blacks don't control the agencies that administer the law; Blacks do not control the communication media, newspapers, radio, and television, etc. which affect people's attitudes toward crime and criminals. As the interest of the powerful changes, Blacks can not stop them from redefining or expanding what acts are criminal.

The typical offender in Alabama (ratio: 60.1% Black too 39.9%) and young (between 20 and 25 years of age). The key to understanding why Blacks are disproportionately represented as clients of the Criminal Justice System is an examination of how that system operates. Such examination must be done with a desire to reveal how crime is defined and Blacks are victimized along racial and class lines.

By
John A. Bivens

ANNOUNCEMENTS

UPC Cultural Speaker

The cultural committee would like to schedule a black cultural speaker for the spring semester '75. You can make your preferences known by checking with Keith Golsen or Brenda Crayton at the UPC office. Brenda can also be reached by phone at 345-1105.

Note that they are interested in cultural speakers concerned with the arts, education, politics, economics, etc. (Mostly the Arts: poetry, dance, black culture, etc). They are not concerned with entertainment at this time. Please offer your suggestions soon.

Ebony Express Dancers

If you love to dance and are confident enough to believe you're good at it, perhaps you could become one of the Ebony Express dancers. The dancers (couples) get to appear on the Ebony Express Show, Tuscaloosa's first Black Soul Show. If you are interested, contact Charles Pitts, the producer, at 348-7359.
