



Abstract

This study is the first empirical exploration of the relationships between Black young people, school exclusions and incarceration in the UK, with a focus on Birmingham, the second city in this country. It builds on Graham's study (2015) and critically explores her claims that the trends are worse in the UK than in the US after shockwaves of austerity, racism and failing public services.

Birmingham's exclusion rates for Black schoolchildren are representative of the UK, and it has similar levels of population density and ethnic diversity to London (BCC, 2020).

This research offers a place-based understanding of the practices and experiences of the education and criminal justice system from the perspective of excluded school children, parents, teachers, prisoners, and former prisoners.

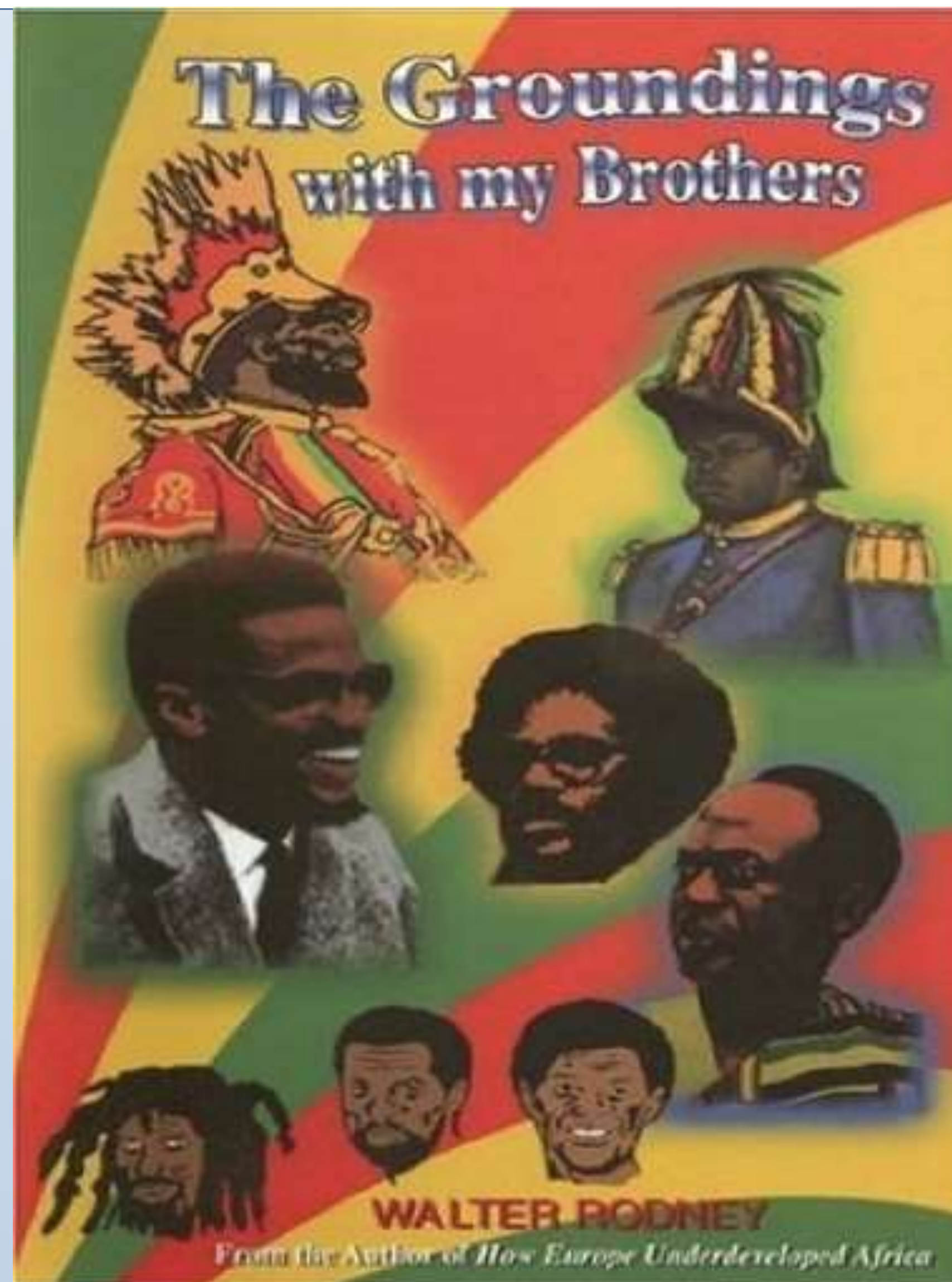
Introduction

The proposed study applies Graham's (2015) gendered framework to Black Caribbean youth. Graham explores the correlations between men's experiences of the educational and judicial systems and argues that through the life experiences of the interviewees, that school served as a preparation for prison.

Building on and diverting from American research (Gilmore, 2007, Heitzeg, 2016, Sojourner, 2016, Mallett, 2016)., the structural racism that channels Black young people into prison in the US is rooted in its history of enslavement. The British context, of course, is deeply implicated in this. Still, there are additional and untapped drivers of racial inequality, including different patterns of migration (e.g., historical and ongoing racism against those coming to Britain from the Caribbean), a unique political system, culture and history of colonisation. It is an urgent and timely investigation that promises to shed light on a significant form of 'symbolic violence' in contemporary Britain.

Methodology

TI used 'groundings' as my methodology and 'reasonings' as the method with Black Caribbean former prisoners in Birmingham, employing epistemologies from the global South. Rooted in indigenous ontological methods, these exchanges aimed at humanizing participants, inspired by Walter Rodney's notion of the guerrilla intellectual - "guerrilla intellectual" as discussed by Rodney (2018): the guerrilla intellectual, must "...struggle over ideas... to find ways of mastering knowledge from a different perspective" (pp. 113-114).



Research Aim

The aim of this thesis is to offer a new, empirically informed understanding of how the education and criminal justice systems interact as sites of racial and class inequality.



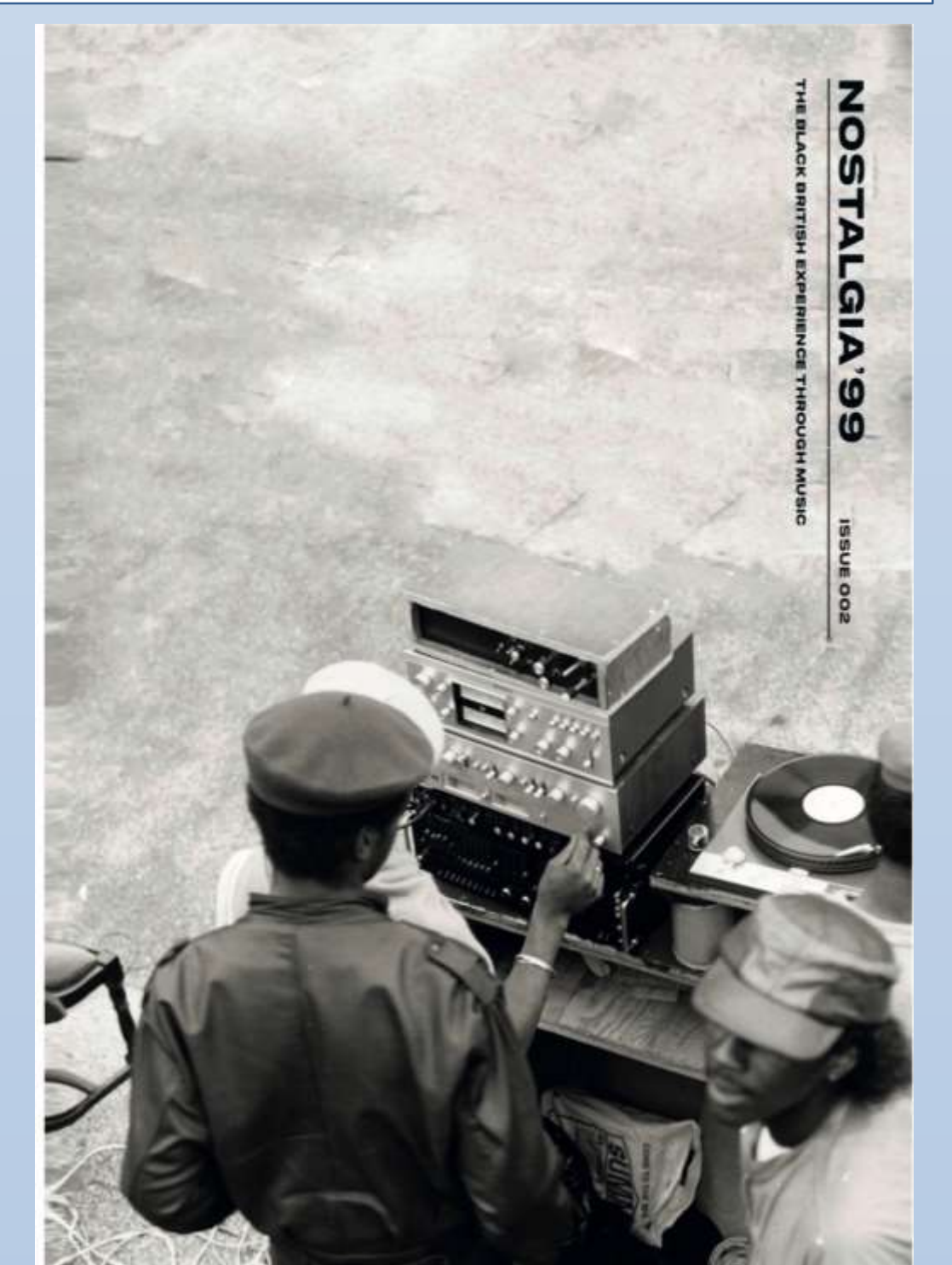
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Criminalization of Black Youth

My latest magazine edition of *Nostalgia '99* explores the deep-rooted histories of state criminalization of 'Blackness'. These same notions are still deeply ingrained in the education system in the 21st century. Available to purchase at: www.nostalgia99.uk



Impact

This study offers a timely investigation into structural violence' in contemporary Britain. It will impact a range of debates around the nature, extent, and experience of the school-to-prison pipeline.

It also impacts debates and practices around community activism and social mobilisation.