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The Disproportionate System With Abortion

The recognition of the right to abortion is widely regarded as a significant advancement for women in the U.S. Being an essential component of health care, it ensures women's control over their bodies and privacy. While the country had taken a big step forward, it has now taken a few steps back with the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* on June 24, 2022. With the constitutional right being eliminated, states are given the ability to regulate and ban it, and this has left many women suffering from the restrictions. While all women are generally affected, certain groups have taken the greatest fall from it. My research question is how has the ban left women from low-income households and people of color disadvantaged? I'm most intrigued because I'm aware that the U.S. system historically has been disproportionate for marginalized communities, lacking opportunities and resources. I want to understand the factors that make these groups feel burdened. What are the dangers of delaying or restricting the process and long-term consequences? The ban itself seems to address a perpetuated cycle of inequality and injustice. Therefore, through this research, I think it's interesting to then compare the gap between white and wealthy women. They aren't shaken up by the ban the same way minorities are. Overall, I gathered different sources of information that will help me answer my questions and provide me insight into this prevalent issue regarding race and socioeconomic position.

SOURCE 1

News: Hassanein, Nada. "People of Color, the Poor and Other Marginalized People to Bear the Brunt If Roe v. Wade Is Overturned." *USA Today*, Gannett Satellite Information Network, 3 May 2022,

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2022/05/03/people-color-most-impacted-if-roe-v-wade-overturned/9626866002/>.

This new article written by Nada Hassanein addresses the heavyweight that marginalized groups and people of color must carry with the ban. She mentions there are already disparities in accessing health care for these groups, but the reversal of *Roe v. Wade* just solidifies it. Throughout her article, she discusses several points that convey how the ban makes it worse. "People may travel hundreds of miles to get to states where abortions are still allowed. Young and low-income people, who are disproportionately of color, may not be able to afford the cost of travel." The author explains that these groups are even more challenged, and with the position they were originally in, it's difficult to accommodate the ban. Unfortunately, the circumstances of financial hardships and insecurity leave them disadvantaged. No choice, they are subjected to unwanted pregnancies they are possibly not ready for, and the author describes this as being "immensely painful, and arduous and a violation of human rights." According to a study conducted by the University of Colorado, Boulder, it revealed the effects of the ban on maternal deaths. It was "found that among Black women, maternal deaths could increase by one-third. Black women are already three times more likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than white women."

This fact is alarming, that the death rate for Black women has increased. It demonstrates the reality of the country, what remains is that white women are still privileged in the system and that they are least likely affected compared to marginalized groups. The article is beneficial to my question because it makes me understand the scope of the situation, and that one's socioeconomic status plays a role in having the basic necessities in life. I agree that abortion is indeed a basic right, no matter the overturn and I like how the author uses ethos to back up her views. When reading her article she quotes from credible individuals, allowing it to be reliable and appealing. For example, Fatima Goss Graves, is a women's health and reproductive rights policy expert, attorney, and president of the National Women's Law Center. Dr. Bhavik Kumar, a medical director at Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast, mentions how devastating it is to be unable to help women in need of an abortion. Both voices are important and trustworthy, as their profession allows them to hear first-hand experiences of women in need, which turned them to be the best advocate for this issue.

SOURCE 2

Article: Michele W. Berger Writer, et al. "Overturning Roe Disproportionately Burdens Marginalized Groups." *Penn Today*, 4 May 1970,

<https://penntoday.upenn.edu/news/overturning-Roe-abortion-bans-disproportionately-burden-traditionally-marginalized-groups>.

The author of this article uses data and studies which strengthens his statements. He wants to inform and educate readers on systemic racism and poverty in abortion and how women in these communities are affected. He states how presently, there are still gaps concerning racial, and socioeconomic position. To have a better understanding of this issue, the

author talks about the health-related dangers of delaying an abortion. For example, ectopic pregnancy or viable pregnancies can endanger women. Thus, it's crucial for their safety and abortion is abortion.

This opens my eyes immediately to why it's devastating that many women are backed up into the corner unable to get the support or access needed. The author describes that these "pregnancy risks declined in the past half-century in the U.S. partly because people had increased access to safe abortions and contraception." However, the ban has changed and has been unfavorable for people of color, which follows back to systemic racism. The deaths per "100,000" live births, is the maternal mortality rate for Black women. This is 2.9 times higher than the rate for white women. According to Stevenson Demography, they collected data which found that the mortality rate for Black People who didn't receive abortions is 33%. In addition, Regina Baker, an assistant researcher at Penn's population Center analyzes the map of the country. She realized that states that enact the ban are poverty-stricken or in rural areas. The population of these areas was mainly Black, Latinos, and Indigenous. The gap in financial stability was huge with white people. They are disadvantaged because white families can easily seek solutions such as traveling abroad, while they cannot. It is important to note that 75% of those seeking abortion are low-income families who make "46,000" and lower, according to the Guttmacher Institute. It's horrible to know that such a high percentage of abortions belong to low-income homes

SOURCE 3

Video: YouTube, 8 July 2022, https://youtu.be/1O_YHxd_HWQ.

The Youtube video addresses the long-term consequences that come with being now denied an abortion. In the Turnaway Study, for 5 years and every 6 months, two groups of women from those denied, and to those given an abortion were checked upon. The purpose was to see how life has progressed. Most of the women denied it, consisting of people living under the poverty line, and women of color. Professor Foster Greene who led the study reveals that in the Turnaway group, 57% were under the poverty line. In the video, individuals were interviewed and they justified their reasons for wanting an abortion. Common reasons were being financially unprepared, and scraping to get by. Some had no paying job because they were prioritizing schooling, or being documented. Professor Foster Greene mentioned how white women in comparison have the means to travel, afford the procedure, or easily get time off work.

The long-term consequence of the participants being denied was even more financial distress; they couldn't dig themselves out. According to the American Journal of Public Health, they collected data on women who had an unwanted pregnancy and noticed they had "80% more debt past due, 20% increase in bankruptcy, loans, and evictions." This study is important, and I think it dives into the depth of the issue, and how hindering the bans are. The damage is significant as focusing on a child is costly, and the trajectory of their career plans changes. Their social life is sacrificed and their mental well-being deteriorates as many women end up living alone, with a lack of child support. Unfortunately, this is what a majority of women in marginalized groups face. The video's use of the Study is an example of logos and pathos. It

produced reasonable and supported results. By interviewing women they were able to share their struggle stories which appeal to readers' emotional side.

SOURCE 4

Layseebi [@LaysieB]. "if we fight for who it affects..." *TikTok*, 17 Mar. 2023,

<https://www.tiktok.com/t/ZTRwCbgkV/>.

In this short Tiktok, the creator LayseiB is calling for the public to fight against the system and ban which is rooted with racism. She states how historically black people were pushed to be disadvantaged and being a minority. Thus, options like Planned Parenthood are extremely important, as it's the most affordable and accessible healthcare for women. Thus lawmakers removing the option is horrible, and she also calls out their hypocrisy. Stating that white men who are in a secure position will never uphold what they put out for others. The minute "their mistress gets pregnant, they will be the first to get an abortion." I like how direct and passionate the creator is, while to the audience it may seem biased since she is a Black woman. But, it is true that the ban targets these minorities and they will suffer, while others won't bat an eye.

CONCLUSION:

In summation, the overturn of *Roe v. Wade* is devastating and reverses all the hard work and effort that women have done to fight for their rights. Women in states that regulate this ban have little control over their bodies. Individuals who do live in them, are having hard times

because the system doesn't consider them and their circumstances. People of color and low-income are overlooked and are extremely disadvantaged. Lacking access, they end up having the short end of the stick, and the disproportionate power between the wealthy and white is clear.