

This week, we will meet the superpredators, revisit profiling, and acquaint ourselves with appropriation.

Fact or Fiction?

Read the following excerpts from the article “The Coming of the Super – Predators” by John Dilulio, and answer the accompany questions.

Lynne Abraham doesn't scare easily. Abraham's the no-nonsense Democratic district attorney of Philadelphia. The city's late tough-cop mayor, Frank Rizzo, baptized her "one tough cookie." The label stuck, and rightly so. Abraham has sent more mafiosi to prison than Martin Scorsese, stood up (all 5'2" of her) to violent drug kingpins, won bipartisan support in this Congress for wresting control of the city's jail system from an ACLU-brand federal judge, and, most recently, publicly shamed the know-nothing literati who want to free convicted cop killer Mumia Abu-Jamal. Today various of her colleagues at the non-partisan National District Attorneys Association describe her as "suite smart and street smart," "a genuine law-and-order liberal," and "probably the best big-city D.A. in the country." All true. So pay attention, because Lynne Abraham is scared.

In a recent interview, Abraham used such phrases as [sic] "never seen anything like it" to describe the rash of youth crime and violence that has begun to sweep over the City of Brotherly Love and other big cities. We're not just talking about teenagers, she stressed. We're talking about boys whose voices have yet to change. We're talking about elementary school youngsters who pack guns instead of lunches. We're talking about kids who have absolutely no respect for human life and no sense of the future. In short, we're talking big trouble that hasn't yet begun to crest.

1. Why did Dilulio start his article with allusions to Lynne Abraham?

2. What is the problem that the article presented?

To cite just a few examples, following my May 1995 address to the district attorneys association, big-city prosecutors inundated me with war stories about the ever-growing numbers of hardened, remorseless juveniles who were showing up in the system. "They kill or maim on impulse, without any intelligible motive," said one. Likewise, a veteran beat policeman confided: "I never used to be scared. Now I say a quick Hail Mary every time I get a call at night involving juveniles. I pray I go home in one piece to my own kids." On a recent visit to a New Jersey maximum-security prison, I spoke to a group of life-term inmates,

many of them black males from inner-city Newark and Camden. In a typical remark, one prisoner fretted, "I was a bad-ass street gladiator, but these kids are stone-cold predators." Like-wise, in his just-published book, Mansfield B. Frazier, a five-time convicted felon, writes of what he calls "The Coming Menace": "As bad as conditions are in many of our nation's ravaged inner-city neighborhoods, in approximately five years they are going to get worse, a lot worse." Having done time side-by-side with today's young criminals in prisons and jails all across the country, he warns of a "sharp, cataclysmic" increase in youth crime and violence.

To add my own observations to this pile, since 1980 I've studied prisons and jails all across the country -- San Quentin, Leavenworth, Rikers Island. I've been on the scene at prison murders and riots (and once was almost killed inside a prison). Moreover, I grew up in a pretty tough neighborhood and am built like an aging linebacker. I will still waltz backwards, notebook in hand and alone, into any adult maximum-security cellblock full of killers, rapists, and muggers.

But a few years ago, I forswore research inside juvenile lock-ups. The buzz of impulsive violence, the vacant stares and smiles, and the remorseless eyes were at once too frightening and too depressing (my God, these are children!) for me to pretend to "study" them.

3. What types of evidence did Dilulio cite to support his argument? How credible are they?

Nationally, there are now about 40 million children under the age of 10, the largest number in decades. By simple math, in a decade today's 4 to 7- year-olds will become 14 to 17-year-olds. By 2005, the number of males in this age group will have risen about 25 percent overall and 50 percent for blacks.

To some extent, it's just that simple: More boys begets more bad boys. But to really grasp why this spike in the young male population means big trouble ahead, you need to appreciate both the statistical evidence from a generation of birth-cohort studies and related findings from recent street-level studies and surveys.

4. What was Dilulio's explanation for the rise of superpredators? What issues are there with it?

But the most famous finding of the study was that 6 percent of the boys committed five or more crimes before they were 18, accounting for over half of all the serious crimes, and about two-thirds of all the violent crimes, committed by the entire cohort.

This "6 percent do 50 percent" statistic has been replicated in a series of subsequent longitudinal studies of Philadelphia and many other cities. It is on this basis that James Q. Wilson and other leading crime doctors can predict with confidence that the additional 500,000 boys who will be 14 to 17 years old in the year 2000 will mean at least 30,000 more murderers, rapists, and muggers on the streets than we have today.

5. How does the "6 percent do 50 perfect" statistic and leading crime doctors' predictions make you feel?

The answer centers on a conservative theory of the root causes of crime, one that is strongly supported by all of the best science as well as the common sense of the subject. Call it the theory of moral poverty.

Most Americans of every race, religion, socio-economic status, and demographic description grow up in settings where they are taught right from wrong and rewarded emotionally or spiritually (if not also or always materially) for deferring immediate gratification and respecting others. Most of us were blessed to be born to loving and responsible parents or guardians. And most of us were lucky enough to have other adults in our lives (teachers, coaches, clergy) who reinforced the moral lessons that we learned at home -- don't be selfish, care about others, plan for the future, and so on.

But some Americans grow up in moral poverty. Moral poverty is the poverty of being without loving, capable, responsible adults who teach you right from wrong. It is the poverty of being without parents and other authorities who habituate you to feel joy at others' joy, pain at others' pain, happiness when you do right, remorse when you do wrong. It is the poverty of growing up in the virtual absence of people who teach morality by their own everyday example and who insist that you follow suit.

In the extreme, moral poverty is the poverty of growing up surrounded by deviant, delinquent, and criminal adults in abusive, violence-ridden, fatherless, Godless, and jobless settings. In sum, whatever their material circumstances, kids of whatever race, creed, or color are most likely to become criminally depraved when they are morally deprived.

6. What is moral poverty?

7. What causes moral poverty?

My one big idea is borrowed from three well-known child-development experts -- Moses, Jesus Christ, and Mohammed. It's called religion. If we are to have a prayer of stopping any significant fraction of the super-predators short of the prison gates, then we had better say "Amen," and fast.

Why religion? Two reasons. First, a growing body of scientific evidence from a variety of academic disciplines indicates that churches can help cure or curtail many severe socioeconomic ills. For example, a 1986 study by Harvard economist Richard Freeman found that among black urban youth, church attendance was a better predictor of who would escape drugs, crime, and poverty than any other single variable (income, family structure) and that churchgoing youth were more likely than otherwise comparable youth to behave in socially constructive ways. Likewise, a study by a panel of leading specialists just published by the journal *Criminology* concluded that, while much work remains to be done, there is substantial empirical evidence that religion serves "as an insulator against crime and delinquency." And we have long known that many of the most effective substance-abuse prevention and treatment programs, both in society and behind bars, are either explicitly religious or quasi-religious in their orientation.

Second, religion is the one answer offered time and again by the justice- system veterans, prisoners, and others I've consulted. With particular reference to black youth crime, for example, it is an answer proffered in recent books by everyone from liberal Cornel West to neoconservative Glenn Loury, Democrat Jesse Jackson to Republican Alan Keyes.

8. How might religion prevent the rise of the superpredators?

9. What challenges might people encounter in implementing this solution?

Watch The New York's Time Retro Report "The Superpredator Scare": <https://bit.ly/1OwT0FZ>

10. What was wrong with Dilulio's argument?

11. Who were the superpredators?

12. What was a legal consequence of the superpredator scare?

13. Do you agree or disagree with the justices who said that automatic mandatory life sentences for juveniles "amount to cruel and unusual punishment?" Explain.

Profile Picture

Read the following excerpt from a chapter in *Racial Profiling*. The subheadings have been removed to challenge you.

"Racial Profiling Is Morally Wrong and Based on False Assumptions" by John A. Kowalski

Racial profiling is more specific in that it disproportionately targets people of color for investigation and enforcement. The ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union] has argued that such discrimination alienates communities from law enforcement, hinders community-policing efforts, and causes law enforcement to lose credibility and trust among the people they are sworn to protect and serve. They conclude that "countless people . . . live in fear [because of] a system of law enforcement that casts that casts entire communities as suspect."

Adam Serwer, writing for *Mother Jones*, said the profiling of the Muslim community to caution a similar boomerang effect from abuse or misunderstanding within communities. As Serwer stated,

“It’s no secret that New York City is a huge target for terrorism . . . however, the Associated Press has shown that the New York City police have responded to that threat by treating its entire Muslim community like possible suspects. That approach harms the NYPD’s ability to respond to threats in the future, since American Muslims are frequently the ones who alert law enforcement to potential threats.”

When the university of Chicago’s professor of law and political science Bernard E. Harcourt presented a paper at the Malcolm Wiener [Center’s] Inequality & Social Policy program at Harvard University in 2009, he discussed the racial issues concerning the arrest of Professor [Henry Louis] Gates. He suggested that the inherent racial profiling bothered many of us most. But Harcourt’s warning focused beyond racial discrimination or profiling, as he argued that the underlying premises and basic mathematical assumptions are faulty, saying that:

“ . . . the problem with racial profiling is precisely the misguided use of statistical discrimination in situations where there are potential feedback effects. The problem is that our customary and ordinary forms of rationality, our ‘odds reasoning,’ our daily uses of statistical discrimination are leading us astray. Race is the miner’s canary that signals—or should signal—the larger problems of statistical discrimination and profiling. And until we properly understand the problems of statistical discrimination writ large, I fear that we will make little progress on racial profiling.” (“Henry Louis Gates and Racial Profiling: What’s the Problem?,” Bernard E. Harcourt, 2009)

Events of Sept. 11 [referring to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States] recast the profiling issue. Public opinion had become strongly against racial profiling in particular. But those terrorist attacks tipped the balance toward reimagining profiling as necessary to fight terrorism. That makes the work of people like David A. Harris, professor of law and values at the University of Toledo College of Law and a Soros Senior Justice Fellow, even more important. What if racial profiling is not only morally wrong but also ineffective? Harris is considered to be one of this nation’s leading authorities. His book, *Profiles in Injustice: Why Racial Profiling Cannot Work* (2003), directly challenges the assertion of law enforcement that profiling is an effective crime-fighting tool. *Publisher’s Weekly*, in reviewing Harris’s book wrote:

“[Harris] analyzes how each, aside from often not passing basic legal or ethical standards, nearly always fails to discover criminal or deter crime. These conclusions are supplemented by his often surprising analysis of arrest statistics: the New York attorney general’s office shows that even though more blacks than whites were stopped and frisked for concealed weapons, the arrest rate of whites for violations was actually higher, while composite profiles of convicted criminals are skewed because 54.3% of violent crimes are never reported to the police. Other studies show just how difficult it is to guess someone’s race just by looking at them.”

The ineffectiveness goes to catching criminals and to preventing crime. Harris added a new chapter to examine how the events of Sept. 11 impacted public opinion and policy.

Create a rough essay outline using the excerpt from Kowalski’s chapter.

Thesis:

Point 1:

Example:

Point 2:

Example:

Point 3:

Example:

Fake It Until You Make It

14. What does it mean to “act black”?

15. What does it mean to act your race? List the top 10 expectations that people have of your race.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Do you meet these expectations? Do you want to?

Culturally Appropriate?

16. Who owns hip hop?

17. Are there any issues with Asians *performing* hip hop? Explain.

Watch “Is Asian Rap Cultural Appropriation?” (<https://bit.ly/2HZFxr4>) and answer the following questions:

18. Instead of cultural appropriation Hollei Day uses the term _____

19. Why does Hollei Day include racial slurs in her music?

20. What criticisms does Hollei Day receive for her hairstyles?

21. To Ninotchka McTaggart, there is no cultural appropriation as long as there is no...

22. What ideas in hip hop connect black and Asian-Americans?

23. What is your opinion about Hollei Day or any other Asian rappers? Are they culturally appropriating?

Around the World

Watch music videos of hip-hop songs from around the world. Compare and contrast them using the following chart:

Song	Sound	Images	Lyrics
<p>Endless Flow by Gai https://bit.ly/2I2POEp</p>			
<p>Eminencia Parda by Emicidia featuring Dona Onete and Je Santiago e Papillon https://bit.ly/2I2POEp</p>			
<p>Jungli Sher by DIVINE https://bit.ly/IRNrWIm</p>			