

COVID-19 and Medical Mistrust in the Black Community

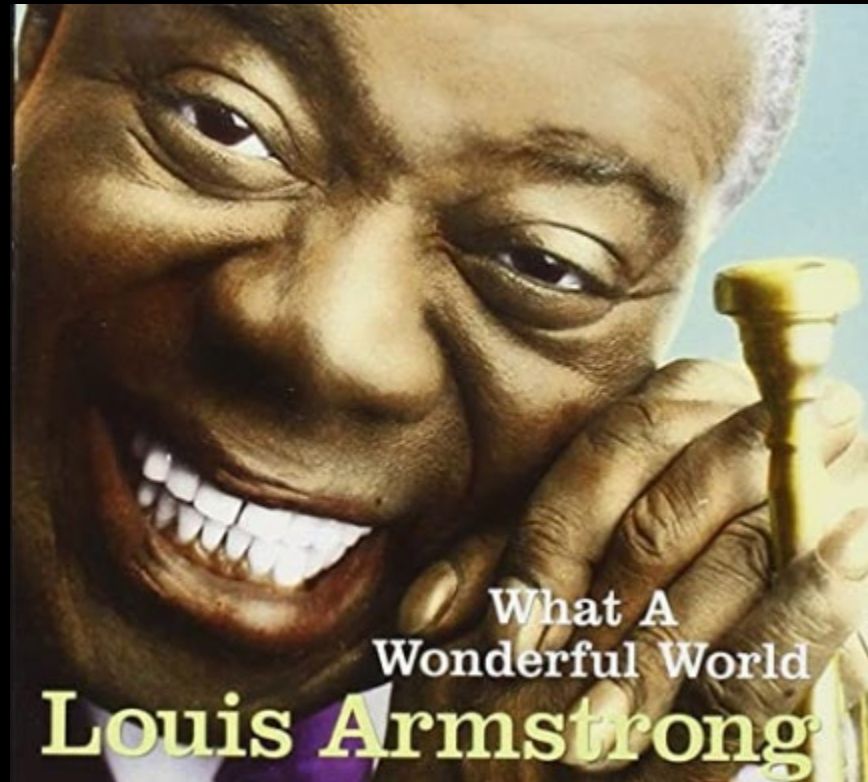
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Objectives

- Outline the history of medical mistreatment of Black Americans
- Review the ways this history exacerbates Black health disparities
- Discuss ways to combat the negative effects of medical mistrust for better uptake of biomedical interventions in Black communities

What A Wonderful World



A note:

- Throughout this presentation, we will use the term “Black” to refer to people of the African diaspora both within and without the U.S.
- We also want to acknowledge that many of the images and historical anecdotes which we are going to share with you might be triggering.

Definitions

- Medical Mistrust- defined as a suspicion or lack of trust in medical organizations
- Race- a class or group of people unified by shared customs and traits

Examples of Medical Mistrust

Often when we speak about medical mistrust, Tuskegee is the first thing that comes to mind. This is one of the most well documented medical abuses, but many others exist

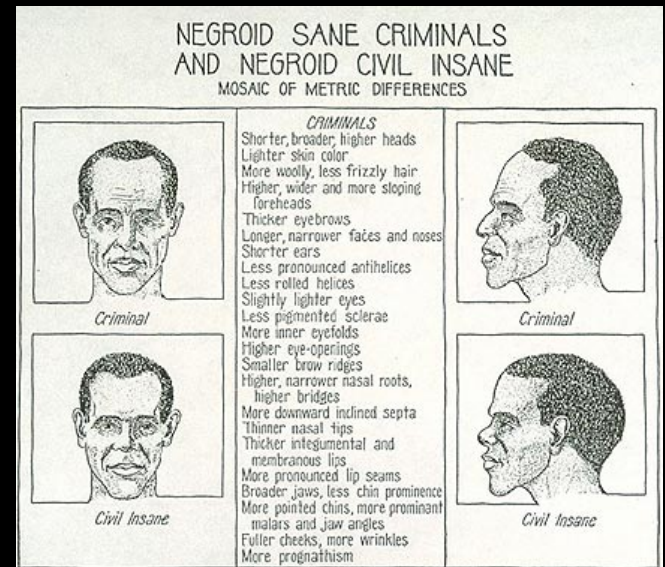
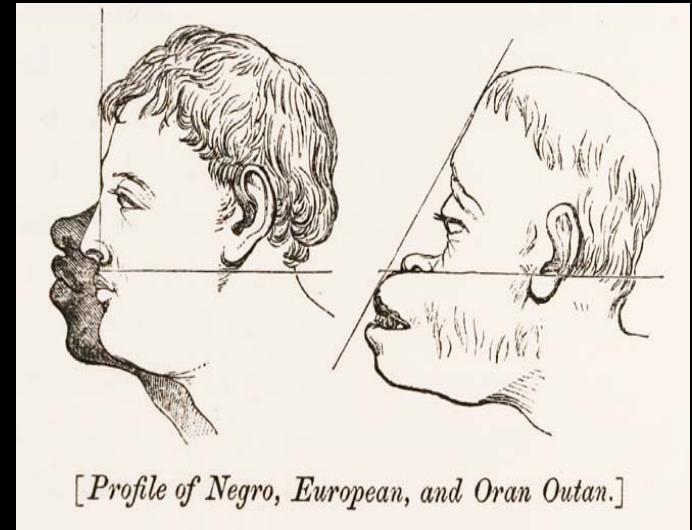


What is medical racism?

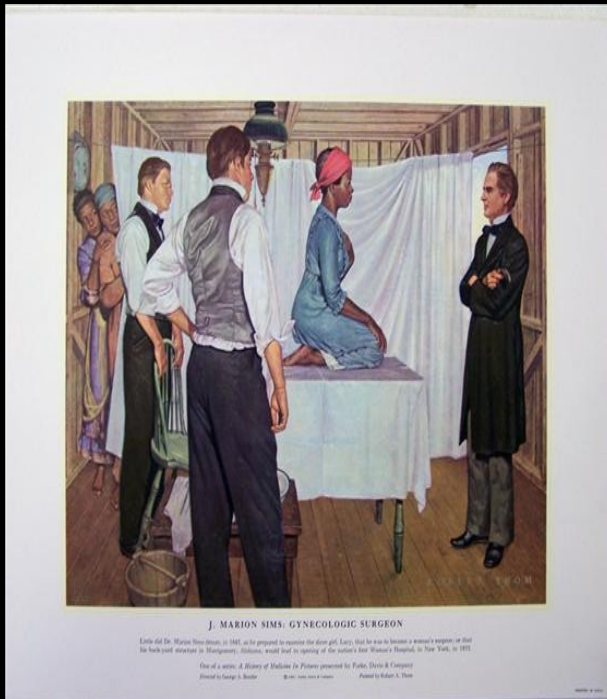
Medical Racism: When racial prejudices from larger society impact diagnosis, treatment, and overall health practices; racial discrimination that influences diversity of clinicians and healthcare staff

Ex: drapetomania, a condition that certain enslaved people were said to have. The main symptom was a desire to run away.

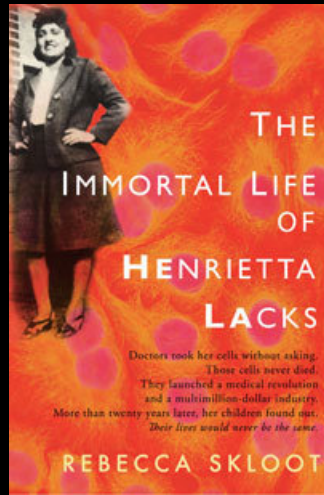
Hoberman, 2012



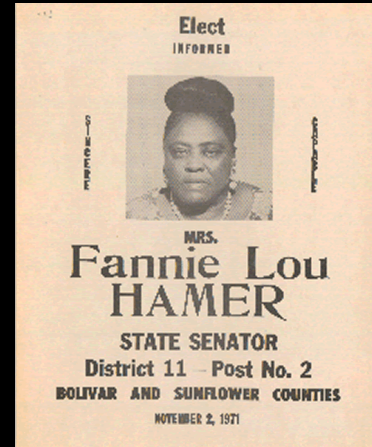
Anarcha and Modern Gynecology



- Anarcha was a woman who had over 30 gynecological surgeries performed on her. She was one of at least 10 enslaved women who went through this
- As an enslaved woman, she was unable to consent to these surgeries
- J. Marion Sims, the doctor who performed these without anesthesia, is honored as the “father of gynecology” (1813-1883)



Henrietta Lacks



Fannie Lou Hamer

“Mississippi Appendectomies

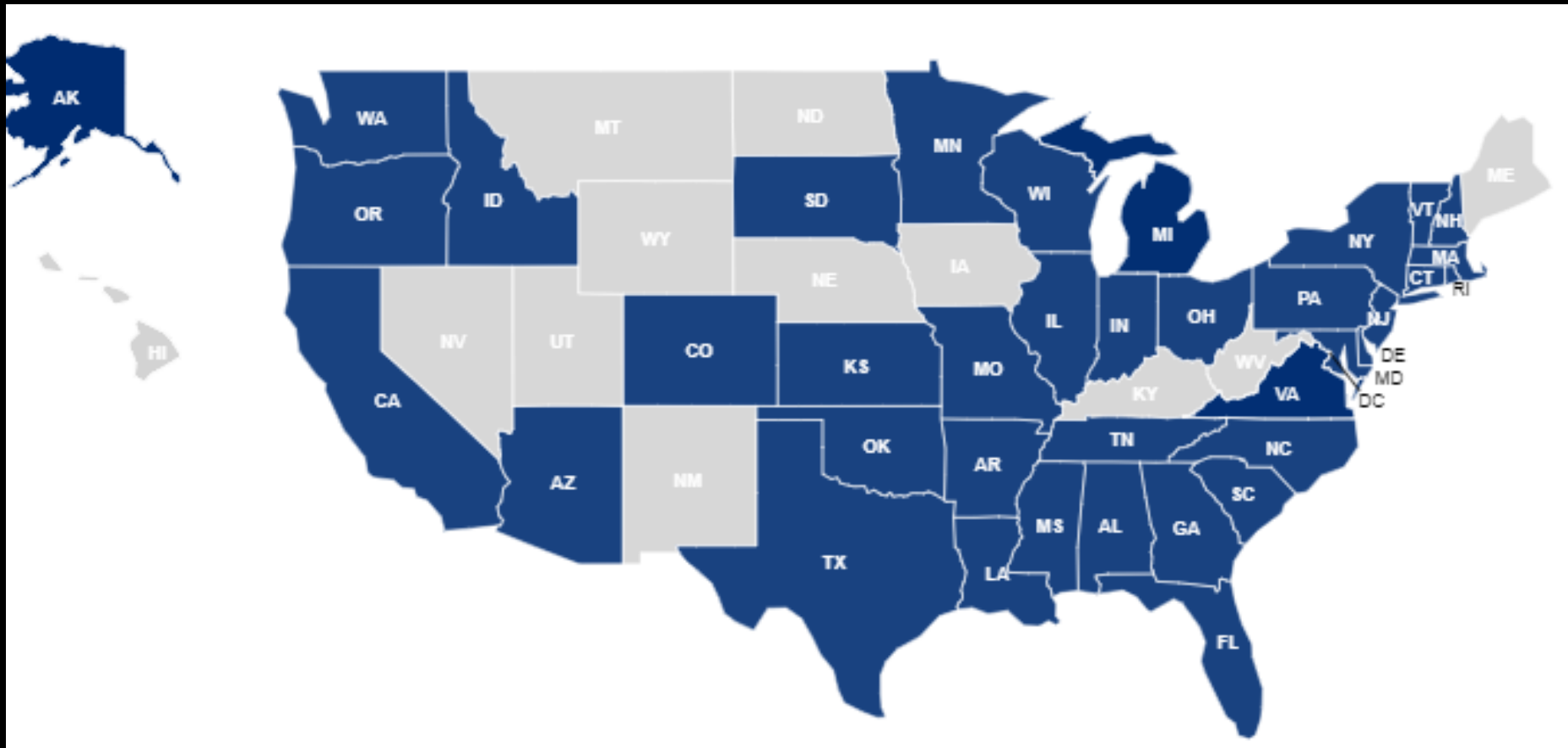
Birth control

“Negroes don’t want children they can’t take care of, but we are afraid to trust you when your offered help has so often turned out to be exploitation.” –

Urelia Brown, a Black social worker speaking on family planning in 1972

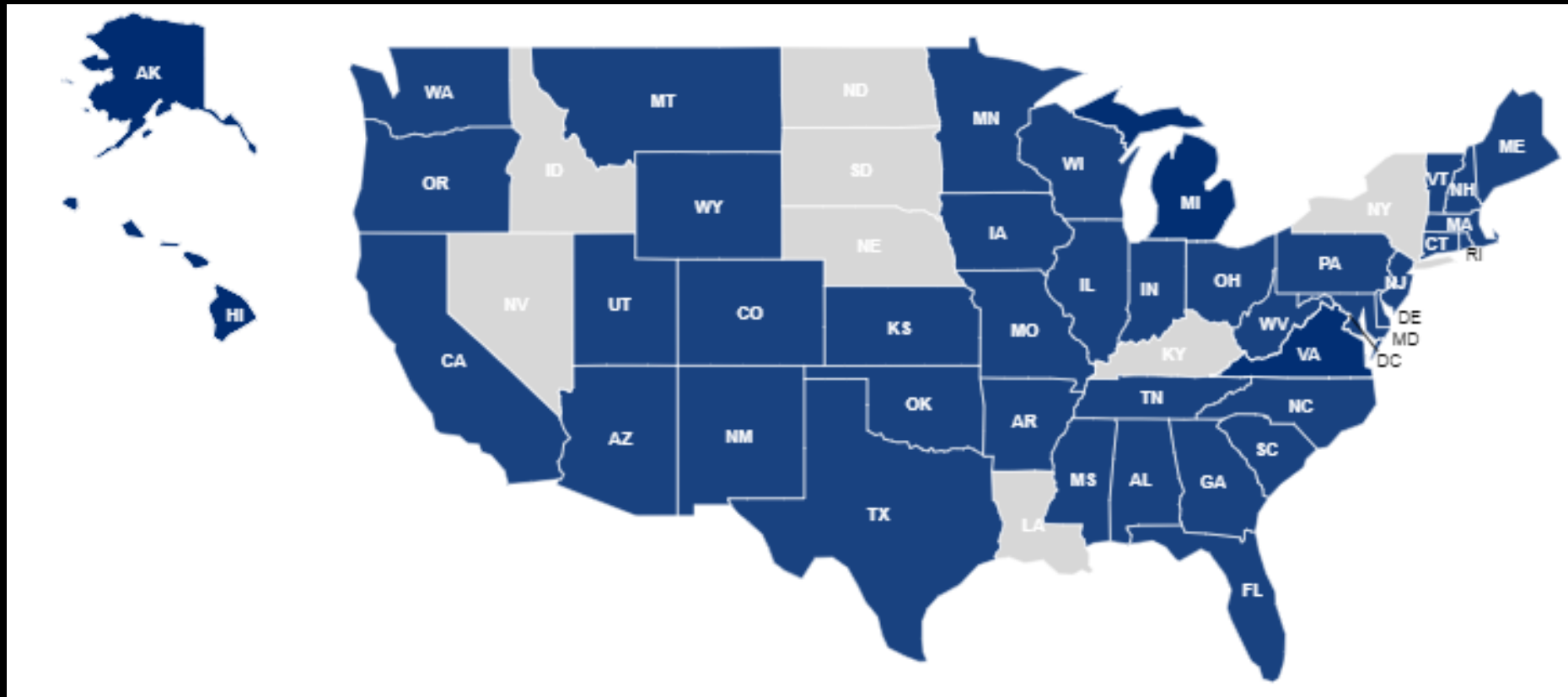
COVID-19 and Black Communities

States that Collect COVID-19 Death Data by Race



Data collected by John Hopkins University as of April 27, 2020
Only 36 states report race and death data

States that Collect Confirmed Cases By Race



Data collected by John Hopkins University as of April 27, 2020
40 states collect confirmed positives and race data

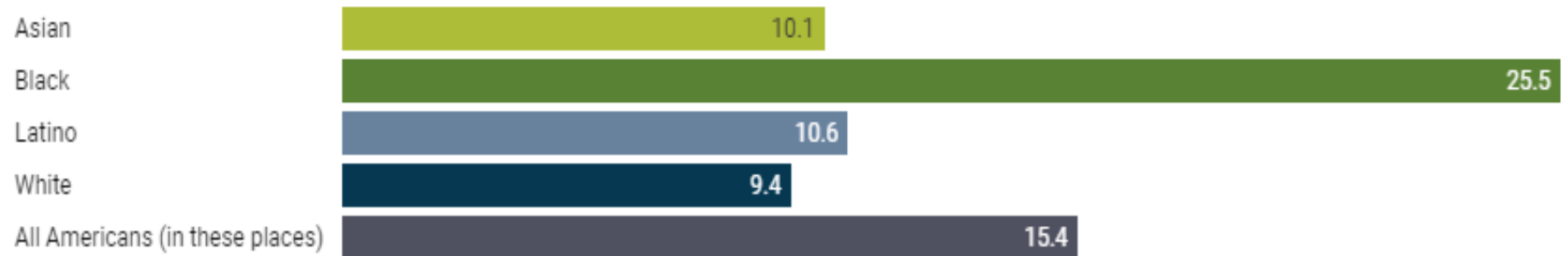
COVID-19 and Black Communities

- **The latest available COVID-19 mortality rate for Black Americans is 2.5 times higher than the rate for Latinos, 2.6 times higher than the rate for Asians, and 2.7 times higher than the rate for Whites.**
- **If Black Americans had died of COVID-19 at the same rate as White Americans, about 7,000 of the more than 11,000 Black residents who have died in these states would still be alive.**

Rate of COVID-19 Deaths by Race

Rate of COVID-19 deaths reported by race/ethnicity through April 23, 2020

For all U.S. states with available data and Washington, D.C. Mortality rate per 100,000 residents of each group.



Examples of Medical Mistrust During COVID-19

- **Family ravaged by coronavirus begged for tests, hospital care, but was repeatedly denied**



Medical Mistrust in a Time of Need

CDC: Antibody Study

- From April 28 through May 4, teams will be visiting randomly selected homes in Fulton and DeKalb counties of GA to ask residents questions about their health and to collect blood samples for an antibody test.

Challenges

- Terminology
- Community Connection
- Another famous southern investigation requiring blood draws....



The New York Times

Syphilis Victims in U.S. Study Went Untreated for 40 Years

By JEAN HELLER
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON, July 25—For 40 years the United States Public Health Service has conducted a study in which human beings with syphilis, who were induced to serve as guinea pigs, have gone without medical treatment for the disease and a few have died of its late effects, even though an effective therapy was eventually discovered.

The study was conducted to determine from autopsies what the disease does to the human body.


Officials of the health service who initiated the experiment have long since retired. Current officials, who say they

have serious doubts about the morality of the study, also say that it is too late to treat the syphilis in any surviving participants.

Doctors in the service say they are now rendering whatever other medical services they can give to the survivors while the study of the disease's effects continues.

Dr. Merlin K. DuVal, Assistant Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare for Health and Scientific Affairs, expressed shock on learning of the study. He said that he was making an immediate investigation.

The experiment, called the Tuskegee Study, began in 1932 with about 600 black men,



Nonpharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs)

- stay-at-home policies
- mandating closures of schools and nonessential businesses
- face mask ordinances
- Quarantine

- Are there other NPIs to impact the prevention of COVID-19?



Solutions

- Make testing available in the communities impacted the most
- Address community concerns about discrimination in access and dissemination of services, information, and education
- Address the interpersonal competence of those providing Healthcare services
- Tackle the difficult conversations of racism, economic profit of health disparities in Black community



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