

STILL I RISE

Voices of Black Women in Psychology

Newsletter for Division 35, Section 1

Volume 1: Issue 1 | July 2015

President's Welcome Message



And Still We Rise! Welcome and thank you for joining the conversation. Section One of Division 35, focuses on the interests and perspectives of African descent Black women and girls. Informed by this vantage point, and uniquely situated in the beauty of our diversity, *Still I Rise*, is the communication arm of Section One, Psychology of Black Women. As such, this venue aims to apply a critical eye and voice to articulate the diverse perspectives within a shared community of Black women psychologists and those

whose work centers on the psychology of Black women and girls. We honor and thank our gifted co-editors, Drs. Batsirai Bvunzawabaya and Collette Chapman-Hilliard, for their creativity and diligence in pulling together our revamped and newly launched newsletter. It is my sincerest hope that our membership feel engaged, feel inspired to submit contributions, and know that in the diversity of our shared experiences, we are able, we are powerful, and in our own lives can declare quite clearly, *Still I Rise!*

Wendi S. Williams, Ph.D.
The Psychology of Black Women | Division 35, Section 1

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Real Talk: Protecting Your Health through Social Connections

By: Dr. Ellen-ge Denton | Assistant Professor, College of Staten Island CUNY

While there are several health factors that require the attention of African American women at health visits, there are also several protective health factors that African American women can reinforce in their family and community circles. The increased risk of pre-term birth, infant mortality, obesity, cancer, type 2 diabetes, and leiomyomata (fibroids) among African American women has warranted the attention of the scientific community, as well as, the many family units that are challenged to learn about the risk and preventative factors associated with the aforementioned health outcomes. However, empirically supported health benefits observed among African American women have been given little attention. Observations such as the decreased prevalence of major depression (when compared to a White majority) and increased impact of positive social support have been noted to mitigate stress and improve mental health.

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"We are all connected: the impact of having health resources, trust-filled relationships, and motivation to manage metabolic factors can reduce disease risk within our community."

- Dr. Ellen-ge Denton



Dr. Ellen-ge Denton

Also, the increased intake of broccoli, collard and mustard greens, and cabbage (cruciferous vegetables) and carrots have been observed to reduce the overall risk of breast cancer, among African Americans (Boggs et al., 2010). Notably, prayer and religious participation buffer stress, improve coping, and are related to less smoking (Feinstein et al., 2010). Such health practices are common in the African American community and should be emphasized.

What are common concerns for African American women and health issues?

Metabolic syndrome. Metabolic syndrome is a collection of problems such as: excess abdominal fat, elevated blood pressure and cholesterol, and irregular glucose metabolism that damages the arteries (Brannon et al., 2013). African American women can be empowered to assess, manage, and develop social support systems for lifestyle behaviors associated with metabolic conditions. More specifically, African American women can promote education, communication, and exercise to the health benefit of women within our communities. *It's all connected:* metabolic syndrome has been linked to diabetes (Park et al., 2003), breast cancer risk (Bosco et al., 2012), obesity (Goodpaster, 2005) and more, among African American women. *We are all connected:* the impact of having health resources, trust-filled relationships, and motivation to manage metabolic factors can reduce disease risk within our community.

What are some advantages for African American women and related health issues?

Social connectedness and networks. Research shows great health advantage when individuals have practical and emotional support (Schulz et al., 2015). Engagement in community events, having a “pray partner”, and home-cooked meals can all be used to reduce metabolic risk factors. For example, Alpha Kappa Alpha, Inc. (AKA) has collaborated with the American Heart Association (AHA) to campaign “Have Faith in Heart.” Working through local churches this program increases health awareness, sponsors health screenings, CPR training, tips on healthy eating, as well as offering materials on heart disease prevention (AHA, 2015). Social and family gatherings with food made from “scratch” and physical activity promote healthy living and reduce the risk of disease. All relationships, ranging from talking with health professionals to walking with community acquaintances, can contribute to increased health literacy and promotion of healthy behaviors in the African American community. With health knowledge and a circle of people who will promote a healthy lifestyle, African American women can reduce the risk of disease and set a new standard for community health!



For a personal assessment of your health status go to:

<http://www.yourdiseaserisk.wustl.edu/>

<https://wellness.uwsp.edu/other/lifescan/lifescan.asp>

<http://www.nutritionquest.com/>

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Sister's Speak: A Letter to Our Children

By: Dr. Cassandra D. Page | Assistant Professor, Regent University

Dear Black Child,

Tears burst across my face and anger flooded my veins as I heard the Ferguson verdict. I was surprised...but I wasn't surprised. I fell asleep disheartened and stunned. Speechless. I walked into work the next day hoping to gain some peace or some sense of direction. I prayed for strength.

As providence had it, I was lecturing on Social Justice that day. How timely. I was not sure what words would escape my mouth. I wanted our discussion to be professional, yet personal. Not political, yet convey my sorrow, while also creating space for my students to do the same. Once again, tears fell down my face. I was raw. My openness gave way to honest conversation and shared tears. We had a moment of meeting.

With passing time, news stories continued to display injustice after injustice. Anger and rage resulted in burning buildings and protest. Pained children, demonized police, and our broken-hearted community were plastered across the television screens and news headlines. I felt paralyzed, unsure how to tackle the system, searching for meaning and hope in the smallest of things.

I wanted to divert your eyes. I wanted to shield you from the destruction. I wanted to protect you from the injustice I hoped would be fading away. I wanted to protect you from the storm.

But, then I realized—doing so would take away your strength.

Beautiful Black Child, you are on the front lines of this new civil rights movement. You are not another statistic. You are not another feared face. You are valuable. You are loved. You are worthy. You are not alone. I am on your side. I will equip you with the tools necessary to incite and cause lasting change. We can surpass this together.

You must be heard. You matter. I see you.

Love,
A Phenomenal Woman



Dr. Cassandra Page

Opportunity for Graduate Students!

- Are you interested in developing your leadership skills within an APA section?
- Do you seek mentoring by Black women psychologists?
- Would you like to participate in the process of research review and evaluation?

Our section is seeking interested graduate students to participate on the Division 35, Section 1 Awards Review Committee.

Now Accepting Applications— Section 1 Awards

Submit your application for the Carolyn Payton Early Career Award or the Graduate Student Award. Applications are due by April 17, 2016 and self-nominations are encouraged.

For further information about either of these opportunities please contact:

Cashuna Huddleston at
chuddleston.uh@gmail.com

Announcements

Congratulations—LIWP Recognition



Dr. Earlise Ward has been recognized for the 2015-2016 APA LIWP for her outstanding career achievements and demonstrated leadership potential. The American Psychological Association (APA) Leadership Institute for Women in Psychology (LIWP) Executive Committee's mission is to prepare, support, and empower women psychologists as leaders to promote positive changes in institutional and organizational life and to increase the diversity, number, and effectiveness of women psychologists as leaders.

Section 1 Award Winners

Each year we sponsor two awards, the Carolyn Payton Early Career and Graduate Student Awards. The Carolyn Payton Early Career Award recognizes the achievement of a Black woman in the early stages of her career, and the Graduate Student Award recognizes the work of a Black woman graduate student in psychology. This year we had many wonderful applicants and are proud to congratulate our two award winners, Dr. Jioni Lewis and Morgan Jerald, and thank you to our Awards Chair, Cashuna Huddleston, for her work in coordinating this process. Check out brief bios of our award winners.

Dr. Jioni A. Lewis is an assistant professor in the Department of Psychology within the Counseling Psychology Program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Her research and teaching interests are broadly focused on multicultural psychology and social justice issues. Specifically, she explores issues of race and racism, microaggressions, racial and gender identity, intersectionality, and Black women's issues. Her current research explores the psychological effects of contemporary forms of oppression, with a specific focus on intersecting forms of racism and sexism, and its impact on health disparities. She recently developed the Gendered Racial Microaggressions Scale (Lewis & Neville, 2015), which is a self-report instrument to measure Black women's experiences with the intersection of racial and gender microaggressions. She teaches courses on Multicultural Psychology, Social Justice Theory and Practice, and African American Psychology. She received her Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.



Morgan Jerald is a doctoral candidate in the Personality and Social Contexts program at the University of Michigan. She received her undergraduate degree from Spelman College, where she majored in Psychology and Spanish. Broadly, Morgan's research examines body image attitudes and sexuality in Black women. Her current work explores the influence of negative stereotypes about Black women's sexuality on their gender beliefs, sexual agency, body image, and mental health.

Bound for 2015 APA Convention | Section 1 Events



What: Section 1 Business Meeting

When: Thursday, August 06, 2015 ~ 12:00 PM-12:50 PM.

Where: APA, Toronto, CA Van Horne Suite at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel (Div. 35 Suite)

Description: We welcome the opportunity to connect with our membership in person and for you to receive the benefits of other programming of Division 35, which are also held in the Suite and throughout the conference.

What: This is a group of section leaders that are mentored by Jessica Henderson Daniel.

When: Thursday, August 06, 2015 ~ 1:00 PM-1:50 PM.

Where: APA, Toronto, CA, Van Horne Suite at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel (Div. 35 Suite)

Description: Members of other section ECs will also be in attendance. This is one opportunity for us all to join in discussion and collaboration to promote diverse women's leadership within the Division through our Section.

What: Intersectionality: How race/ethnicity intersects with other important identities to uniquely impact clinical practice, research, and policy by Nicole T. Buchanan, Wendi S. Williams, & Ivy Ho.

When: Friday, August 07, 2015 ~ 11:00 AM -11:50 AM

Where: APA, Toronto, CA Van Horne Suite at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel (Div. 35 Suite)

Description: A collaborative program with Division 12, Section 6.



From the Editors' Desk

Co-Editors: Batsirai Bvunzawabaya, PhD & Collette Chapman-Hilliard, PhD

The thrust of this newsletter is to support connection, communication, and collaboration among our members and within the larger psychological community. The title of our newsletter is informed by the words of the late Dr. Maya Angelou, a Black woman whose words inspire us to reflect on the power that resides within us to persevere and to use our voices. We are delighted to have this newsletter as a forum for the voices of Black women and girls, and to celebrate our collective growth and achievements. This is an exciting venture for us that continues to evolve, and we are eager to see how the newsletter develops in the next year. Please feel free to contact us with ideas and any feedback you may have using the email address below.

Submit to the Next Issue!

We review submissions on a rolling basis and very much encourage you to share your voice, your achievements, and your work. As you've read, the newsletter includes several sections that are geared to help us remain connected, learn from and celebrate one another. If you or someone you know would like to write or has ideas for a piece for any of our sections we invite your interest.

Submission Details

"Real Talk"

Discuss research and/or practice related to a current health and mental health issue impacting the lives of Black women and/ or girls (200-300 words)

"Spotlight on Our Members"

Share a discussion of your current initiatives in research and/or clinical practice (200-300 words)

"Sisters Speak"

Discuss your perspective on a current issue in the Black community (200-250 words)

"Announcements"

Share promotions, accolades, position openings, call for study participants (e.g., research on relevant to Black girls and women), calls for papers, etc. Please include contact information as necessary (no more than 50 words)

PLEASE EMAIL ANY QUESTIONS AND ALL SUBMISSIONS TO

d35section1news@gmail.com