

Close life-expectancy gap between men and women

While USA TODAY columnist Barbara Reynolds and Matilda Cuomo of New York revealed some disturbing information on the treatment of women by the health-care industry, they failed to reveal the enormity of the gender bias that pervades medicine today ("Outrageous treatment of women's health care must end," Friday; "Putting more focus on women's health," Tuesday).

A more accurate and complete picture of gender bias in medicine would contain the following ignored statistics from Warren Farrell's *The Myth of Male Power*:

▶ While a woman is 14% more likely to die from breast cancer than a man is to die from prostate cancer, breast-cancer research receives 660% greater research funding than prostate cancer.

▶ Heart attacks have become the No. 1 killer of women. However, before age 65 men are almost three times as likely to die of a heart attack than women.

▶ Men between 25 and 34 are four times as likely as women in this age group to commit suicide.

▶ According to the National Institutes of Health Office of Research on Women's Health, 85% of the research budget is spent on non-gender-specific health issues. Of the rest, 10% is spent on women's health, 5% on men's.

▶ In 1920 women lived one year longer than men; today women live seven years longer than men.

This ongoing indifference to men's health care under the guise that "women are victims of paternalism" reinforces the notion that men are the disposable sex.

To demonstrate a true commitment to equal health care, we need a strategy to ensure funding and research that have as a mission the closing of the life-expectancy gender gap. To accomplish this, it will be necessary to discourage the feminist reliance upon the chivalry factor that politicians relish for the sake of votes and publishers embrace for added circulation.

Donald F. Keyes, dep. dir., Media Watch National Center for Men, Liverpool, N.Y.

'Contract' is suicide pact

I am appalled at the attack on senior citizens brought about by the "Republican Contract" ("GOP robs future to write 'Contract with America,'" Our View, Debate, Sept. 28).

The two main authors of this leadership-driven "contract" were House GOP Whip Newt Gingrich, who in 1986 proposed the outright abolition of Social Security, and House Republican Conference Chairman Dick Armey, who said in a C-Span interview last week: "I would never have created Social Security."

This contract leaves a \$1 trillion hole in the federal budget because of a commitment to balance the budget requiring \$700 billion to \$800 billion in cuts over the next five years. It also calls for \$200 billion in tax cuts for the wealthy and a boost in defense spending.

The only way to make this plan add up would be to balance the budget on the backs of American seniors, making huge cuts in Social Security, Medicare, food stamps and senior housing. There are

How do I miss baseball? Let me count the ways

I miss baseball.

I miss the New York Yankees and their race to become the best team in baseball. I miss Don Mattingly stepping up to the plate, Wade Boggs turning a 5-4-3 double play, Paul O'Neill smashing a home run over the right-field fence and Jimmy Key fooling yet another batter with his curve ball.

I miss the obnoxious New York fans and their quest to distract the opposing teams. I miss the roar of the crowd as they watch a brawl between two fat guys who had too much to drink, that baseball fanatic next to me who never shuts up and those tall people in front who always stand up. I miss the fans from the upper deck who spill beer.

I miss watching that Don Mattingly foul ball land two rows away.

I miss outrageous ticket prices, mysterious people asking if I need tickets or if I am selling them. And I miss buying tickets off scalpers that were for yesterday's game.

I miss traffic on New York's Major Deegan Expressway and that garage 10 blocks away where I always seem to park, no matter how early I arrive.

I miss looking for my seat in the wrong section, standing on line for a hot dog and a pretzel and missing an inning and a half. And I miss standing on line for the men's room while Darryl Boston pinch-hits a game-winning home run.

I miss the seventh-inning stretch.



By Cliff Vancura, USA TODAY

I miss walking back to the wrong parking garage, wondering where my car is and the beer bottles people leave on my trunk. I miss near crashes in the parking garage, near crashes trying to get onto the expressway and crashes on the Major Deegan.

I miss baseball.

Sean C. Dunn, Washington, D.C.

grams make up about 49% of all the funds available for cutting.

Cutting benefits to the old, the sick and the poor is an economic suicide pact that would rob millions of seniors of the benefits they depend on.

The Democrats passed a tough deficit-reduction plan last year without a single Republican vote. Now the deficit is below \$200 billion. And by next year, the deficit will be down three years in a row for the first time since Harry Truman.

The Republican Party must think the American people are incredibly stupid to fall for this phony attempt to win votes. As usual, they are sacrificing the welfare of the American people for political gain.

Joann Rossall, Snohomish, Wash.

Education is community's job

Manchester, N.H., will place a referendum on the November 1995 ballot mandating privatization of our public school system ("Privatizing public schools," Debate, Friday). Should this pass, Manchester will find itself in the position of finding a business willing to run our schools for \$4,700 per student.

Manchester also will find that many of our public employees, teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals and all those who work in our system contribute more than they ever imagined.

Our classroom, for the most part, has been furnished by my family. Four of the six computers were donated by my family, friends or awarded through grants, which I wrote. Our overhead and slide projectors

teacher-desks and cabinets also were acquired this way.

Every week my assistant and I purchase paper, computer ribbons, pens or some other supplies that we feel are needed to help us work with the 67 special-education students we teach. We feel education is important, and this is one way we can contribute to our community. In reality, it is the only way we can have a functioning classroom.

I am not alone. I believe most of our teachers contribute their resources. We would not do so for a profit-making enterprise. It would make no sense.

I was disappointed to see that USA TODAY did not do its homework. Renovations and computers cannot replace teachers. A computer can tell students when their answers are incorrect, but it can't tell them how they made their mistakes.

The solution is in the community, which must pull together in every way to raise these children as their children and as their hope for the future. We can't push that responsibility off on an outsider who has no stake in our community or future.

Nancy Dennis, Manchester, N.H.

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