Assessment of the OB Patient Presenting to the ED

History of Racism in Gynecology

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EMS Credits

- Send Marleine EMS license #
- In Chat put in name and facility
- Must attend live Zoom Meeting
Simulation Updates

Making Travel Plans

Goal: To visit 4 ED facilities by September 2022

Training on new simulator

Will be reaching out to facilities to set up informational zoom calls
Upcoming Topics

• March 21\textsuperscript{st}, 2022  noon – 1:30pm
  • OB Emergencies – Post Partum Hemorrhage
  • Possible alternative time – evening hours – Stay Tuned!

• April 18\textsuperscript{th}, 2022 – OB Emergencies – Part 2 –

• May 16\textsuperscript{th} 2022 – Human Trafficking
Today’s Guest Speaker

• Dr Marygrace Elson MD MME FACOG
• Clinical Professor and Vice Chair
  Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology
  University of Iowa
Through the Lens of U.S. History: Racism in Gynecology

M. Elson, MD, MME
Clinical Professor and Vice Chair for Education
Obstetrics and Gynecology
University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine
Educational Objectives

• Define systemic racism

• Discuss the historical context for required documented informed consent for sterilization and other operations in the USA

• Describe how social opinions and eugenics have influenced contraception options in the USA
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• Members of the CREOG Social Determinants of Health Task Force
Have you ever wondered why your client of color—

- Declines genetic screening?
- Declines a LARC implant?
- Declines participation in research studies?
Is Race a Biological Condition or a Social Construct?
When you talk about Systemic Racism in health care, are you calling me a racist?
Definitions

Implicit Bias

• Also known as unconscious bias, “The attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner”
  • Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity

System Racism

• Also known as Institutional Racism, “A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representatives, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity”
  • The Aspen Institute
Implicit Bias in Medicine

Systemic Racism in Medicine

Health Disparities
Examples- health disparities

• Black individuals are less likely to be offered preventive services such as cancer screening and influenza vaccine\(^1\)

• Black individuals are less likely to have adequate treatment of pain\(^2\)

• Blacks and Hispanics are less likely to receive bypass surgery even when medically indicated\(^3\)

• Women are less likely to undergo appropriate cardiovascular testing\(^4\)


Victims of Lynchings 1882 - 1968

160 - 581 reports
47 - 122 reports
21 - 43 reports
1 - 20 reports
No reports

States where half or more of the victims were black

Virginia State requires colored passengers to ride in a separate car.

Citizens remain silent.

Showers

White Officers
Colored Officers

Dept. of the Army

Colored Only

HOT DOG

COLORED ONLY
Race

• First appears in the late 16th C with reference to categorizing humans
• By the 18th C widely used
  • Europeans as free people
  • Indigenous people who had been conquered
  • Africans brought into slave labor
• In the American colonies, human rights vs property rights
  • Dehumanizing Africans, focusing on physical differences

Race is not Biological

• Race is a social construct. It has been used to deny freedom and goods to people for centuries via racism
  • Ethnicity- a group that shares cultural traditions
• Ancestry describes the genetic inheritance of an individual or populations.
• There are relationships among these terms, but they are not the same.
Biased Beliefs about Race and Pain

Then...

Dr. Marion Sims is known as the father of Modern Gynecology inventing the speculum and the surgical procedure to repair vesicovaginal fistulas.

He performed thirty surgeries on the slave woman Anarcha over approximately five years, finally successfully treating her vesicovaginal fistula with silver sutures.

In accord with the scientific racism of the time, she and the other slave women, Betsey and Lucy, were viewed as “medical super bodies” who could tolerate surgery without anesthesia.
Race and Pain - now

• USA, 2016- In a study of 222 white medical students and residents, about 50% believed black people were biologically different from white people, including having nerve endings that are less sensitive and having thicker skin.

Psuedoscience- Comparative Physiognomy and Phrenology

From Nott and Gliddon
*Types of Mankind* (1856)
Medical Research - Memories Remain Fresh

- Henrietta Lacks and the HeLa cell line - 1951
- USPHS Tuskegee study of syphilis 1932-1972
- Baltimore Lead Paint Study - 1990s
Medical Education

• “Teaching material”
• The “Resurrection Man”
  • “Many bodies of southern Negroes were used in northern medical colleges...A Professor of Anatomy in a New England medical school told me....he had an arrangement under which he received in each session a shipment of twelve bodies of Southern Negroes. They came in barrels marked ‘turpentine’.”
  • Dr. F.C. Waite
Bias Beliefs about Black Women

- Bias beliefs about Black women are founded in four archetypes
  - Mammy
  - Sapphire
  - Jezebel
  - Welfare Queen
Bias Beliefs About Black Women

- Mammy
  - Stereotyped Black women as obese, dark-skinned, maternal figures, desexualized, loyal to white families
  - Stereotyped as taking care of the white family’s children but not her own
  - Dark-skinned was also seen as ugly
  - Stereotyped Black women as only being domestic workers
  - Perpetuated in art, literature, and media

Bias Beliefs About Black Women

- Sapphire archetype
  - Sassy Mammies
  - Black women portrayed as rude, loud, stubborn and overbearing
  - Led to Angry Black Woman stereotype
  - Not wanting to fulfill this stereotype, Black women often remain silent

Bias Beliefs About Black Women

- Jezebel archetype
  - Stereotyped Black women as hypersexual
  - Began when Europeans began to travel to Africa. African women were scantily clothed compared to European women
  - Used to justify slave owners raping slaves
  - Perpetuated in art, novelties, and media

Bias Beliefs About Black Women

• Welfare queen archetype
  • Stereotype that Black women are uneducated, single mothers who have children to take advantage of public assistance
  • According to the Nutrition Assistance Program Report Series, in 2016 36.2% of SNAP beneficiaries were white and 25.6% black.

Bias Beliefs About Black Women

Now....

• In a study of 435 undergraduate students, ratings for Black women compared to White women as
  • More likely to have multiple sex partners in the last month
  • Less likely to use birth control
  • More likely to receive public assistance
  • Have less education
  • Earn less income
  • Less likely to follow the doctor’s instructions
  • Less likely for the father of the child to be involved

Manipulating reproductive freedom

- Forced reproduction of enslaved women
- Government and social policies discouraging reproduction
  - Eugenics influence on the family planning movement
  - Imposed long-acting contraception
- Sterilizing without informed consent
Enslaved women

“I consider the labor of a breeding woman as no object, and that a child raised every 2 years is of more profit than the crop of the best laboring man.”

- Thomas Jefferson, in a letter to Joel Yancey
- 17 Jan 1819

Then...
System Racism and Reproductive Rights

Then...

- Slave breeding was encouraged by plantation owners, especially at the end of the slave trade
- Owners had to approve of marriages. Often these were arranged
- If no children were born to a couple, the husband and wife were expected to find another spouse
- Slave women were often raped by the master or his acquaintances

System Racism and Reproductive Rights

Then....

- Slave breeding paved the way for a system of men with authority and power controlling the reproductive rights of Black women.
- A precursor for *Eugenics* in the late 19th Century through WW II.
- **Eugenics** is a practice or advocacy of controlled selective breeding of human populations (as by sterilization) to improve the population’s genetic composition.

- Merriam-Webster
System Racism and Reproductive Rights

1920’s– Eugenics through Contraception

- Margaret Sanger, founder of American Birth Control League, which later became the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, saw birth control as a way of emancipating women
- However, she ultimately collaborated with the Eugenics Movement
- “The most urgent problem today is to limit and discourage the over-fertility of the mentally and physically defective”
  -Margaret Sanger

“The Pill”- Puerto Rico

- Approximately 900 women, no informed consent. 3 deaths, no autopsy.
- Initial testing 70 women in informal trials in Massachusetts.
- 1st attempt at trial in Puerto Rico involved coercion of 23 female medical students.
- 2nd attempt was nurses at SJ city hospital, who refused
- 3rd attempt inmates of a PR women’s prison who refused.
System Racism and Reproductive Rights

1970’s – Eugenics through Sterilization

- Until the 1970’s, over 30 states had laws that mandated sterilization in disabled, mentally ill, or socially disadvantaged groups.
- From 1909 to 1979, approximately 20,000 sterilizations took place in California state institutions accounting for one-third of all sterilizations.
- The Mississippi Appendectomy, coined by Fannie Lou Hammer, was the practice in the 1920’s to 1980’s of involuntarily sterilizing Black women by hysterectomy.
- In 1976, the government admitted to sterilizing 3,406 American Indian women without consent.

Norplant

The first major contraceptive breakthrough since The Pill

Approved by FDA 1990

Long-acting (5 years), reversible, effective
Easy to put in, not to remove

- Deep placement
- Financial barriers
System Racism and Reproductive Rights

- From 2006 to 2010, 148 female inmates in California prisons were coerced into sterilization

- In September 2020, through a whistleblower, several advocacy groups filed a complaint due to forced hysterectomies being performed on immigrants in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention centers


1974 - National Research Act

• Created the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research
• Requirement that all human subjects’ research must be reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB)
Informed consent and mandatory waiting periods for sterilization paid with federal funds

Prohibits hysterectomy performed solely for sterilization

Prohibits sterilization of institutionalized individuals

Prohibits sterilizations of minors
Next Steps

• Individual- SO important! Take an Implicit Bias Test
  • https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html

• Systemic- Work intentionally to correct system racism and bias
  • Minority, immigrant and native populations
  • Physically and mentally disabled
  • Socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals
  • Poor health literacy
Address and Acknowledge SDH

- Racial/ethnic disparities in health care outcomes
  - May be related to genetic ancestry
  - Are far more likely to reflect social determinants of health such as poverty, housing insecurity, food insecurity, lack of health insurance or health care access

- Race/ethnicity may serve as a risk marker, but is it the cause?
  - Societal structural racism has been the basis for maldistribution of freedom, opportunity and wealth for hundreds of years.
  - Rigorous evidence-based research regarding potential genetic basis is needed

Oni-Orisan et al., NEJM, 2021.
Decreasing Institutional Racism
At the System Level

• Physical Space
  Accessibility, Parking, Equitable provision of care

• Health Insurance Plans
  “Improving Payer Mix”

• Reduce Implicit Bias
  Recruitment, hiring and promotion practices

  Intentional, strategic interventions for patient care such as communication training

*Achieving Health Equity: A guide for Health Care Organizations,
Institute for Healthcare Improvement, 2016.*
Reproductive Liberty

• Right to have a child
• Right to not have a child
• Right to parent in a safe and healthy environment

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