


The Deepening Reproductive Health Care Divide

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Increasing inequities in access to reproductive healthcare

- Access to birth control, abortion and preventative screenings have long been limited by financial resources in the United States.
- Many recent policies have exacerbated difficulties obtaining basic reproductive healthcare.
- **Texas SB 8**
 - Prohibits nearly all abortions at 6 weeks of pregnancy
 - This is only 1-2 weeks after it is medically possible for women to receive a positive pregnancy test
- **Medication abortions**
 - Approximately 39% of US abortions are now medication abortions rather than surgical procedures, and are clinically approved to 11 weeks of pregnancy (Guttmacher Institute, 2021).
 - States have recently begun banning medication abortions earlier in pregnancy

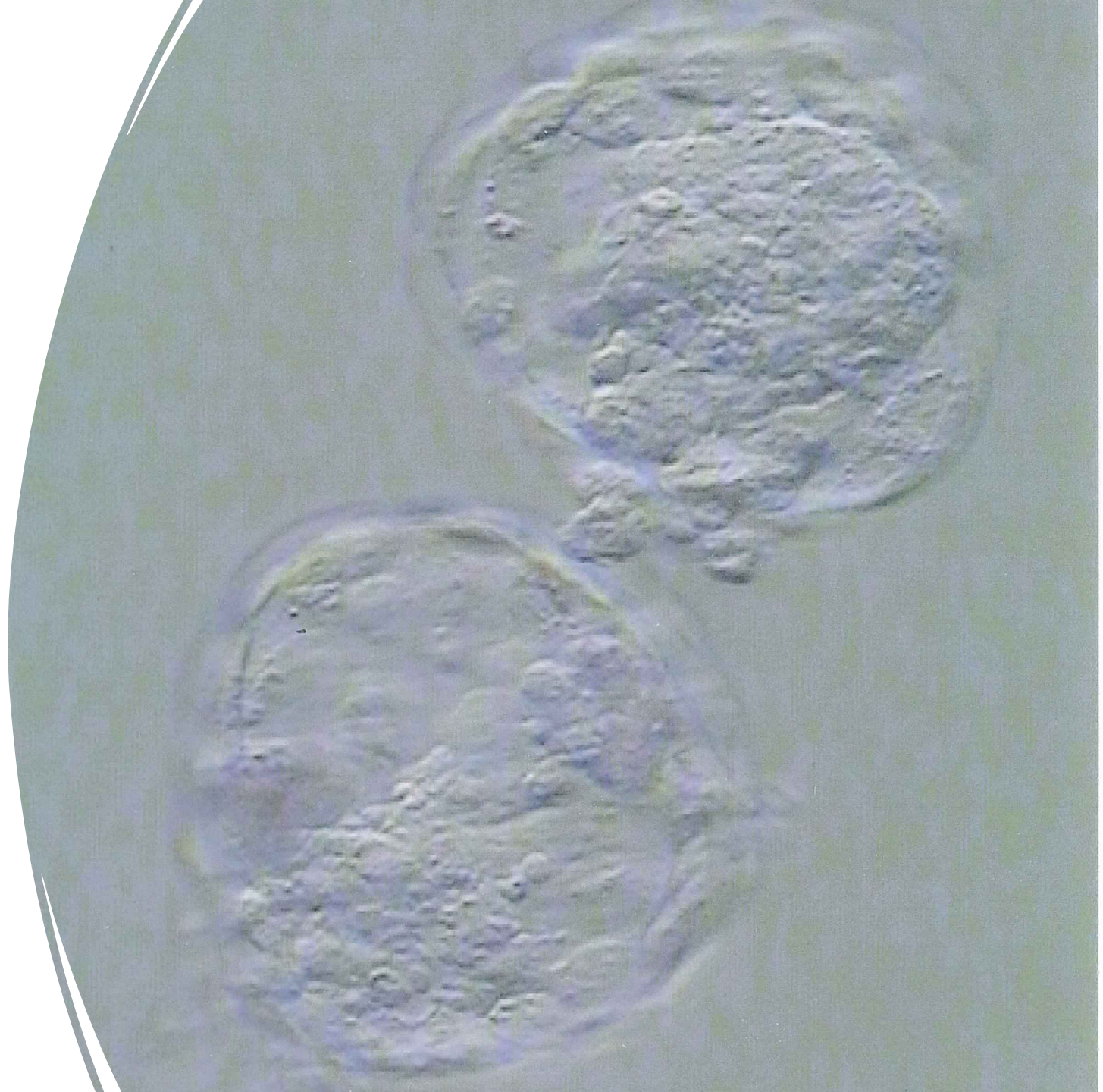


Preimplantation Genetic Testing (PGT)

- Preimplantation Genetic Testing (PGT) is one of the newest reproductive healthcare tools that is only available to those of means.
- In order to utilize PGT, the patient must first undergo pricey in-vitro fertilization (IVF) services.
- PGT is an optional screening procedure offered to patients undergoing IVF. The test offers an array of genetic information about created embryos for the purpose of determining which to transfer for an attempted pregnancy.

Why PGT?

- Embryos with known genetic abnormalities can be discarded prior to pregnancy. Use of the procedure has exploded over the past decade. PGT increases multiple problems of disparity, diversity, and inclusion in US society, as America has done little to regulate IVF and PGT practices.



Economic implications of PGT

- From an economic perspective, wealth disparity will be exacerbated as wealthy families will have the choice to select against common developmental disabilities, while those unable to afford PGT will continue to shoulder additional costs associated with raising children with special needs.
 - According to the US Dept. of Agriculture (2020), the cost of raising a child to the age of 18 in the United States is approximately \$233,610.
 - Those costs rise exponentially for parents of children requiring specialized care.
- Medical expenses
 - Therapeutic expenses
 - Medications
 - Medical Equipment
 - Travel to specialists
 - Time off work
 - Respite care
 - Caregiver expenses
 - Adult support

Philosophical implications of PGT

- Philosophically, it has been argued that parents have a moral obligation to choose the best options for their children, but this is endorsed from a problematic ableist perspective, and PGT in this way promotes the rejection of diversity and inclusion.

Ableism is “a network of beliefs, processes and practices that produces a particular kind of self and body (the corporeal standard) that is projected as the perfect, species-typical and therefore essential and fully human. Disability then is cast as a diminished state of being human” (Campbell 2001, 44).

Legal implications of PGT

- From a legal perspective, abortion for genetic conditions can be difficult to access for many reasons, while those who pay for PGT can avoid similar restrictions, as well as stigma.
 - Several states have bans on abortion for various reasons in effect
 - Sex selection: 11
 - Race: 4
 - Genetic abnormality: 6
- (Guttmacher Institute, 2022).

Conclusion

Implications of PGT cannot be ignored as the US continues debate over the lines of reproductive regulation.



References

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