

# The Corner

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## Black Abortions: The Forbidden Topic

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As Kathryn [notes below](#), the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is specifically prohibited by statute from addressing in any way the issue of abortion. Accordingly, in its fifty-plus years of existence, never has the commission conducted a hearing or investigation regarding the startling disparities in abortion rates between blacks and all other races.

During my tenure on the commission, hearings have been conducted on all manner of exotic issues involving purported racial disparities. The evidence adduced in some of these hearings showed few, if any, statistical disparities between the races. That didn't prevent advocacy groups, particularly single-issue organizations, from demanding wholesale changes to the ordering of American society to redress the alleged disparities. Yet despite the fact that almost no one is aware that the commission is prohibited from examining racial disparities in abortion, no black advocacy group or organization has ever petitioned the Commission to study the issue during my two terms.

In fact, the only time the issue was ever raised was when a newly appointed conservative commissioner, unaware of the statutory prohibition, innocently suggested that the commission take a peek at the issue. Some of the other commissioners looked at him as if he had tarantulas crawling out of his ears — not because they were aware of the prohibition (when later informed of same, they were surprised) but because they were horrified at the prospect of investigating an issue so radioactive to many (note: almost every issue the Commission addresses is radioactive; such is the nature of civil-rights discourse today).

Nearly one out of every two black pregnancies ends in abortion. Blacks account for more than forty percent of all abortions in America, a rate that dwarfs that of any other race. Does anyone doubt that if such disparities existed on other serious issues, advocacy groups would be clamoring for hearings?

Why the silence? Are some lives less valuable than others?

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