

# **We need to talk about race: Researching the lives of young women on road**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper will reflect on my experiences researching the lives of young women, predominantly of colour, who engage in badness as part of road culture. This is a specific subculture which is adopted by both young men women and women as they seek survival and respect in urban deprived neighbourhoods. Based on qualitative interviews with young women, youth practitioners, and criminal justice practitioners in London, my study took a black feminist approach in order to explore the intersectionality of class, gender and race. I will use the examples of the ways in which black men are demonised and stigmatised by the racist gang agenda, how black women have been viewed as innately more violent than their white counterparts due to the myth of the angry black woman, and how black girls are viewed as less innocent than white girls. I will argue that criminologists must acknowledge the importance of intersectionality in order to consider how these interlocking systems of oppression can frame the experiences of young people, as well as being mindful about the colonisation of criminology by Western thought. I will also reflect on the complexities around the positionality and power relations of a white researcher exploring the lives of people of colour.

**Keywords:** badness; black feminism; colonisation; intersectionality; positionality