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## ABSTRACT

A disproportionate number of African American men are captives of the capital punishment system in the U.S. This presentation examines data from the U.S. Department of Justice's Capital Punishment Statistics (2013 to 2016) and other sources. The data represents persons under sentence of death in the U.S. The purpose of this presentation is to examine possible racial bias against African American men in the U.S. capital punishment system.

## INTRODUCTION

Racial prejudice has historical roots in the U.S. judicial system. For example, in the 1700s there were Slave Codes that reinforced the ideology that African slaves could be murdered by their masters for any reasons (Fede, 2017). These traditions and doctrines carried from the 1700s to modern day society, a history of support in favor for capital punishment against African Americans without any due process. Historical traditions of the Southern Culture still affect African Americans in the judicial system.

## HYPOTHESES

- African American men are sentenced to death at a rate out of proportion to population size and crime commission and compared to Euro-American men.
- Southern U.S. states have the highest rates of capital punishment for African American men.

## STATISTICAL SOURCES

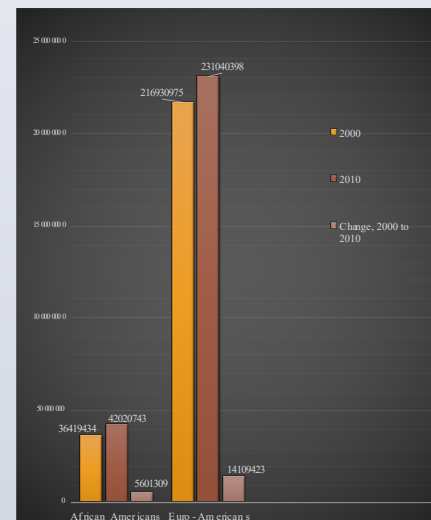
- U.S. Department of Justice's Capital Punishment Statistics (2013-2016)
- FBI Uniform Crime Reports
- National Crime Victimization Survey (2017)
- United States Census (2010)

## METHOD

- Capital punishment data was gathered from the DOJ's Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Prisoner Statistics program (NPS-8, 2016) and included state statistics. Also, capital punishment data was gathered from the Federal Bureau of Prisons for the federal government.
- The U.S. Census Bureau was utilized for population statistics. The statistics are only updated every 10 years. Projected population data is given in between census publishing by the bureau.

## RESULTS

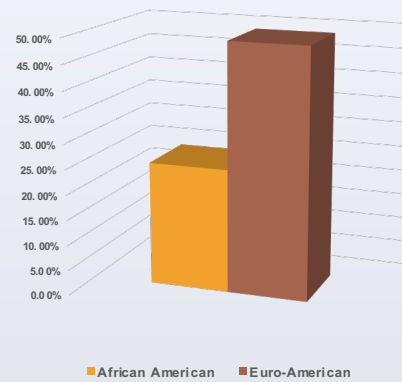
### African American/Euro American Population



Population estimates for the year 2017 showed African Americans made up 13.4% of the population and Euro-Americans made up 76.6% of the population

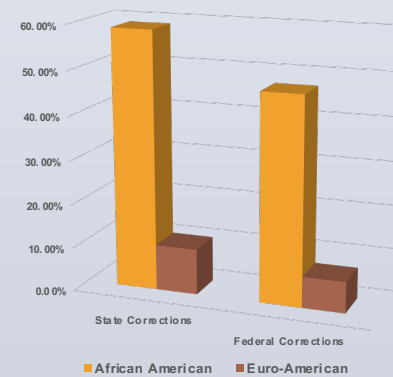
## RESULTS

### Percent of Offenders of Violent Crimes in 2017 Based on Crime Surveys



Of the people who committed violent crimes in 2017, 24.5% were African Americans and 49.2% were Euro-Americans

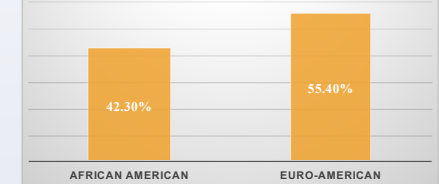
### Percent of Prisoners Incarcerated for Violent Crimes in 2016



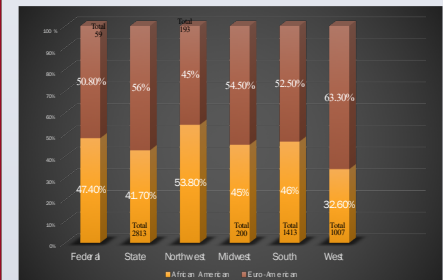
Of prisoners held in 2016 for violent crimes, 44% were African Americans and 44% were Euro-Americans

## RESULTS

### Percent of prisoners under sentence of death in 2016



Although African Americans comprise about 13% of the American population, in 2016, African American men accounted for 42.3% of the prisoners under sentence of death.



## DISCUSSION

- Results show that African Americans are disproportionately incarcerated for violent crimes and disproportionately sentenced to death.
- Racial biases in the American judicial system may help explain the disproportionate number of African American men in the prison and capital punishment system (Cochran et al., 2017; Unnever & Cullen, 2012).
- Neither population statistics nor crime statistics account for the number of African American men on death row.