Sinead Scott

Writing Assignment #2

4/09/20

The article I read has to do with the virus, COVID-19, disproportionately affecting people and families of color. It was posted KFF.org; an American non-profit organization focused on major health care issues facing the nation. “Communities of Color at Higher Risk for Health and Economic Challenges due to COVID-19” by Samantha Artiga, Rachel Garfiled and Kendal Orgera. Published on April 7th, 2020, analyzes data on underlying health conditions and health care/coverage across communities and people of different socioeconomic statuses:

“Social distancing policies required to address COVID-19 have led many businesses to cut hours, cease operations, or close altogether. People who work in certain industries, such as restaurant, hospitality, retail, and other service industries, are particularly at risk for loss of income. Those who maintain jobs amid the COVID-19 outbreak, such as grocery store workers and delivery drivers, are at increased risk of contracting coronavirus since they remain exposed to other individuals. Nearly a quarter of Blacks and Hispanics (24%) are employed in service industries compared to 16% of Whites, putting them at increased risk for job loss or loss of income or for exposure if they maintain their jobs.”

The data finds that communities of color are at an increased risk of becoming infected, and they are more likely to face increased hardships when trying to access COVID-19 testing and treatment because they are more likely uninsured.

Link:

<https://www.kff.org/disparities-policy/issue-brief/communities-of-color-at-higher-risk-for-health-and-economic-challenges-due-to-covid-19/>

I chose this issue one, because of how the virus is affecting our lives (everyone’s) at the moment and two, because it highlights what I thought to be a very important justice issue. This virus is not the first and/or only time where we see communities of color facing disparities in health care; though the Affordable Care Act was designed to reduce some of these disparities, the COVID-19 outbreak has shown that this is not necessarily the case. The article notes that: “Though groups of color generally are [younger relative to Whites](https://www.kff.org/report-section/key-facts-on-health-and-health-care-by-race-and-ethnicity-demographics/), they are more likely to have certain underlying health conditions. Blacks and American Indians and Alaska Natives (AIANs) fare worse than Whites across many [health status indicators](https://www.kff.org/disparities-policy/report/key-facts-on-health-and-health-care-by-race-and-ethnicity/); findings for Hispanics are mixed, but they face large disparities for certain measures.” This most likely has to do with lack of access to insurance and thus health care (which is more expensive than many can afford). I think this in and of itself is a justice issue; in a country where we have the ability to insure and make health-care more affordable, and thus accessible, we should not be leaving certain groups of people to suffer. I would also argue that because it is so strongly correlated with race is becomes more of a justice issue. While this issue does not relate directly to one of our texts, it is in a sense a reflection of what Coates said in his book. The notion that certain people, people of color in particular, are provided with less opportunity and less chance because of less access to necessities such as health care (though Coates never talked explicitly about this aspect I think some of what he was saying was related) is reflected in any point made about disparities between different races.

I think tis hard to relate this to some of the texts mostly because the texts that I think would most relate are not fresh in my mind (and I don’t have them with me) so I had to pull them from memory and this was rather difficult to do. However, I think that this issue with COVID-19 is an example of one of the smaller things that contributes to the larger issues that some of the authors we have talked about discuss.