

# The Mask of Masculinity: Breaking the Stigma of Mental Health in Black Men

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## Research Question

There are many factors that contribute to the reason many Black men do not seek mental health treatment: socioeconomic status, lack of health insurance, religion, etc. However, masculinity is a factor that is rarely talked about. This raises my question: How does masculinity propel the stigma of Mental Health in black men?

## Methodology

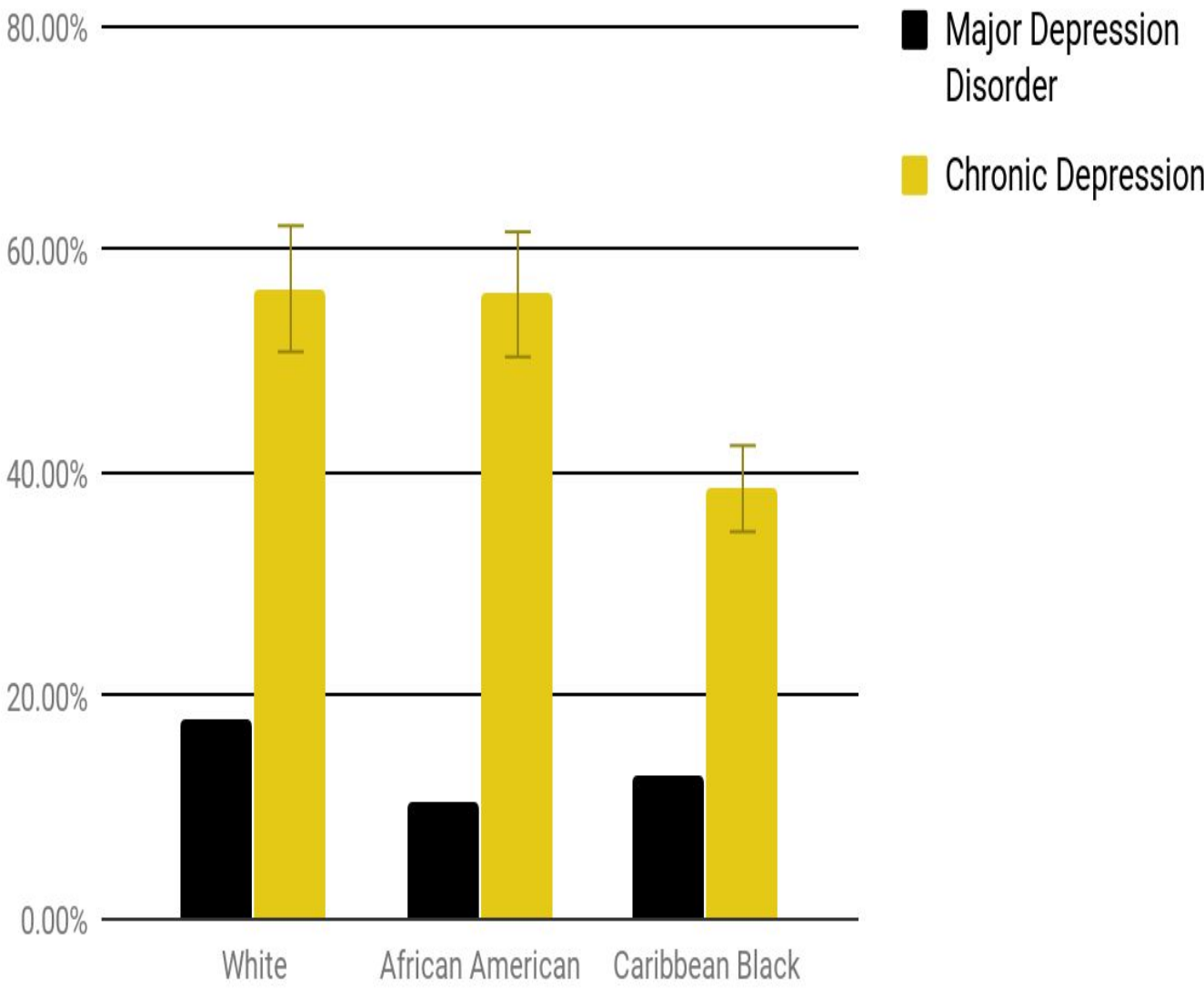
To answer my research question, I collected information from various online resources, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. For the graphs, I used statistics from the American Association of Suicidology and the American Medical Association. Information in masculinity in Black men was gathered from various articles from Perkins Library and NC Wise Owl. It was difficult to find data that combined the topics of masculinity and mental health; however, I ended up using data from the National Center for Biotechnology Information. The bottom middle bar graph was a survey of about 6,000 men of different races and ethnicities. The top right pie chart is statistics of 2,504 African Americans living in the United States.

*“A culture of hyper-masculinity, particularly among Black men, can create false beliefs that depression is something that doesn’t impact them—and even if it does, conquering it starts with the help of others,” – Isaiah Pickens, Ph.D., licensed clinical psychologist.*

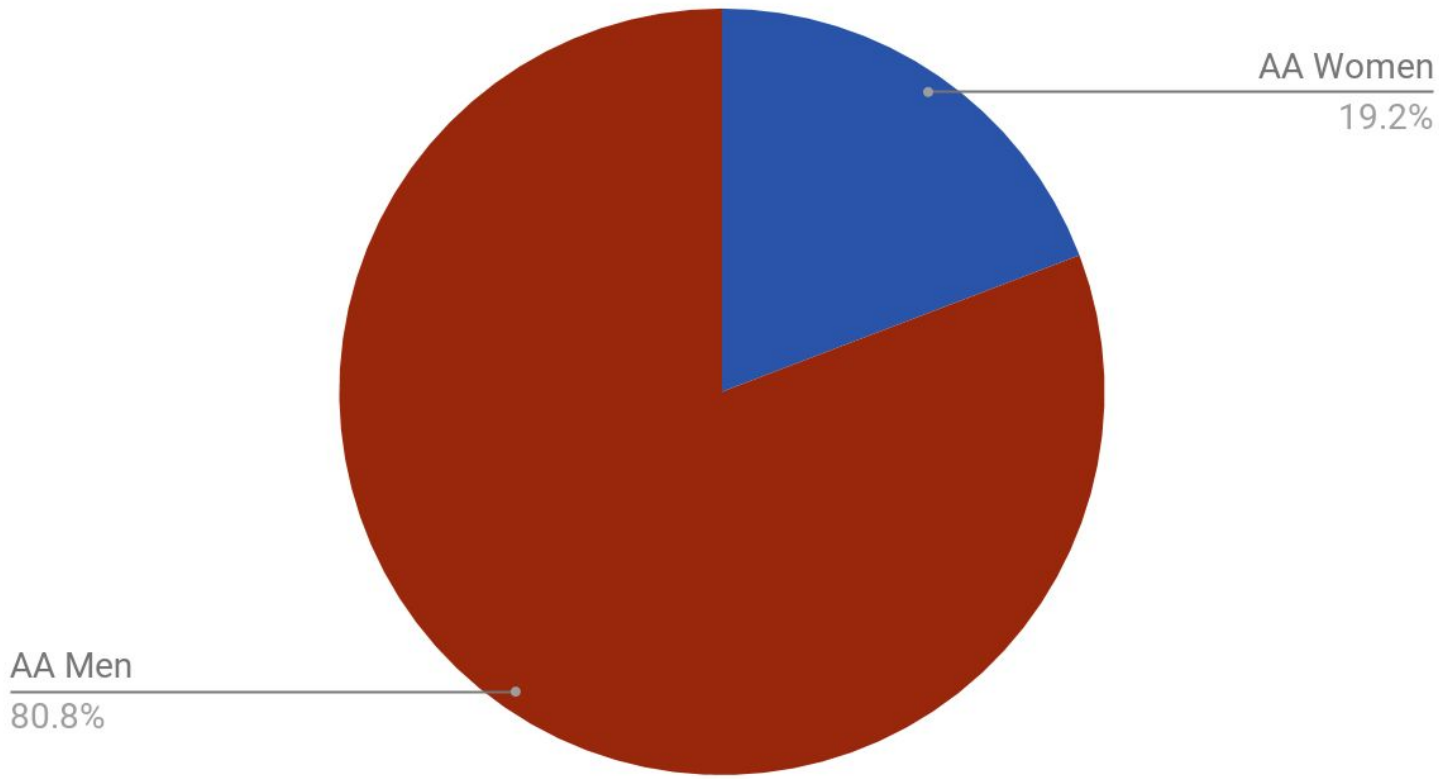
## Background

- Masculinity is defined as all the physical and emotional traits that are assumed to characterize a male.
- Mental Health is the well-being of a person, psychologically and emotionally.
- Black man is defined as those 18 and older.
- Black and African American is used interchangeably.
- African Americans in general are 20% more likely to experience mental illness.
- Over 90% of African American males do not seek help for mental health according to Health Line statistics.
- 6% of African Americans believe depression is a normal part of aging.

### Major Depression Disorder and Chronic Depression



In 2015, 2,504 African Americans (AA) committed suicide:



## Results

Since the beginning of slavery, African American men were expected to display themselves a certain way: emotionless, strong, and assertive. These traits have passed down throughout generations and have a direct effect on their mental health. 63% of African Americans believe depression is a personal weakness and this negative stigma continues to have a detrimental effect on our society.

## Conclusion

Next year I would like to expand my research to other mental illnesses that are prevalent in the black community. I would like to possibly look at the prevailing rates of Schizophrenia and Bipolar Disorder. Lastly, I will also change the age range for my topic. During my research this year I found that there are large amounts of data on mental health in black teenagers and how they cope with these problems.