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Issue 1. Should the United States Adopt a Single-Payer Plan to Fund National Health Insurance? 2

YES: **Physicians for a National Health Program**, from “Proposal of the Physicians’ Working Group for Single-Payer National Health Insurance” (2006). <http://www.pnhp.org/> 4

NO: **Ezekiel J. Emanuel**, from “The Problem with Single-Payer Plans,” *Hastings Center Report* (January–February 2008) 8

Physicians for a National Health Program argue that single-payer financing is the only way to ensure that all Americans would be covered for all needed medical services. Physician and director of the Clinical Bioethics Department at the U.S. National Institutes of Health Ezekiel Emanuel opposes the proposed adoption of a single-payer system of national health insurance in the United States on the basis that it would not fix the present health care problems.

Issue 2. Should Health Care Be Rationed in the United States? 16

YES: **Peter Singer**, from “Why We Must Ration Health Care,” *The New York Times* (July 15, 2009) 18

NO: **James Ridgeway**, from “Meet the Real Death Panels” *Mother Jones* (July/August 2010) 27

Professor of bioethics Peter Singer believes that the costs of the current health care in the United States make systematic rationing critical. Writer James Ridgeway argues that health care should be treated as a human right instead of a profit-making opportunity.

Issue 3. Should Prescription Drugs Be Advertised Directly to Consumers? 39

YES: **Paul Antony**, from “PhRMA Chief Medical Officer Testifies on DTC Advertising,” <http://www.phrma.org/> 41

NO: **Marc-André Gagnon and Joel Lexchin**, from “The Cost of Pushing Pills: A New Estimate of Pharmaceutical Promotion Expenditures in the United States,” *PLoS Medicine* (January 2008) 49

Paul Antony, chief medical officer at the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), claims that direct-to-consumer

advertising of prescription medications has been beneficial to American patients and is a powerful tool in educating consumers and improving their health. Professors Marc-André Gagnon and Joel Lexchin argue that drug companies spend almost twice as much on advertising to consumers as they do on research and development.

UNIT 2 HEALTH AND SOCIETY 61

Issue 4. Are We Winning the War on Cancer? 62

YES: John R. Seffrin, from “Winning the War on Cancer: Public Health or Public Policy Challenge?” *Vital Speeches of the Day* (September 2006) 64

NO: Reynold Spector, from “The War on Cancer: A Progress Report for Skeptics,” *Skeptical Inquirer* (January/February 2010) 70

American Cancer Society president John R. Seffrin claims we are winning the war against cancer and that it is possible to eliminate the disease as a major public health problem. Physician and professor of medicine Reynold Spector argues that the gains made against cancer have been limited and that overall there has been very little progress in the war on cancer.

Issue 5. Should Marijuana Be Legalized for Medicinal Purposes? 82

YES: Kevin Drum, from “The Patriot’s Guide to Legalization,” *Mother Jones* (July/August 2009) 84

NO: Christian Science Monitor Editorial Board, from “Legalize Marijuana? Not So Fast,” *The Christian Science Monitor* (May 22, 2009) 89

Kevin Drum contends that medical marijuana is now legal in more than a dozen states without any serious problems or increased usage. The editorial board of *The Christian Science Monitor* maintains that the drug can lead to dependence and can cause lung damage and other health concerns.

Issue 6. Should Doctors Prescribe Drugs Based on Race? 95

YES: Sally Satel, from “I Am a Racially Profiling Doctor,” *The New York Times Magazine* (May 5, 2002) 97

NO: Gregory Michael Dorr and David S. Jones, from “Facts and Fiction: BiDiI and the Resurgence of Racial Medicine,” *Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics* (Fall 2008) 102

Physician Sally Satel believes it important to note a patient’s race and to treat accordingly because many diseases and treatment responses cluster by race and ethnicity. Professors Gregory Michael Dorr and David Jones argue that there is risk to using race and ethnicity to select treatment options.

Issue 7. Should Embryonic Stem Cell Research Be Permitted? 112

YES: Jeffrey Hart, from “NR on Stem Cells: The Magazine Is Wrong,” *National Review* (April 19, 2004) 114

NO: Ramesh Ponnuru, from “NR on Stem Cells: The Magazine Is Right,” *National Review* (April 19, 2004) 117

Professor Jeffrey Hart contends there are many benefits to stem cell research and that a ban on funded cloning research is unjustified. Writer Ramesh Ponnuru argues that a single-celled human embryo is a living organism that directs its own development and should not be used for experimentation.

UNIT 3 MIND-BODY RELATIONSHIP 123

Issue 8. Should Addiction to Drugs Be Labeled a Brain Disease? 124

YES: Alan I. Leshner, from “Addiction Is a Brain Disease,” *Issues in Science and Technology* (Spring 2001) 126

NO: Sally L. Satel, from “The Fallacies of No-Fault Addiction,” *The Public Interest* (Winter 1999) 133

Alan I. Leshner, director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse at the National Institutes of Health, believes that addiction to drugs and alcohol is not a behavioral condition but a treatable disease. Psychiatrist Sally L. Satel counters that labeling addiction a chronic and relapsing brain disease is propaganda and that most addicts are the instigators of their own addiction.

Issue 9. Do Religion and Prayer Benefit Health? 146

YES: Gregg Easterbrook, from “Is Religion Good for Your Health?” *The New Republic* (July 19 & 26, 1999) 148

NO: Michael Shermer, from “Prayer and Healing: The Verdict Is in and the Results Are Null,” *Skeptic* (vol. 12, no. 3, 2006) 154

Writer Gregg Easterbrook believes men and women who practice in any of the mainstream faiths enjoy better health and that lack of religious involvement does have a negative effect on mortality. Author Michael Shermer contends that intercessory prayer offered by strangers on the health and recovery of patients undergoing coronary bypass surgery is ineffective. He also addresses flaws in studies showing a relationship between prayer and health.

UNIT 4 SEXUALITY AND GENDER ISSUES 161

Issue 10. Is It Necessary for Pregnant Women to Completely Abstain from All Alcoholic Beverages? 162

YES: Phyllida Brown, from “Drinking for Two?” *New Scientist* (July 1, 2006) 164

NO: Julia Moskin, from “The Weighty Responsibility of Drinking for Two,” *The New York Times* (November 29, 2006) 169

Science writer Phyllida Brown maintains that even a small amount of alcohol can damage a developing fetus and cites new research indicating that even small amounts of alcohol consumed during pregnancy may be harmful. Journalist Julia Moskin argues that there are almost no studies on the effects of moderate drinking during pregnancy and that small amounts of alcohol are unlikely to have much effect.

Issue 11. Should Pro-Life Health Providers Be Allowed to Deny Prescriptions on the Basis of Conscience? 175

YES: **John A. Menges**, from “Public Hearing on HB4346 Before the House State Government Administration Committee,” *Illinois House State Government Administration Committee* (February 15, 2006) 177

NO: **R. Alta Charo**, from “The Celestial Fire of Conscience—Refusing to Deliver Medical Care,” *New England Journal of Medicine* (June 16, 2005) 180

Pharmacist John Menges believes that it is his right to refuse to dispense any medication designed to end a human life. Attorney R. Alta Charo argues that health care professionals who protect themselves from the moral consequences of their actions may do so at their patients' risk.

Issue 12. Should the Cervical Cancer Vaccine for Girls Be Compulsory? 186

YES: **Cynthia Dailard**, from “Achieving Universal Vaccination Against Cervical Cancer in the United States: The Need and the Means,” *Guttmacher Policy Review* (Fall 2006) 188

NO: **Gail Javitt, Deena Berkowitz, and Lawrence O. Gostin**, from “Assessing Mandatory HPV Vaccination: Who Should Call the Shots?” *Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics* (Summer 2008) 195

The late Cynthia Dailard, a senior public policy associate at the Guttmacher Institute, argued that universal vaccination was needed because virtually all cases of cervical cancer are linked to the human papillomavirus. Most infected people are unaware of their infection, which is linked to nearly 10,000 cases of cervical cancer. Professors Gail Javitt, Deena Bertowitz, and Lawrence Gostin believe that mandating the cervical cancer vaccine raises significant legal, ethical, and social concerns. They are also concerned about the long-term safety and effectiveness of the vaccine.

Issue 13. Is There a Post-Abortion Syndrome? 215

YES: **Ian Gentles**, from “Poor God-Crazed Rhonda: Daring to Challenge the ‘Scientific’ Consensus,” *The Human Life Review* (Spring 2007) 217

NO: **Emily Bazelon**, from “Is There a Post-Abortion Syndrome?” *The New York Times Magazine* (January 21, 2007) 223

Ian Gentles, vice president of the deVeber institute for Bioethics and Social Research in Ontario, maintains that there is a causal connection between abortion and increased risk of suicide. Senior editor and author Emily Bazelon counters that the psychological risks posed by abortion are no greater than the risk of carrying an unwanted pregnancy to term.

Issue 14. Do Ultrathin Models and Actresses Influence the Onset of Eating Disorders? 240

YES: Janet L. Treasure, Elizabeth R. Wack, and Marion E. Roberts, from “Models as a High-Risk Group: The Health Implications of a Size Zero Culture,” *The British Journal of Psychiatry* (2008) 242

NO: Fred Schwarz, from “Not Our Stars but Ourselves,” *National Review* (February 23, 2009) 247

Physician Janet L. Treasure and psychologists Elizabeth R. Wack and Marion E. Roberts maintain that the promotion of an ultrathin ideal produces an environment that favors eating disorders. Journalist Fred Schwarz disagrees and contends that skinny models and actresses do not make girls and women anorexic since the disease predates the era of an ultrathin beauty standard.

Issue 15. Is There a Valid Reason for Routine Infant Male Circumcision? 252

YES: Hanna Rosin, from “The Case Against the Case Against Circumcision; Why One Mother Heard All of the Opposing Arguments, Then Circumcised Her Sons Anyway,” *New York Magazine* (October 26, 2009) 254

NO: Michael Idov, from “Would You Circumcise This Baby?” *New York Magazine*, (October 26, 2009) 258

Writer Hanna Rosin argues that male circumcision decreases the risk of disease transmission and that people who oppose the operation are filled with anger that transcends the actual outcome. Michael Idov, author and contributing editor of *New York Magazine*, counters that newborns feel pain and that there is no valid medical reason to perform the surgery.

UNIT 5 PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES 263

Issue 16. Is There a Link Between Vaccination and Autism? 264

YES: Robert F. Kennedy Jr., from “Deadly Immunity,” *Rolling Stone* (June 30–July 14, 2005) 266

NO: Matthew Normand and Jesse Dallery, from “Mercury Rising: Exposing the Vaccine-Autism Myth,” *Skeptic* (vol. 13, no. 3, 2007) 276

Environmentalist and attorney Robert F. Kennedy Jr. argues that childhood vaccines containing thimerosal are linked to autism and that the government has colluded with pharmaceutical companies to cover up this information. Psychology professors Matthew Normand and Jesse Dallery contend that studies have failed to uncover any specific link between autism and mercury-containing thimerosal vaccines.

Issue 17. Do Cell Phones Cause Cancer? 286

YES: Ronald B. Herberman, from “Tumors and Cell Phone Use: What the Science Says,” http://cellphones.procon.org/sourcefiles/Herberman_Testimony.pdf (September 25, 2008) 288

NO: Bernard Leikind, from “Do Cell Phones Cause Cancer?”
Skeptic (2010). 297

Physician and Director of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute Ronald B. Herberman maintains that radio frequency radiation associated with cell phones is a potential health risk factor for users, especially children. Physicist Bernard Leikind argues that there is no plausible mechanism by which cell phone radiation can cause cancer.

Issue 18. Will Global Warming Negatively Impact Human Health? 305

YES: Carl Bloice and Conn Hallinan, from “Global Warming,”
California Nurse (December 2005) 307

NO: Indur M. Goklany, from “Stop the Panic on Climate Change,”
USA Today Magazine (May 2008) 314

Carl Bloice and Conn Hallinan maintain that rising global temperatures will increase mosquito-borne diseases, asthma, and heat stroke. Indur Goklany argues that rising global temperatures are not responsible for increased illnesses and deaths.

Issue 19. Is Breastfeeding the Best Way to Feed Babies? 324

YES: Pat Thomas, from “Suck on This,” *The Ecologist* (May 2006) 326

NO: Hanna Rosin, from “The Case Against Breastfeeding,” *The Atlantic* (April 2009) 342

Author Pat Thomas believes that breastfeeding is the best and healthiest way to feed infants and children and that formula manufacturers are promoting their products at the expense of babies and children. *The Atlantic* editor Hanna Rosin claims the data on the benefits of breastfeeding are inconclusive and suggests a more relaxed approach to the issue.

UNIT 6 CONSUMER HEALTH 355

Issue 20. Is It Safe to Consume Genetically Engineered Foods? 356

YES: Henry I. Miller and Gregory Conko, from “Scary Food,” *Policy Review* (June/July 2006) 358

NO: Mark Schapiro, from “Sowing Disaster: How Genetically Engineered American Corn Has Altered the Global Landscape,” *The Nation* (October 28, 2002) 366

Authors Henry I. Miller and Gregory Conko defend biotechnology used in genetically modifying crops and foods and believe they bring many advantages. Reporter Mark Schapiro argues that the impact of genetically engineered products include the emergence of potential allergens that could trigger reactions in humans, the rising resistance of pests to the Bt toxin, and the crossing of new genes into wild relatives.

Issue 21. Does Obesity Cause a Decline in Life Expectancy? 381

YES: Samuel H. Preston, from “Deadweight? The Influence of Obesity on Longevity,” *New England Journal of Medicine* (March 17, 2005) 383

NO: Paul Campos, from “The Weighting Game: Why Being Fat Isn’t Bad for You,” *The New Republic* (January 13, 2003) 387

Samuel H. Preston maintains that obesity negatively affects a person’s longevity and has become a major public health problem for Americans. Law professor and writer Paul Campos disagrees and claims that the health consequences of obesity are not as dire as some health officials claim.

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