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Professor Kevin Pinkham

ENG102: College Writing II

10/15/2020

“The Psychological Standing of Being Black in America”

Documentation: “Addressing Mental Health in the Black Community” Vance, Thomas A.

Columbia University Irving Medical Center, 8 Feb 2019,

[columbiapsychiatry.org/news/](http://columbiapsychiatry.org/news/)

Annotation: “The increased incidence of psychological difficulties in the Black community is related to the lack of access to appropriate and culturally responsive mental health care, prejudice and racism inherent in the daily environment of Black individuals, and historical trauma enacted on the Black community by the medical field.” Mental health has been proven to be an issue in black communities. In this article Dr. Vance takes time to prove his statement, not only is mental health an issue in the black community but there is historical trauma by the medical field. There is indeed a lack of trust due to historical abuses. Black people have dealt with deep trauma from enslavement, oppression, colonialism, racism, and segregation. He goes on to say this level of trauma can be passed down biologically from generation to generation. There is also a stigma associated with mental health concerns, some see it as a personal weakness. Dr. Vance concludes with tips on how to seek out culturally responsive providers. It is important for Black people to confront their psychological issues and do so in a safe culturally responsive space.

Quotation: “The Black community has a long history of social change and prioritizing mental health is not a sign of weakness, but an act of strength.”

Documentation: “America’s Racial Reckoning is Putting a Spotlight on Black Mental Health”

Madani, Doha

NBC News, 26 Sept 2020,

[Nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/](https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/)

Annotation: This article opens speaking about the life of Reginald Howard, who had his share of suffering with mental illness. He recalls his childhood; his family didn’t know what was wrong with him and was unable to get the help he needed. Instead of getting help, they blamed his behavior on “his blood”; since his father also had issues. He struggled from childhood to adulthood; two failed suicide attempts later, he sought help for himself. Howard believes the black community and the mental health community have two different languages that speak the same truth. The black community is flooded with compounded issues, so it often feels like a mental health tsunami. He also speaks about the effect racial trauma has on the body. Throughout this article its talks about the importance of breaking stigmas and healing.

Quotation: “Our entire motto for the program is called ‘healed men, heal men,’” Zakia Williams (co-founder of Black Men Heal) said. “And just putting these healed men back into the black home, back into the black community is going to create a positive change for us.”

Documentation: “As A Black Woman, Janice Ellis Faced Sexism, Racism, and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace” PR Newswire

PR Newswire, 1 Mar 2018

Annotation: Black women always had two separate fights; the war on race and the war on gender. In the 1960's and the 1970's they were fighting in the Civil Rights Movement and well as the Women's Liberation Movement. Janice Ellis tells the story of her growing up as a black woman during this era. She writes about the battles she faced trying to exist in these two continuing struggles. Although black people in general deal with racism because of the color of their skin, women also deal with sexism. Both groups deal with feeling misunderstood and inferior, especially in the workplace. A place where women are often not taken seriously and sometimes forced to use sex to get ahead. Stories help encourage those with similar experiences to know, they're not crazy or alone.

Quotation: “Which is the greater burden being **woman**, or being **black**? Imagine the burden of being both and being triumphant.”

Documentation: "Is it Because I'm Black? Micro aggressive Experiences Against Black Professionals in Sport and Exercise Psychology" Carter, Leeja

Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 12 Jun 2017

APA PsycArticles

Annotation: There is Colorblind Ideology and Racism in Sports. Carter writes about microinsults, which can be nonverbal or verbal insults meant to attack, demean, devalue a person's heritage or identity. This leads to a culture of mistrust; it makes it even harder to move forward in anyway because there is no trust or communication. Trust and communication are needed to be successful in sports. After a study was taken, it was seen that there is a need for more black professional mentors. Having more black professional mentors would help guide mentees. It would create a safe space for black athletes to talk about experiences and gain advice. Although the study proved that many black athletes were able to ignore microaggressions, it can also have a lasting effect on their mental standing.

Quotation: I probably haven't been exposed to much microaggression in my current job, or at my current social status, but I do not care to even consider the thought of it as a roadblock for what I intend to accomplish. I feel that as African American we actually have a significant amount of opportunities to take advantage of that elevates us above microaggressions & actually gives us an advantage over others.

Documentation: “Practice recommendations for addressing racism: A content analysis of the counseling psychology literature” Miller, Matthew J.

Journal of Counseling Psychology Nov 2018

APA PsychArticles

Annotation: “Racism, the longstanding system of dominance, power, privilege, inequity, and oppression based on socially constructed racial hierarchies, continues to be a social and political reality resulting in maltreatment, unjust burden, and disparities for people of color in the United States.” It doesn’t matter how blatant or subtle it is, it has been proven to have a negative mental effect on people of color. Studies have shown the difference there is between counseling with coping strategies such as; problem solving, social support, and family support in order to cope with racism. There have also been studies that demonstrated coping strategies such as; self-criticism, social withdrawal, wishful thinking, and suppressive coping. There has been so many different problems dealing with what practices work best for people of color. This study shows several categories such as; psychoeducation, validation, self-awareness/critical consciousness, critical examination of privilege and racial attitudes, culturally responsive support, developing positive identity, externalize/minimize self-blame, outreach and advocacy, and the effect they have on trauma.

Quotation: Critical examination of privilege and racial attitudes, a variant category, was generally focused on the training of White mental health professionals and highlighted the fundamental importance of processing emotional reactions to **racism** and privilege (e.g., White guilt and White empathy), and challenging colorblind racial attitudes.

Documentation: "The Psychology of American Racism" Roberts, Steven O.

American Psychologist, 25 Jun 2020,

Annotation: Steven O. Roberts, is a Stanford psychologist who believes "American racism is alive and well". Many people underestimate the how deeply embedded racism is in American history. Roberts believes a lot of these missteps are taken during childhood. "Humans are not born with racial categories in mind. They must be learned." Who you are around, what you are taught, what friends you have; also have an effect on certain behaviors. There are seven factors listed but one that stood out most was passivism or passive racism. People who are advantaged usually take this stance not knowing or caring about those who suffer. A lot of his work was influenced by Kendi's, "How to Be an Antiracist"; he believes that figuring out how isn't important but helping people become antiracist is.

Quotation: "Racism is a system of advantage based on race. It is a hierarchy. It is a pandemic. Racism is so deeply embedded within U.S. minds and U.S. society that it is virtually impossible to escape."

Documentation: "Toward a multidimensional construct of racialized sexual discrimination:  
Implications for scales development" Wade, Ryan M,

Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity, 27 Aug 2020

APA PsycArticles

Annotation: This article helps me understand the mental hardships of being black and sexual. During this study they had a total of four focus groups, each group consisted of three to five subjects. They were all mixed in race and sexual preference, and asked questions dealing with rejection and unconventional practices. How frequently they encountered it, what affect it had on them, and if they believed it was racist. My question is, can safety be provided for black men in sexual relationships with the opposite race? Many felt rejected or fetishized based on their race. Whether there is or isn't love involved, can intimacy help with empathy. This study shows that a person's sexuality can be taken advantage of because of their race.

Quotation: "One Black participant proposed a possible fifth category but was unsure how to label it. This participant suggested "stereotyping" (nonerotic) as a potential category. Although this participant's perspective was not fully formulated, he did suggest that there are other ways that White men would interact with him that were racialized but did not quite fit under the label *Erotic Objectification*."

Documentation: "Why Race Matters When It Comes to Mental Health" Jaye, Lola.

BBC Psychology, 11 Aug 2020,

[Bbc.com/future/](https://www.bbc.com/future/)

**Annotation:** "The significant role that race and systemic racism play both historically and in today's world can, and is, affecting individuals psychologically." This article was written during the pandemic and after the killing of George Floyd. Dr. Jaye is a psychotherapist who has many black clients that suffer from the same issues. She speaks about racial trauma, which black people experience via direct and indirect microaggressions as well as exposure of racism via media. There seems to be no real escape from the amount of racism a black person can experience on a daily basis. She writes about the different issues in the black community like the lack of empathy, concern, and attention to health issues. The huge issue black women face in hospitals and misdiagnoses amongst the community. She also makes mention of the Black Lives Matter Movement as well as giving hope for a triumphant future.

**Quotation:** To understand the psychological trauma carried by many black people, we need to acknowledge two things. Firstly, the unconscious bias within belief systems that can stimulate and propel certain attitudes about black people and secondly, the colossal impact of systemic racism.