Who Let Her Out of the Kitchen?
The He-Man Woman-Hating Virus

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IA 701
Why do women living in African nations contract HIV/AIDS at more than twice the rate that men do?
HIV/AIDS in Numbers

• 33.3 million cases of HIV/AIDS worldwide
  − 22.5 million in sub-Saharan Africa
  • 58% in women
  • Women (aged 15-24) → >4x as likely
Increased Vulnerability of Women

- Biological Factors
- Sociocultural Factors
- Socioeconomic Factors
Biological Factors

Sociocultural Factors

Socioeconomic Factors
Culture of Silence

- Taboo
- Definition of a “good” woman
- Lies, silence, beating, parables
- Sexual health not taught in schools
Marriage as a Risk Factor

• Arranged marriages
• Intergenerational unions
• Early sexual debut
Virgin Worship

- Unmarried women must be virgins
- Virgin cure
- Erotic imagery of innocence/passivity
- Breaking/tearing virginity is highly valued
Sociocultural

- Culture of silence
- Marriage
- Virgin Worship
- Men’s Pleasure
- Polygamy
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Circumcision Ceremonies
- Dry vs. Wet Sex
- Myths & Misconceptions

Socioeconomic

- Colonization
- Poor Economy
- No Education
- Fewer Marketable Skills
- Commercial Sex Work
Economic Vulnerability

- Economic dependency
- Less education
- Few marketable skills
- Commercial sex work
- Sugar daddies
Connections

• All of these factors are either created by or exacerbated by gender inequality
  – Deepening economic crisis & increased gender conflict
  – Poverty aggravates high-risk behaviors

• They are inextricably intertwined
Implications

• Initiatives and campaigns against HIV/AIDS
  – not effectively decrease the rate at which women contract HIV/AIDS

• Unless accompanied by programs that liberate women