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Race-Ethnicity in American Politics

2 March 2016

#### Key Words:

Abortion, Healthcare, Breast Cancer, HIV/AIDS, Women's Rights, Healthcare

#### Description:

This issue brief seeks to discuss current day issues concerning Women's rights issues in Public Health. It will discuss different diseases, imbalances in health care, and abortion.

#### Key Points:

- Abortion is a topic that will be debated for many years on whether it is morally correct or not. There are many different factors that play into whether a woman chooses to get an abortion or not.
- African-American women are more likely to die of breast cancer than any other race on the ethnoracial pentagon.
- African-Americans need better resources in order to ensure equality in healthcare.
- While over 5000 African American women were diagnosed with HIV, only about 1,500 white women were diagnosed with HIV in 2014
- Awareness about disease needs to be increased for minorities in order to fix these problems.

#### Issue Brief- Public Health and Women's Issues

There are many prominent issues concerning public health and women's issues. The first, and probably the most debated topic concerning women's issues and public health is abortion. In fact, according to Guttmacher Institute, about half of American women will have an unintended pregnancy, and nearly 1 in 3 will have an abortion, by age 45. Abortion is an interesting topic because the people that are put in these



situations, have a very tough decision to make. There are many factors that go into a female's decision including age, religious beliefs, economic status, etc. 58% of women that have an abortion are in their 20's. Also, 6 in 10 people that have an abortion already have a kid and 73% of those who get an abortion are religiously affiliated. Women that are living below the federal poverty line represent about 42% of all abortions and about 69% are considered "economically disadvantaged." Race also seems to come into play when discussing abortion. In fact, 92 out of every 1000 black women will have an abortion and 79 out of every 1000 Hispanic women will have an abortion while only 38 out of every 1000 white women will have an abortion. Abortion is an issue that will never have a correct answer concerning its morality, but it will be an issue that is forever discussed.



The next topic of discussion when talking about public health and womens' issues is the disparity in healthcare provided for whites vs. minorities. To start, breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths among women in the United States (CDC). Nearly 40,000 women die of breast cancer every year. Again, race comes into play when looking at breast cancer statistics. For example, a black woman is 40% more likely to die of breast cancer as white women. What is very

interesting is the fact that, for the most part, every main ethnicity from the ethnoracial pentagon has the same percentage of women who receive a mammogram (Komen). So why is it that African Americans are diagnosed so much more often? There are a few possible reasons as to why this is the case but the most logical answer is that a lot of African-American women do not have the same social and economic resources that a white woman has. In fact, if the death rates between white and black women were the same, then 1,800 fewer black women would die of breast cancer. Obviously for these numbers to improve, not only black women but also all minority women should have better access to the resources needed to get tested or treated for cancer.

Another disease that will obviously garner some serious attention is HIV because of the severity of the disease. Similar to breast cancer, minorities seem to be affected by HIV more than other races/ethnicities. For example, according to *cdc.gov*, From 2005 to 2014, the number of new HIV diagnoses among African American women fell 42%, though it is still high compared to women of other races/ethnicities. In 2014, an estimated 1,350 Hispanic/Latino women and 1,483 white women were diagnosed with HIV, compared to 5,128 African American women. Once again we can see that the disease affects black women far more than that of a white woman. Clearly, something needs to be done about the problem and doctors say there are a number of challenges that contribute to the higher rate of HIV among African Americans. There are two key reasons that can possibly be why African Americans seem to be affected far more than White people. The first reason is that African-Americans seem to have sex with partners of the same race/ethnicity.

Not only that, but most people are completely unaware that they have the disease, and a lot of the time they don't even have the resources necessary to find out.

Although this might not be factually supported, it can be assumed that people living in poverty do not have the resources necessary to get tested for the disease.

### Works Cited

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