THE CENTRE FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FOR BLACK SURVIVORS OF HOMICIDE VICTIMS (THE CRIB) Presents:

Strange Fruit: The Sociocultural Embodiment of Homicide Violence

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AGENDA

The Root

BREAK

Homicide Violence & Victimization

BREAK

Model of Coping for African American Survivors of Homicide Victims (MCAASHV)

BREAK

Implications for Research, Policy & Practice

Q + A
The Root
Structural Violence
Because they seem so ordinary in our ways of understanding the world, they appear almost invisible."

(Farmer et al., 2006)
Coined by Johan Galtung (1969) "as embedded, longstanding, social structures—economic, political, legal, religious, and cultural—that stop individuals, groups, and societies from reaching their full potential"
"100,000 African Americans will **DIE** every year simply because they are **BLACK**"

(Gurmankin, Polsky, & Volpp, 2011)
Pre-Existing Health Conditions

- **Heart Disease**: 46.5% of Americans with heart disease are Black (38.4 M).
- **Diabetes**: African Americans are at a 77% higher risk of developing diabetes than white Americans.
- **HIV**: African Americans represent 43% of new HIV diagnoses in 2018 but comprise only 12% of U.S. population.

Food Deserts in the U.S

Interactive Activity
Figure II: Store Average Healthfulness and Size by ZIP Code Median Income

Figure III: Store Counts by ZIP Code Median Income

(Allcott, et al., 2019)
Structural Violence & COVID-19

- African Americans make up 70% of deaths but make up 26% of the county's population (Milwaukee, WI).
- African Americans make up 39% of the 78 deaths resulting from COVID-19 while Whites represent 29% of the COVID-19 deaths (Philadelphia, PA).
- African Americans make up 50% of positive tests while comprising only 33.33% of the community (Chicago, IL).
- African Americans have the highest death rate at 92.3 per 100,000 compared to ALL other ethnicities (NY).
- African Americans make up 11% of deaths while comprising only 6% of the community (CA).

References:
Briggs & Feldman, 2020; CDC, 2020; Golden, 2020; Meyer & Madrigal, 2020; Crowley, 2020
BREAK
Homicide Violence & Victimization
“The deliberate and unlawful killing of one person by another; murder”
Homicide Violence

• Areas that experience the highest rates of homicide violence are **predominately urban**.

• The predominate weapon of choice used in homicides are **firearms/guns**.

• African Americans **are 10 x more likely** than White Americans to **die as a result of gun violence**.

• **Black men** between the **ages of 15-44** experience homicide victimization more so than any other racial group in the United States.

• Research on homicide violence focused mainly on the **victim and perpetrator**.
Global Homicide Rates

Homicide rate, 2017

Homicide rate is measured as the number of homicide deaths per 100,000 people.

- Jamaica: 31.9
- Brazil: 30.1
- Latin America and Caribbean: 28.4
- Southern Sub-Saharan Africa: 23.9
- Caribbean: 21.7
- Barbados: 17.3
- Zimbabwe: 12.8
- Botswana: 12.8
- Andean Latin America: 10.9
- Sub-Saharan Africa: 10.8
- United States: 6.1
- Eastern Sub-Saharan Africa: 5.8
- Uganda: 3.9
- Central Sub-Saharan Africa: 3.4
- Democratic Republic of Congo: 3.4
- Jordan: 3.0
- Cambodia: 2.4
- Canada: 1.5
- Algeria: 1.1
- Kuwait: 0.9
- Italy: 0.8
- England: 0.5

Source: IHME, Global Burden of Disease

Note: To allow comparisons between countries and over time this metric is age-standardized.
Homicide Victims
Homicides in the United States

(FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1960-2017)
Homicide Victims by Race

- Black: 47%
- White: 39%
- Latino: 14%

(Cella, M. & Neuhauser, A., 2016)
Homicide Violence in Philadelphia, PA
Philadelphia Homicides

(Philadelphia Homicides, n.d.)
As of June 10, 2020 Philadelphia has 178 homicide deaths, which is a 27% increase from June 10, 2019.

African Americans made up 85% of those killed, even though they make up about 41.5% of the Philadelphia's population.
Philadelphia Homicide Victims By Race

Percentage of homicides by race of victim*

* Data provided by the city list the race of victims as black, white, asian, or other. For the years 1988-1996, 2007 and 2014-17, a separate field in the data indicated if the victim was Hispanic. We have changed the victim’s race designation wherever it was marked as Hispanic.

(Philadelphia Homicides, n.d)
BREAK
Survivors
Edna
Redmond (1989) suggests that on average each homicide victim has at least 7-10 family members and friends who must learn how to cope with the homicide of their loved one.
• On average each homicide victim has **7-10** surviving family members

• Based on this assumption **African Americans** make up roughly **75% of the survivor population**

(FBI Supplementary Homicide Reports, 2013)
African American Survivors
Cultural Trauma
Cultural Trauma

Ancestral Survivorship

“I just have confidence in African American’s ability to be a people and understand from whence we came and understand how much baggage we have been able to destroy or clean up or whatever it is that we have had to deal with that I don’t think we were born to bear…I believe the ability of my people to overcome so much, so many things and still have not truly in my opinion arrived at ‘first class recognition’ by many, many people, we are still, (I think) some of the greatest achievers there are”

(Margaret-Surviving Grandparent)
Anticipated Hardship

“I am trying to make sure that you understand that one of the reasons for me, and I dare say the majority of African Americans and people of color…the reason we keep things to ourselves is life is supposed to have a little bit of pain. You know “No sunshine without the rain.” We grew up with those kind of anecdotes that make us hold things in”  
(Elaine-Surviving Aunt)
HOMICIDE
The Culture of Homicide
The Culture of Homicide

Shame/Stigma

“I try to cope now by not being ashamed to talk about it, cause I was ashamed to talk about it…especially being African-American, and the stereotypes of African-Americans that we are just prone to this, and you know like every time I tell people this, (not every time I am exaggerating now a bit here) but someone says you know “Oh, is it drug-related?” like that is the first thing that pops out of their mouth”

(Malik Surviving Cousin)
The Culture of Homicide

Blame

“I question whether or not there was something I could have done to keep him out of that environment and therefore perhaps this never would have occurred. So I guess I am saying in some sense I am always questioning whether or not I am partially or a bit somehow responsible for his tragic death”

(Elaine-Surviving Aunt)
Lack of Justice

“I remember my brother was like, ‘We all know who did it and the problem is the police aren’t doing anything about it!’…My brother was like, ‘I know who it is, you know, we all know who it is!’ Because my cousin was apparently not the right target…It is unsolved, and we just feel like they don’t care”

(Malik-Surviving Cousin)
Interaction

Cultural Trauma

The Culture of Homicide
Racial Appraisal
Racial Appraisal

• Race is a component of our social structure that allocates material, social, and psychological resources unevenly throughout the U.S.

• African Americans are often marginalized and racial marginalization impacts responses to trauma.

• Racial appraisal exposes how cultural expectations based on racial status and race based structural inequality influence interpretations of trauma and justifies one’s response to it.

(McGuffey, 2005)
COPING STRATEGIES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN SURVIVORS OF HOMICIDE VICTIMS
Spiritual Coping

“My grandmother used to say “If you have a problem, take it to God.” She didn’t say take it to the therapist”
(Elaine-Surviving Aunt)

Meaning Making

“I believe in God but to a certain extent because I don’t think God takes an innocent baby or a person that good that wants to help the world. So I keep telling myself he probably needs another angel now”
(Langston-Surviving Cousin)
Maintaining a Connection to the Deceased

“I try to cope with it by maintaining a personal connection with him…meaning like having conversations with him sometimes when things get difficult or remembering that I don’t want anybody else to have to deal with the kind of thing that I did, so almost talking to him or praying to him to get through not only the grief that I feel regarding his loss but also to get through and do the work that I need to do”

(Trinity-Surviving) Cousin
Collective Coping & Caring

“I really focused on what my family was going through rather than what I was going through, I was really like “What do you need?” “How do we get this together?” So in many ways that was my coping mechanism, by not dealing with it in many respects so I focused my energies on helping other people”
(Malik-Surviving Cousin)
“I think I tend to internalize and find a small part of my heart or a small part of my mind an actual small closet in my heart or small closet in my mind to shut off those things that bother me”
(Elaine-Surviving Aunt)

“I don’t know if you remember the movie the Godfather, there is a line in the Godfather where Michael says to his younger brother- ‘You never speak against family, you never disagree with the family’ you never go outside of the family’, and I think that is kind of my mantra…I am just not of the belief that you go outside the home to garner assistance with family or personal problems”
(Elaine-Surviving Aunt)
Model of Coping for African American Survivors of Homicide Victims (MCAASHV)
MCAASHY = MODEL OF COPING FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN SURVIVORS OF HOMICIDE VICTIMS

CULTURAL TRAUMA
- Ancestral Survivorship
- Anticipated Hardship

HOMICIDE

CULTURE OF HOMICIDE
- Shame
- Blame
- Stigma
- Lack of Justice

RACIAL APPRAISAL
- Racial Status
- Race Based Structural Inequality

COPING STRATEGIES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN SURVIVORS OF HOMICIDE VICTIMS
- Spiritual Coping and Meaning Making
- Maintaining a Connection to the Deceased
- Collective Coping and Caring for others
- Concealment
BREAK
Implications for Research
Research

**Survivor Experiences**
Exploring the experiences of African American Survivors of Homicide Victims

**Assessments**
Need for tools of measurement that capture trauma and post homicide experiences

**Collaboration**
With survivors of homicide victims; Interdisciplinary collaborations (e.g., community-based agencies, Social Work, Law Enforcement, Criminology, Sociology, Public Health, etc.)

**Innovation**
Social media/Online platforms, space and place

**Dissemination**
Publications co-authored and shared with community
Implications for Policy
Policy

**Trauma Histories**
Mandate consistent and frequent collection of trauma histories (e.g., homicide and racism)

**Inclusive Victim Rights**
Culturally Responsive Victim Services

**Anti-Black Racism**
Diverse Strategic Partnerships that inform the development of Anti-Black Racism policy
Implications for Practice
Practice

Grief Work
"Complicated"/Disenfranchised no ordered stages

Trauma History
NO PTSD for Black survivors of homicide victims

Programming/Interventions
MUST include a sociocultural context

Culturally Responsive Practice
In MCAASHV for service providers (social workers, psychologist, police, physicians, faith-based community, etc).
THE CRIB

THE CENTRE FOR RESEARCH & INNOVATION FOR BLACK SURVIVORS OF HOMICIDE VICTIMS
Mission
To reduce service inequities within communities of Black survivors of homicide victims through advancing, collaborative, innovative research, culturally-responsive evidence-based strategies, and policy.

Vision
The CRIB is the global leader enabling Black survivors of homicide victims to thrive.

Values Statement
The CRIB is passionately committed to adopting culturally-responsive approaches through the development of Research, Policy & Practice designed to support and sustain the well being of Black survivors of homicide victims.
Projects

• **Inventory of Coping for African American Survivors of HomicideVictims (ICAASHV)**
  - The ICAASHV is a measure designed to assess the origins and types of coping strategies used by African American survivors of homicide victims.

• **Supporting Male Survivors of Violence (SMSV) Baltimore**
  - This project is designed to identify needs and address gaps in services to support community-based trauma informed services for young male survivors of color (YMOC) between the ages of 14-24 and their families who live in the Madison/East End neighborhoods of Baltimore, Maryland

• **Survivors of Homicide Victims & Mental Health (CMHA)**
  - This project is designed to advance understanding of existing approaches to working with survivors of homicide victims from Indigenous and Black populations for service providers throughout the Ontario province.

• **Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)- Insight Grant –Invisible Wounds**
  - The goals of this study are to explore: (1) The impact of experiencing the murder of a loved one on African, Caribbean & Black (ACB) survivors’ wellbeing; (2) How ACB survivors cope with the murder of their loved one(s); and (3) What ACB survivors still need to help them cope with the murder of their loved one.

• **Instagram Live (30@8:30)**
  - A weekly series of Instagram Live talks that aim to investigate COVID-19’s impact on vulnerable populations throughout our global community
Q + A
Thank You
References


References


