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“Disease and Distrust: Mandatory Premarital HIV Testing in Illinois”



This thesis discusses a law passed in 1987 Illinois that mandated premarital HIV testing. Although a good idea on the surface, mandatory testing had serious flaws, and the law was repealed in 1989. This thesis examines the factors that led to the law’s passage, the problems with mandatory premarital HIV testing, and the reasons for the law’s repeal. I argue that distrust of public health professionals, traditional Christian values, and mass fear all contributed to the passage of the law,

and that these factors disarmed (and continue to disarm) the
U.S. AIDS response.