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Professor Cannon

KHC ST102

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**Prospectus**

**The Original Question:**

Question: How did the meaning of being an American citizen change for members of the LGBTQ+ community due to the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s and 1990s? How is the general population’s perception of AIDS still affecting the community today?

**The Problem:**

Due to mass hysteria and misinformation back in the 80’s on the way that the HIV virus could be transmitted, a homophobic stigma has been formed around the LGBTQ+ community that alienized the members of this community and stripped them of their rights as American citizens. Hence, I hope my research can further inform people of the injustice that was committed against the LGBTQ+ community in the past and encourage them to be more open and spread awareness about this epidemic.

**Hypothesis:**

I believe that I might come across the conclusion that despite medical care having improved a lot since the 1980’s, there are still quite a lot more casualties than if people were more open and direct about this subject. Therefore, I currently want to try and make the argument that people should be more open about this subject and the rest of the population should still be aware that this disease affects all of us, not only homosexual males.

**Summary of Research:**

My first source was a video by the BBC titled “How The AIDS Crisis Changed The LGBT Movement | NBC News Now,” and it showed me how despite there being an incredible amount of deaths due to this epidemic, it was this epidemic that truly accelerated the gay rights movement to where it is now. In addition, it also taught me the extent to which gay people were associated with this disease since it showed several news outlets in the 80’s referring to what was back then an unknown disease as “gay cancer.”

My second source was another video by the title of “Speak Out: Experts Talk Gay Men & HIV/AIDS (7:13).” It gave me a more numerical reference point in regards to the amount of victims to this disease and the increased risk that homosexual men have of contracting it when compared to the rest of the American population. In addition, it also taught me about Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis(PrEP) and Antiretroviral therapies and the scale to which both of these reduce the transmission of HIV among partners.

**Further Research:**

The first source that I looked at mentioned the Stonewall Riots which seemed to be the beginning for the pro-gay movements in the United States. Therefore, I intend to look further at what this event was and its historical significance in the context of the LGBTQ+ community. In addition, it also mentioned a documentary film called “5B” which refers to the United States’ first AIDS medical ward. In addition, I want to look at individual cases of AIDS and the stories of the people that are affected with this disease so as to further get a fuller picture of the disparities in treatment of heterosexual and homosexual individuals. Finally, I want to research more about the medical side of this disease, not only in its symptoms and possible ways in which it can be transmitted, but also in the new technologies that have recently been developed to try and treat this disease such as gene therapy.