

**Sabbatical Leave Report for Fall 2019**  
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Sabbatical Requested

I was approved for a semester sabbatical in support of the completion of a book addressing *Racial Trauma and African-American Men* that could potentially serve as a resource for the college. The 16-week calendar was spent with the overlapping tasks of conducting research, reading, and writing.

Summary of Sabbatical Leave Project

My sabbatical project during the Fall 2019 semester provided me with the opportunity to conduct research and write chapters for my upcoming book on *Racial Trauma and African-American Men*, which will be published by Routledge. The importance of this project is to fill a void in academic research and literature by highlighting the impacts of Racism and Trauma on the mental health of African-American Men as there are not any books and very few journal articles available that address this specific topic and population.

My research consisted of searching for, ordering, and printing journal articles and books along with indexing their information for specific chapters. During this time, I was able to read approximately 10 books and over 200 journal articles. Further, I was able to complete a couple of chapters for the book. One completed chapter defined racism and the various types of racism along with a historical narrative of the construction of race in the United States. Another

completed chapter defined trauma and how it manifests along with the history of how trauma began to be recognized and a DSM category.

Part of my scholarship with the topic of trauma and African-American men is the introduction of two theories that I developed and posit with research to support these theoretical frameworks. One theory reviews historical oppression in the context of transgenerational trauma of African-American men. The other theory reviews how African-American men historically have not been seen as human and the resulting consequences.

The following are important highlights from my research that illuminate the significance of this work.

1. African-American men have the lowest life expectancy in the U.S.
2. African-American men suffer higher rates of domestic violence, intimate partner homicide, and child (physical & sexual) abuse than many other groups of men.
3. African-American men suffer the highest rates of homicide, incarceration, and unemployment.
4. In the academy, African-American men are the most underrepresented group of professors and students next to brown men.
5. Being killed by police is the number one cause of death for young African-American men.
6. Suicide rates for African-American boys has grown 60% between the years of 2001-2017. African-American males ages 5-12 are committing suicide at higher rates than any other racial or ethnic group.

I also learned from compiled data that from January 1, 2013 to October 3, 2016; 303 known unarmed Black Americans were killed by police officers; 278 (92%) of these victims were Black men.

Additionally, trauma as a result of racism is a normative experience for many African-American men. According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (5th ed.; DSM-5; American Psychiatric Association, 2013), "There is evidence that racism can exacerbate many psychiatric disorders, contributing to poor outcome, and that racial biases can affect diagnostic assessment" (p. 749). African-Americans who experienced racism are significantly more likely to experience symptoms of PTSD. Recent research suggests that multiple levels of racism, including interpersonal experiences of racial discrimination and the internalization of negative racial bias, operate jointly to accelerate biological aging among African-American men.

African-Americans report significantly more instances of discrimination than either Asian or Hispanic Americans and African-Americans who experienced racism were significantly more likely to experience symptoms of PTSD (Chao, Asnaani, Hofmann, 2012). For most traumatic experiences, people show signs of re-experiencing (intrusion) the event(s). In the case of race-based traumatic stress, encounters may be clustered or cumulative, and a "last straw" event may serve as the trigger for the trauma (e.g., one may be stressed, but the level of stress may not reach threshold for being traumatic until the trigger or last straw); the trigger may be a major or minor event. Many People of Color report their stress is not because of one event, but a series of emotional wounds and blows experienced (Carter, 2007).

## Institutional Benefits

According to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems Data Mart, there were 1,320 African-American male students enrolled at El Camino College during the Fall 2019 semester. My research and published book will not only fill a void in scholarship, but it will also provide the institution with a resource to potentially improve delivery of teaching, student services, and employment at El Camino College. This includes events such as the *Men of Color Conference* sponsored by and hosted at El Camino College last fall (2019) and in which I also participated as the keynote speaker during my sabbatical.

One of the aspirations for the work I conducted during the sabbatical is that it will contribute to any of the college's efforts to deliver more robust and responsive learning environments, student services, and hiring practices with a focus on aiding students of color and the college's surrounding communities. Furthermore, the college will have the ability to be at the forefront and present itself as a model institution for addressing the barriers and the inequities of racism and the resulting trauma that African-American men face on a daily basis.