



# THE DEVASTATING IMPACT OF RACISM IN HEALTHCARE

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# OBJECTIVES

**Following the session, participants will be able to:**

- **Identify the psychological impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences**
- **Identify the impact racism and microaggressions have on the mental health of African Americans and Latino**
- **Understand the intersection of trauma and racism**
- **Identify the evidence of racism in healthcare**
- **Understand the importance of cultural humility when engaging with families of color**
- **Understand how to address individual and systemic racism in mental healthcare**

- 
- NO DISCLOSURES



# DISPARITIES IN CARE AND OUTCOMES

“200 black people die every single day in the US who would not have died if the health experience of African Americans was equivalent to that of Whites”

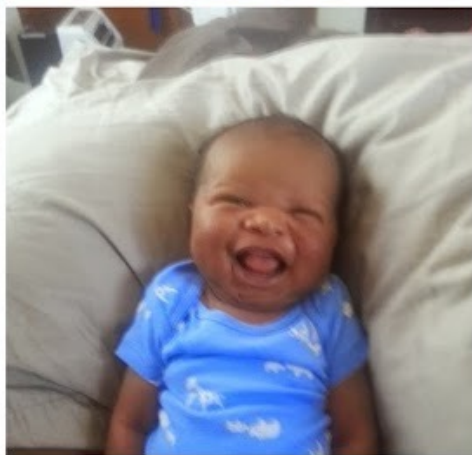
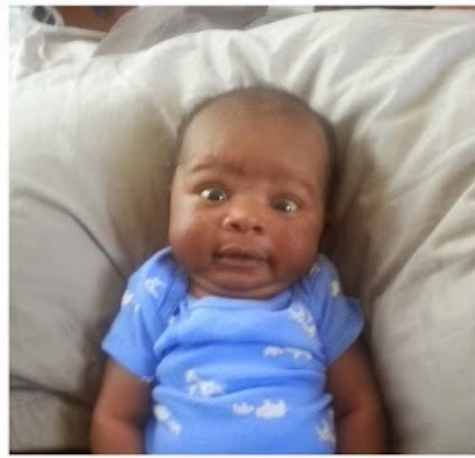
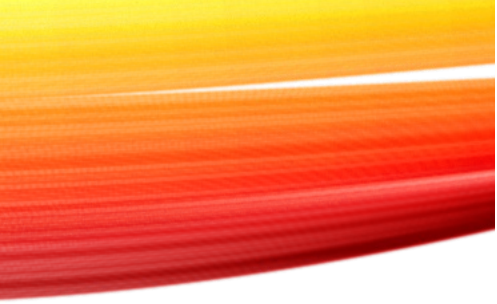
*Dr. David Williams*



**CHADWICK BOSEMAN**

**1976-2020**

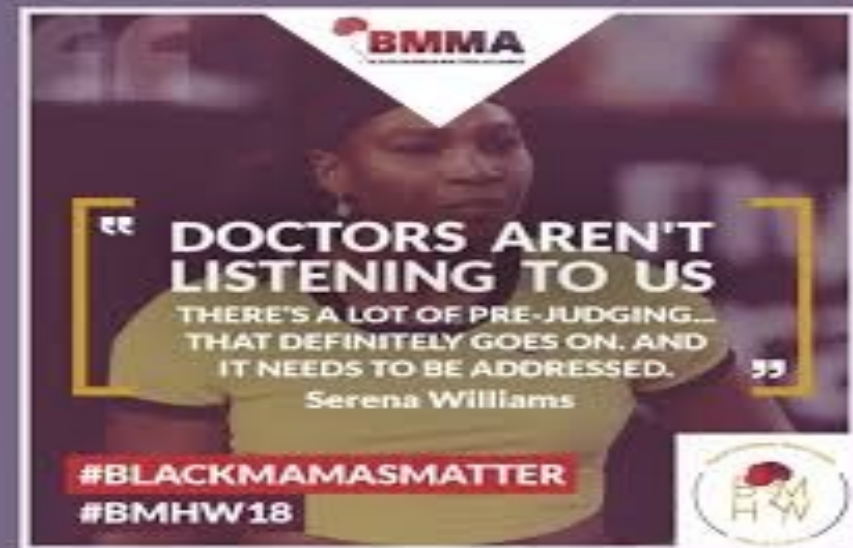
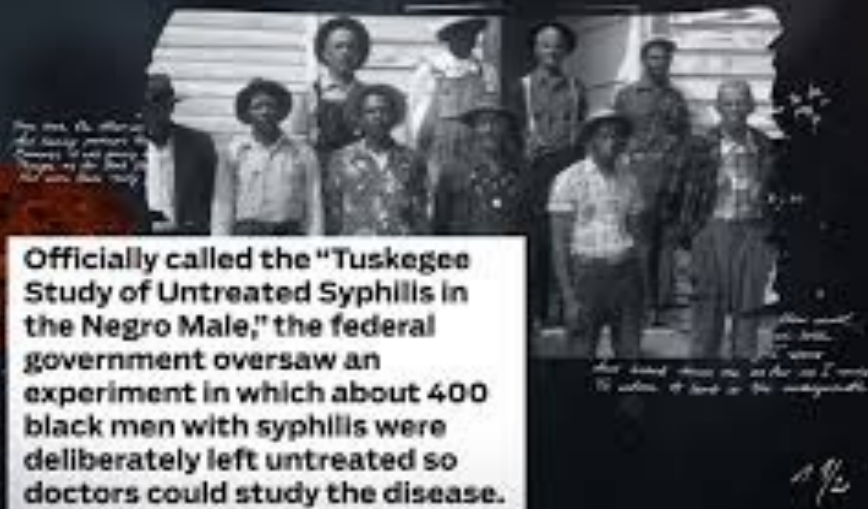




# UNDERSTAND THE HISTORY



# CULTURAL MISTRUST



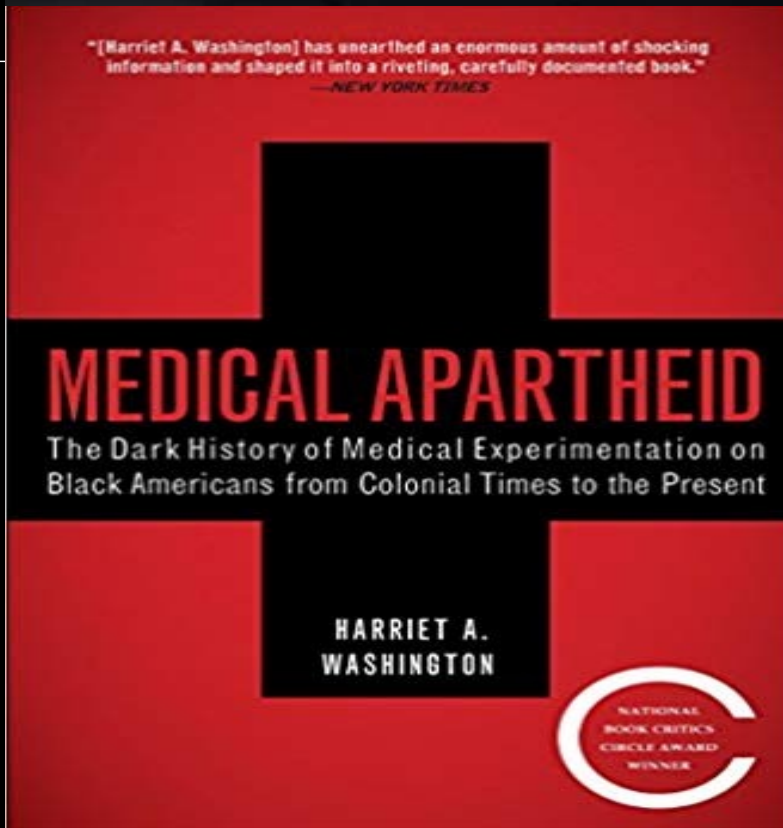
The New York Times Magazine

THE 1619 PROJECT

ILLUSTRATION BY DIANA EJAITA

*Myths about physical racial differences were used to justify slavery — and are still believed by doctors today.*

By Linda Villarosa  
AUG. 14, 2019



## Cultural Mistrust of Medical & Governmental Systems





# RACISM IS THE PRIMARY UNDERLYING FACTOR LEADING TO DISPARITIES IN HEALTHCARE

- Individual and Systemic (Institutional and Structural)
- 96% of AAs experience some type of racism over the past year
- 98% experienced racism at some point in their lives
- 95% found these events to be stressful
- Discrimination is cumulative
- Perceived discrimination is just as negative as blatant, objective discrimination

## The Pair of ACEs

### Adverse Childhood Experiences

Maternal  
Depression

Physical &  
Emotional Neglect

Emotional &  
Sexual Abuse

Divorce

Substance  
Abuse

Mental Illness

Domestic Violence

Homelessness

Incarceration

### Adverse Community Environments

Poverty

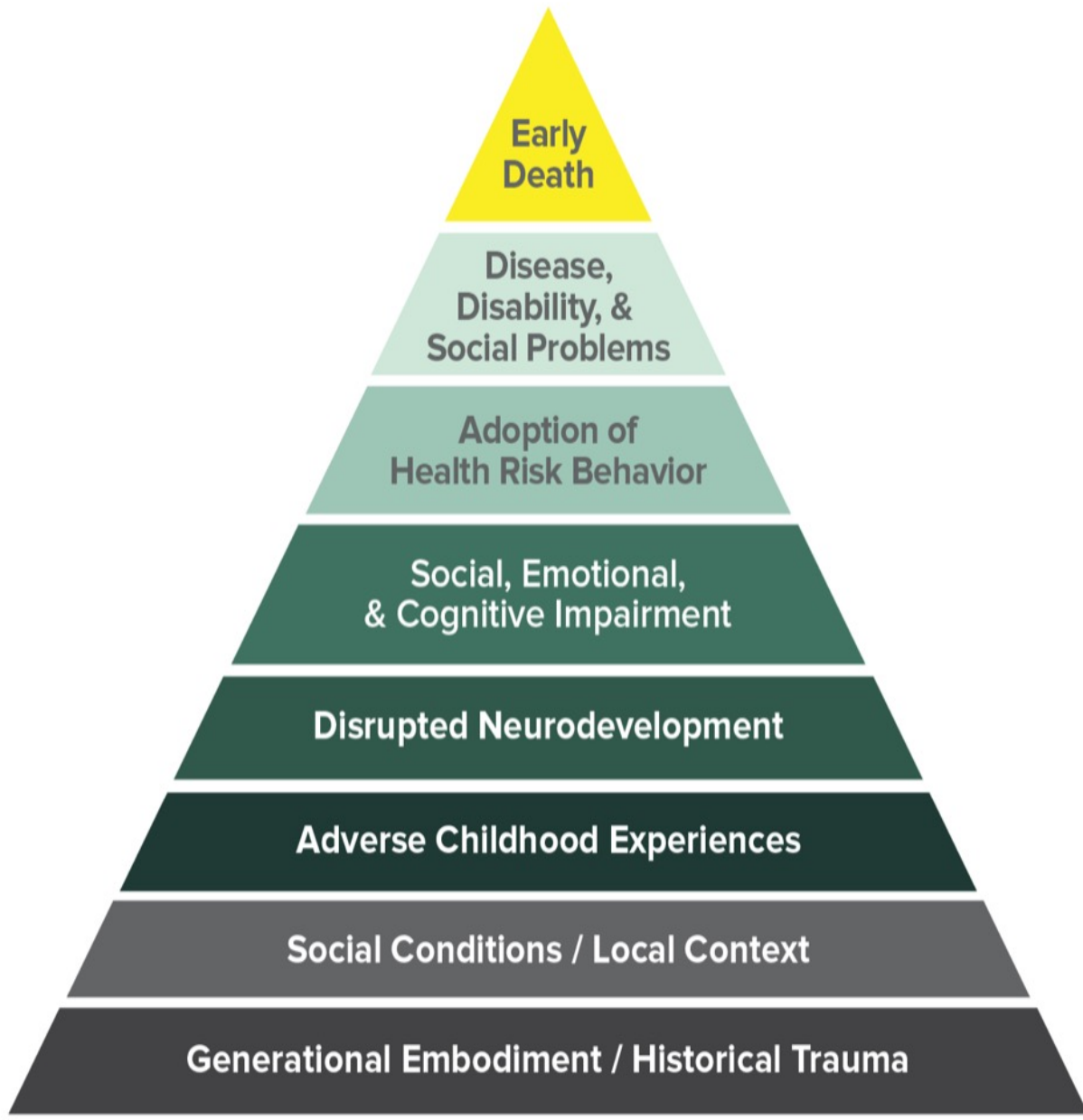
Violence

Discrimination

Poor Housing  
Quality &  
Affordability

Community  
Disruption

Lack of Opportunity, Economic  
Mobility & Social Capital



Mechanism by which Adverse Childhood Experiences Influence Health and Well-being Throughout the Lifespan



As the number of ACEs increases so does the risk for the following\*:

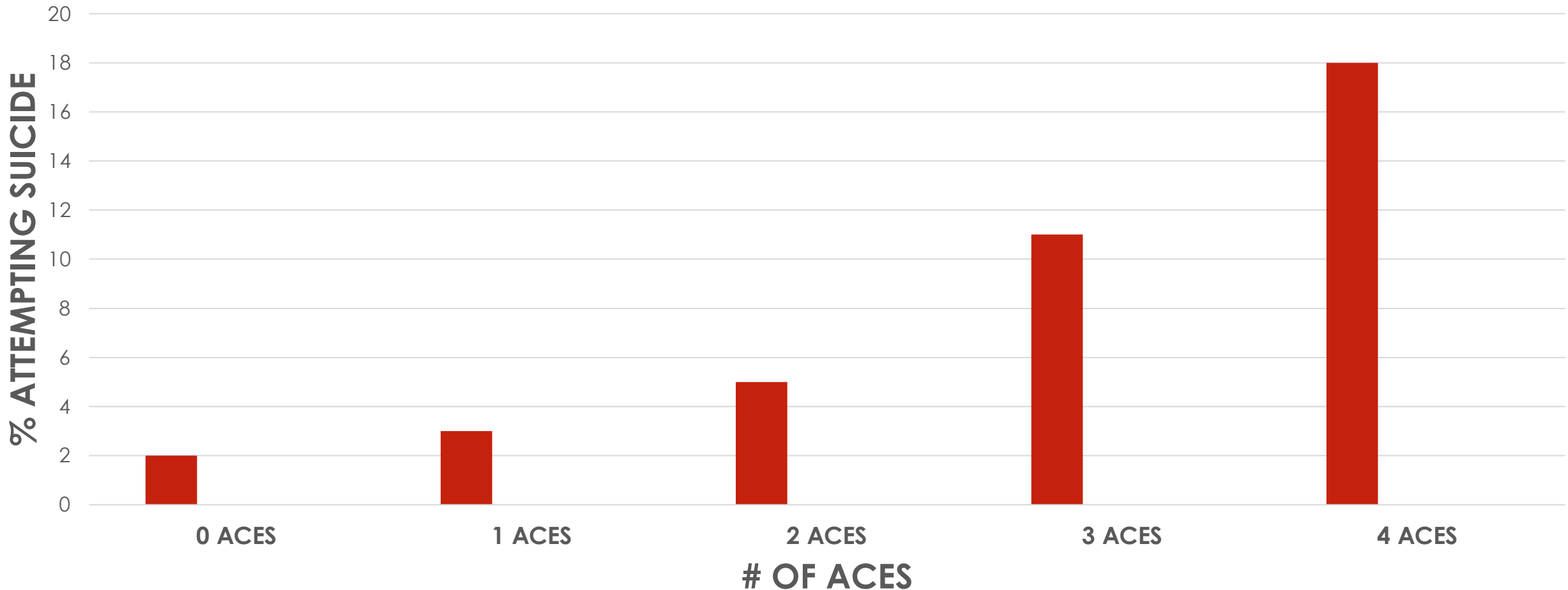
- Alcoholism and alcohol abuse
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- Depression
- Fetal death
- Health-related quality of life
- Illicit drug use
- Ischemic heart disease
- Liver disease
- Poor work performance
- Financial stress
- Risk for intimate partner violence
- Multiple sexual partners
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Smoking
- Suicide attempts
- Unintended pregnancies
- Early initiation of smoking
- Early initiation of sexual activity
- Adolescent pregnancy
- Risk for sexual violence
- Poor academic achievement

# RACISM AND MENTAL HEALTH

- Racial discrimination is a direct contributor and predictor of various forms of Anxiety, including GAD, SAD and PDA
- Perceived racism predicts an increase in Anxiety and Depression Sx later in life
- Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences are dose-dependent and cumulative
- PTSD



# ACES UNDERLIE SUICIDE ATTEMPTS



Adapted from Childrens Trust of South Carolina. [https://scchildren.org/prevention\\_learning\\_center/adverse\\_childhood\\_experiences\\_aces/](https://scchildren.org/prevention_learning_center/adverse_childhood_experiences_aces/)

# WEATHERING



- Stress leads to accelerated cellular aging
- On average blacks health status is comparable to whites who were 10 years older
- Geronimus – “African Americans are expected to do things even though they were set up for failure, and if they succeed at them, it exacts a physical price. There’s a toll of having to prove yourself all the time and interact with the people who disparage you”
- Worse as you age – the stress accumulates
- May be one explanation for lifetime elevated risk for PTSD

# FORMS OF RACISM









**BREAKING NEWS**

**UNIV. OF CINCINNATI OFFICER INDICTED FOR MURDER**

Prosecutor: Campus cop "purposely killed" driver



DOW ▲ 99.44

WOLF



AP Associated Press AP · Tue Aug 30, 11:31 AM ET

A young man walks through chest deep flood water after looting a grocery store in New Orleans on Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2005. Flood waters continue to rise in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina did extensive damage when it

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Monday, Mar 23, 2015 Full Forecast - 33°

NEWS WEATHER CANCELLATIONS SPORTS VIDEOS 9.2 9.3 SHOW YOU CARE YOURS CONTACT US

**Three University of Iowa wrestlers arrested; burglary charges pending**

By Lee Hermlston, The Gazette

Photos

Ross Lembeck, Seth Gross and Logan Ryan

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Monday, Mar 23, 2015 Full Forecast - 33°

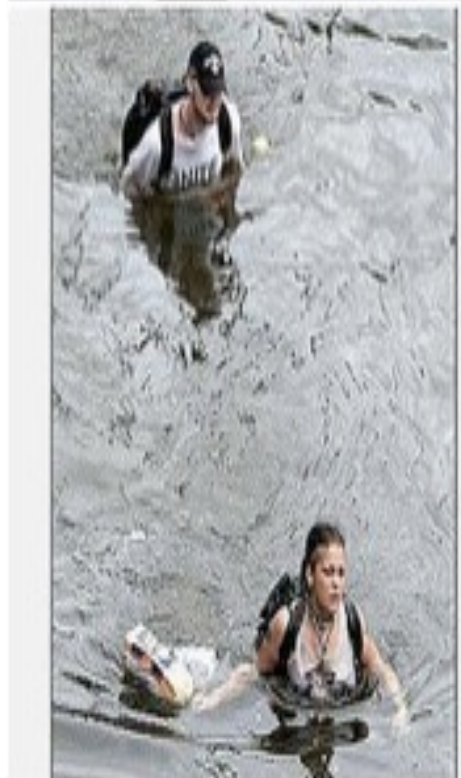
NEWS WEATHER CANCELLATIONS SPORTS VIDEOS 9.2 9.3 SHOW YOU CARE YOURS

**Coralville police arrest four in burglary investigation**

By Lee Hermlston, The Gazette

Video Photos

Coralville burglary suspects Kevin Crawford, Mike Whitehead, Quentin D.W. Eshman and Curtis J. Johnson (left to right)



3:47 AM ET

Two residents wade through chest-deep water after finding bread and soda from a local grocery store after Hurricane Katrina came through the area in New Orleans, Louisiana. (AFP/Getty Images/Chris Graythen)

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• Katrina's Effects, at a Glance AP · Tue Aug 30, 1:26 PM ET

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## Examples of Different Forms of Microaggressions

### **Microinsult**

A Black male college student at a highly selective university is asked what sport he plays, with the underlying assumption that he did not gain admission based on his academic credentials, but rather his athletic ability.

A Latina administrator is described as "spicy," which culturally and sexually objectifies her while diminishing her effectiveness as a leader.

### **Microinvalidation**

An Asian American professor is asked where she is from, and when she replies, "Kansas," her student responds with, "No seriously, what country are you from?" suggesting that she was not born in the U.S.

### **Microassault**

A Muslim student sits in a class where a professor makes Islamophobic comments during his lecture.



WE MEAN MICROAGGRESSIONS.

Racism,  
in all  
its forms,  
is trauma.

<https://childhaven.org/news/racism-in-all-its-forms-is-trauma/>

# ANTI-RACISM: INDIVIDUAL / PERSONAL

- Learn about individual bias
- Challenge bias
- Listen to/Center POC
- Be willing to be uncomfortable
- Cultural sensitivity training
- Diversity training
- Accept reality of Position of Privilege
- Use your privilege to amplify disenfranchised voices
- Focus on Individuation
- Community exposure
- Learn to become an ally
- Hold peers accountable
- Address microaggressions and implicit bias in the moment
- Understand historical and structural racism
- Be willing to accept correction
- Admit what you don't know / understand

# PATIENT MICROAGGRESSIONS

- When appropriate and not in an emergent clinical situation, clearly indicate to the patient that harmful language will not be tolerated
- Educate staff on the clear pathways for reporting mistreatment
- If safe, give the Resident/Student/Nurse permission to walk away and request assistance
- Debrief and offer support
- Use this as a teachable moment for white staff
- Understand that these experience are traumatic, and trauma is cumulative.
- Affirm the individual's experience



@jamesbenoa

On my shift tonight, while stabilizing her cspine, a patient called me a “dirty black monkey” and said some other colorful words about my family. It was then that I realized I was the only black person in the room.

12:22 AM · 21 Nov 20 · [Twitter for iPhone](#)

# INTENT VS IMPACT

- That's not what I meant!
- You are being way too sensitive
- I don't see color!

## **Discuss Impact vs Intent**

Example: "I know this may not have been your intent, but that statement was very hurtful."

Ensure you are using "I" statements

Just because your intentions are good doesn't mean that you aren't impacting people negatively. We can always mean well, but if we don't slow down to consider how our words, decisions, and behaviors impact those around us, we run the risk of doing some serious harm. Make the impact just as important as your intentions and see how your relationships begin to change.

- Vienna Pharaon

# ANTI-RACISM: INSTITUTIONAL

- Leadership commitment
- Minority representation in leadership
- Recruitment and Retention
- Diversity Training
- Promotion/Credit for D and I work
- Train faculty to discuss racism
- Survey faculty and staff
- Financial commitment
- Anti-racist policies
- Address environmental micro / macroaggressions
- Measure POC satisfaction and feelings of safety
- Clear avenue for complaints of racism and discrimination
- Provide Affinity Groups for staff of color
- Mentorship for new employees/students
- Support for POC
- Trauma informed/sensitive work environment
- Pay POC for diversity/anti-racism work



# ANTI-RACISM: SOCIETAL/STRUCTURAL

- Policy Changes
- Economic Relief
- Police Reform
- Governmental leadership
- Healthcare disparities
- Housing Disparities
- Educational Disparities
- Vote



# SUPPORTING PATIENTS WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED RACIAL TRAUMA

- Screen for race-based trauma
- Consider how intersectional identities (race, religion, ethnicity, gender identity, age or socioeconomic status) influence the experiences and worldview of patients
- Cultural Humility
- Recognize your internal bias
- Promote Mindfulness and Self-Compassion



# SUPPORTING PATIENTS WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED RACIAL TRAUMA

- Are your scales/measurements culturally sensitive
- Help patients take back their sense of control
- Words Matter
- Explore Stress
- Positive Racial Identity



Item	<i>M (SE)</i>	Missing, percentage
Sometimes people feel as though they are treated differently than others because they are Indian/Native. What are your experiences?		
Are you treated with less courtesy than other people?	2.30 (0.02)	4
Are you treated with less respect than other people?	2.20 (0.02)	4
Do you receive poorer service in restaurants or stores?	2.10 (0.02)	4
Do people act as if they are better than you?	2.45 (0.02)	5
Do people act as if they are afraid of you?	1.92 (0.02)	4
Are you called names or insulted?	1.67 (0.01)	4
Are you threatened or harassed?	1.45 (0.01)	4
Do people act as if you are not smart?	2.04 (0.02)	5
Do people act as if you are dishonest?	1.84 (0.02)	6

*Note.* *SE* = standard error. Everyday Discrimination Scale ranges from 1 to 4 (1 = *never*, 2 = *rarely*, 3 = *sometimes*, 4 = *often*).

Item	Component			
	1	2	3	4
21. Due to past experiences of discrimination, fear of social situations causes me a lot of problems in my daily functioning.	<b>.854</b>	.231	.232	.036
16. Due to past experiences of discrimination, in social situations I feel a rush of intense discomfort, and may feel my heart pounding, muscles tense up, or sweat.	<b>.770</b>	.256	.162	.118
20. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I am nervous in social situations, and am afraid people will notice that I am sweating, blushing, or trembling.	<b>.768</b>	.341	.025	-.055
7. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I often have trouble relaxing.	<b>.749</b>	.215	.288	.298
14. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I often feel so restless that it is hard to sit still.	<b>.693</b>	-.052	.356	.306
10. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I often cannot stop or control my worrying.	<b>.619</b>	.353	.263	.372
8. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I often feel numb or detached from others, activities, or my surroundings.	<b>.613</b>	.480	.137	.230
19. If I think about past experiences of discrimination, I cannot control my emotions.	<b>.588</b>	.105	.307	.175
3. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I often fear embarrassment.	.202	<b>.836</b>	.229	-.015
11. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I often find that being embarrassed or looking stupid are one of my worst fears.	.347	<b>.716</b>	.014	.260
17. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I feel isolated and set apart from others.	.208	<b>.702</b>	.284	.267
4. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I often feel nervous, anxious, or on edge, especially around certain people.	.154	<b>.651</b>	.315	.280
9. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I often avoid certain activities in which I am the center of attention.	.498	<b>.589</b>	.087	.308
18. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I avoid certain situations or speaking to certain people.	.124	<b>.523</b>	.438	.401
15. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I feel the world is an unsafe place.	.220	.108	<b>.724</b>	.218
1. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I often worry too much about different things.	.201	.398	<b>.637</b>	.174
6. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I often have nightmares about the past experience or think about it when I do not want to.	.535	.134	<b>.600</b>	-.092
5. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I often feel afraid as if something awful might happen.	.298	.202	<b>.572</b>	.390
2. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I often try hard not to think about it or go out of my way to avoid.	.207	.476	<b>.551</b>	-.244
12. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I often become easily annoyed or irritable.	.218	.292	.096	<b>.762</b>
13. Due to past experiences of discrimination, I often feel constantly on guard, watchful, or easily startled, especially around certain people or places.	.200	.293	.499	<b>.560</b>

*Note.* (1) Uncontrollable distress and hyperarousal, (2) Alienation from others, (3) Worry about safety and the future, and being (4) Keyed up and on guard. Highest loading item is in boldface.  $N = 120$ .

“Of all the forms of inequality,  
injustice in health is the  
most shocking and inhumane.”

—*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

“

This notion of 'color  
blindness' leads to all  
white spaces.

- Janice Wyatt-Ross

In Education Week Teacher



**TRANSLATION:**

I'm going to use my place of privilege  
to refute and deny the sufferings of  
those who do not have  
**white privilege**  
while at the same time  
**erasing**  
their personal  
and cultural history.



# RESOURCES

- **Active Minds:** <https://www.activeminds.org/blog/chicanx-latinx-salud-mental/>
- **People of Color and Mental Illness Photo Project:** <http://diorvargas.com/>
- **NAMI: Latinx:** <https://www.nami.org/find-support/diverse-communities/latino-mental-health>
- **Mental Health Services for Latino Youth:** <http://www.nlbha.org/PDFs/NCLRMentalHealthServices1219.pdf>
- **SAMHSA's National Helpline – 1-800-662-HELP (4357)**
- **Mental** <https://www.mhanational.org/depression-african-americans>
- **Association of Black Psychologists:** <https://www.mhanational.org/depression-african-americans>
- **Therapy for Black Girls:** [www.therapyforblackgirls.com](http://www.therapyforblackgirls.com)
- **Therapy for Black Boys:** <https://therapyforblackboys.com/for-parents/>
- **NAMI African American Resource Manual:**  
<https://www.naminys.org/images/uploads/pdfs/African%20American%20Community%20Mental%20Health%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>
- **InnoPsych:** [www.innopsych.com](http://www.innopsych.com)
- **Ebony Mental Health Resources:** <https://www.ebony.com/life/black-mental-health-resources/>

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