

LeRon L. Barton

— WRITER. SPEAKER. ARTIST. —



ABOUT

LeRon L. Barton is a writer from Kansas City, Missouri currently Lives in San Diego, CA. A graduate of Paseo Academy of Fine Arts, LeRon is the author of two books, *Straight Dope: A 360 degree look into American Drug Culture* and *All We Really Need Is Love: Stories of Dating, Relationships, Heartbreak, and Marriage*. In addition to his books, LeRon is an essayist whose topics cover racism, mass incarceration, politics, gender, and dating. These works have appeared in *Black Enterprise*, *Salon*, *Harvard Business Review*, *The Good Men Project*, *Your Tango*, *Media Diversity*, *Raconteur*, *Elephant Journal*, *East Bay Times*, and *MoAD*. LeRon is an international speaker who has given three TEDx speeches and has appeared at Al Jazeera, the University of San Francisco, Navis, *Speakers Who Dare*, Nas Dubai, Glide Memorial Church, The City of Cupertino, Los Altos Chamber of Commerce, Square, and Defy Ventures. In his spare time, LeRon enjoys mentoring African-American youth, teaching Creative Writing at the San Francisco County Jail, and backpacking around the world.

Talks

The Psychological Impact of Racism/White Supremacy

In this discussion, we talk about how the everyday effects of racism can change a person's life. We will define the terms "Microaggressions," "Code-switching", "Imposters Syndrome", see how PTSD exists in Black and Brown communities, and how we can battle with these challenges.

Being Black in Tech

The technology is one of the most innovative fields today. Life changing software, equipment that powers our everyday existence, and apps we cannot do without have been produced by tech. However, as exciting as technology hubs such as Silicon Valley are, they still have a problem with race and diversity. Black and Latino people make up 4% to 5% of the work force at major tech firms, and that points to a very important issue. As a Black man who has been in tech for over 20 years, I will talk about my experiences, challenges, suggestions for people who want to enter the field, and what I would like to see changed in technology.

The Power of Telling Your Story

Today, even in a multi-cultural society with different races, sexual orientations, and genders, the general narrative is still dominated by white, straight people. Because of this, we are not able to see and hear different experiences. This is due to access, discrimination, and people feeling as if their story is not valid. In this talk, I will discuss why it important for everyone to tell their story, why it is important, how it illuminates the world, and by giving a chance for everyone to speak, it can inspire others to do the same.

Why Men of Color Need To Embrace Mental Health

Black and Latino face challenges everyday due to their race and maleness. Society sometimes sees us as criminals, sexual deviants, and threats. We are impacted by the criminal justice system, unhoused, and unemployed at very rates. In our communities, we are often told to be tough, boys don't cry, and be a man. Because of this, when we have depression, feel uncertainty, and deal with challenges, we are not encouraged to express them. Unfortunately, this can lead to isolation, loneliness, alcohol and drug abuse, and even violent outbursts. In this conversation, I will discuss why I feel we need to break away from the long held beliefs of not seeing a therapist, being vulnerable, seeking healthy outlets for our feelings, my story of finding a therapist, and why Black and Brown men should embrace mental health.

Testimonials

- ❖ *LeRon gave a talk at our company on the history of Juneteenth and the origins of racism in America and how it manifests and what one can do to be a part of the solution and not the problem. It was incredible! I have never had a speaker come and garner as much engagement as LeRon did. He fostered so much true discussion about tough topics and the team felt utterly energized to make a difference after his presentation. I cannot recommend LeRon enough. He is a great speaker with excellent content.*
- ❖ *LeRon spoke at our equality week which was a virtual even prompted by the BLM movement. LeRon was our virtual speaker who spoke to all the students in secondary form ages 11-19. His talk was insightful and allowed our students to reflect upon their own privilege's. LeRon further spoke about being an 'ally' which a turn of phrase many students had not heard before here is a video of our event and LeRon's talk, highly recommended for any similar events or key note speaker opportunities.*
- ❖ *My first interaction with LeRon was a training put on by United Way featuring him on "Exploring Microaggressions." The audience had various types of individuals from different industries and titles, but his 90 minute presentation was so awesome I had to get him to do a similar training for our law firm. When reaching out to LeRon he was able to tailor the content on microaggressions and expand it out to macroaggressions as it pertains to the law firm experience and he knocked it out the park! LeRon's session was very interactive and he had an innate way to create a safe space where people felt comfortable being open. He was very professional, friendly, and provided a lot of insight for our employees to continue conversations on their own. I highly recommend him to speak to your company or group on micro/macroaggressions as well as other focused topics that affect people daily!!!*
- ❖ *Yesterday, LeRon Barton an effective presenter, wowed our team! United Way of Greater Los Angeles had the pleasure of having LeRon be our honorary guest in celebration of Black History Month. Our team had a great experience with LeRon's presentation, "The importance of sharing your story! His presentation touched on the importance of telling your story and why some may be afraid to do so. As well the complications of code switch, lack of representation and imposter syndrome that many BIPOC have to navigate. LeRon not only did the talking but got our team to engage in a vulnerable dialogue. Our team felt comfortable and got invaluable experience. Thank you, LeRon for making our experience fun, lively, educational, and authentic!*
- ❖ *LeRon spoke with our non-profit organization (South Carolina PTA) and did an AMAZING job! This was by far one of the best presentations we've had! He is very engaging with the audience which allowed us to have very deep and meaningful discussions. We will definitely ask him to speak with us again! We appreciate everything he does and received positive feedback regarding the webinar. I STRONGLY recommend LeRon!*

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Contact Info:



www.LeRonBarton.com



Lbarton78@gmail.com

