

Events for Reproductive Justice Timeline

1600-1800s

- 1600s first enslaved African women forced to provide free reproductive labor, enduring horrific physical, sexual, social, and emotional abuse
- 1830s-President Andrew Jackson encourages his troops to kill women and children in order to decimate current and future generation of Native peoples
- 1850s –Condoms are mass-produced in the United States
- 1865–Emancipation of all enslaved people in the United States
- 1869–Pope Pius IX declares abortion is a mortal sin—previously, abortion was acceptable up to “quickening” at ~24 weeks, indicating “ensoulment” of the fetus
- 1873-Comstock act forbids distribution of and public education about birth control as “obscene”.
- 1875- Congress passes the Page Act which effectively ended the entry of unmarried Asian women into the country as a way of limiting family development

1900-1950s

- 1916–Margaret Sanger opens first US birth control clinic
- 1920-19th Amendment gives women the right to vote
- 1956-clinical trials begin on early forms of the birth control pill on women living in housing projects in Puerto Rico. Levels of estrogen and progesterone are 20 times the eventually acceptable levels, creating harmful side effects for women.

1960s

- 1960-The FDA first approves the oral contraceptive Pill
- 1965-President Lyndon Johnson signed historic legislation creating Medicare and Medicaid health care programs that provide health insurance to the elderly and poor in the United States.
- 1966 Eisenstadt v Baird allows unmarried women access to the Pill
- 1967-1978 Dep Provera injections are tested on a disproportionate number of poor, black and rural women without informed consent

1970s

- 1971- Southern Baptist Convention passes resolution supporting abortion rights
- 1973–Roe v. Wade and Helms Amendment (limits use of US foreign assistance for abortion)
- 1975-term “Female Genital Mutilation” first used to describe the ritual cutting or removal of some or all the external female genitalia
- 1976–Hyde Amendment
- 1976–The Indian Health Care Improvement Act

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- 1977-Texas hospitals can refuse to provide abortions regardless of reason. One of the earliest of many TRAP (Targeted Restrictions on Abortion Providers) laws passed in US states over the following decades.

1980s

- 1979-China imposes one-child policy for Han Chinese (half the population of China)
- 1980s-states criminalize substance abuse during pregnancy (by 2020, 45 states have fetal-assault laws in place)

1990s

- 1994 –Term “Reproductive Justice” is first coined by the group that will become Sister Song Women of Color
- 1996–AFDC (Aid for Families with Dependent Children) replaced by TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) which punished low-income women on welfare for bearing children and coercing low- income women to marry.
- 1998—first full anatomical dissection of the clitoris, revealing an extensive internal structure

2000s

- 2001- Regina McKnight, an African American woman who admitted cocaine use was convicted at the age of twenty-two for committing “homicide by child abuse.” She became the first woman in the United States to be arrested, prosecuted, and convicted for experiencing a stillbirth. Her conviction was [overruled by the SC Supreme Court in 2008](#).
- 2008 –ICE raid in Postville: 389 workers arrested; traumatizing children left behind
- 2009–Dr. George Tiller murdered by anti-choice activist
- 2010-First national strategy on HIV/AIDS

2010s - present

- 2010–Affordable Care Act (ACA)
- 2015- Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA) and cosponsors introduce the EACH Woman Act (Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance) to ensure coverage for abortion for every woman, however much she earns or however she is insured.
- 2016-For the first time, the Democratic Party platform includes an explicit call to repeal the Hyde Amendment
- 2016-Whole Woman’s Health v Hellerstedt finds some parts of Texas HB2 unconstitutional.
- 2017-Oregon passes the Reproductive Health Equity Act, expanding insurance coverage on abortion procedures and other reproductive health services to residents of Oregon regardless of their income, gender identity, or citizenship status.
- 2020-Supreme Court rules in favor of June Medical v Russo, upholding WWH v Hellerstedt.
- Sept. 2020—whistleblower alleges forced sterilization at ICE detention camps
- Oct. 2020-twelve states, including Texas, still refuse to expand Medicaid under the ACA.

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Year	Event shorthand	Full description	Which framework?
1850	Condoms mass-produced in US	Amid opposition from conservatives and feminists alike, the first rubber condoms are mass-produced in the United States. Less than 40 years later, condoms are the most popular birth control method in the country. Feminists objected because condoms are controlled by men.	health
1865	Emancipation of all enslaved people in US	The 13th Amendment: Emancipation becomes enforced throughout the United States, freeing African and African American families from reproductive and other oppressions they had undergone during slavery.	Rights
1873	Birth control labelled "obscene" Comstock Act	Comstock act forbids distribution of and public education about birth control as "obscene".	Justice
1916	First US birth control clinic opens	Margaret Sanger and her sister, Ethel Byrne, open the first U.S. birth control clinic in Brooklyn, New York, offering counseling, birth control information, and supplies to local women. Nine days later, the police close the clinic and arrest Sanger, Byrne, and their staff under charges of "maintaining a public nuisance."	health
1966	The pill 1st time accessible to unmarried women	Eisenstadt v Baird allows unmarried women access to the Pill	rights
1967	DepProvera tested on unconsenting women	Dep Provera injections are tested on a disproportionate number of poor, black and rural women without informed consent	justice
1973	Helms Amendment	Helms Amendment (limits use of US foreign assistance for abortion)	Justice

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1973	Roe v Wade	SCOTUS rules Texas statues criminalizing abortion in most instances as unconstitutional due to right of privacy. Having ruled in previous cases, Griswold v. Connecticut and Eisenstadt v. Baird, that married couples and single people have a federally-protected right to privacy, the court ruled that a woman’s right to privacy is “broad enough to encompass her decision whether or not to terminate a pregnancy.”	Rights
1976	Hyde Amendment	The Hyde Amendment is passed for the first time, prohibiting the use of federal funds for abortion. It primarily targets recipients of Medicaid, though also affects federal and military employees, prisoners, clients of the Indian Health Service, Peace Corps Volunteers, and others. A policy rider on budget bills, it was the first major success of the anti-choice movement and continues to be attached to bills today.	justice
1976	Indian Health Care Improvement Act	The Indian Health Care Improvement Act is signed into law, giving tribes the right to manage or control Indian Health Service programs, ending programs of forced sterilization. Various studies have revealed that, during the six years prior, the Indian Health Service sterilized between 25 and 50 percent of Native American women.	justice
1980	States criminalize substance abuse during pregnancy	By 2020, 45 states have fetal-assault laws which criminalize substance abuse during pregnancy. Critics—including not only women's health and reproductive rights activists, but also the bulk of the public health and medical establishment—argue that, in practice, punitive measures of this type are counterproductive to protecting infant health. They warn that such policies, which disproportionately affect low-income and minority women, only create obstacles to drug treatment and prenatal care. As a result, the rights of the woman are compromised, largely at the expense of both her health and the health of her fetus.	rights

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1994	Term "Reproductive Justice" coined	The framework of "reproductive justice" is coined by the Black Women's Caucus at a national conference in Chicago, aiming to move away from "choice"-based language to integrate ideas of reproductive health with social justice.	Justice
1998	First anatomical dissection of clitoris	First full anatomical dissection of the clitoris, revealing an extensive internal structure	Health
2001	Regina McKnight convicted of "homicide by child abuse" for stillbirth	Regina McKnight, an African American woman who admitted cocaine use was convicted at the age of twenty-two for committing "homicide by child abuse." She became the first woman in the United States to be arrested, prosecuted, and convicted for experiencing a stillbirth. Her conviction was overruled by the SC Supreme Court in 2008.	justice
2008	ICE raid in Postville, IA	The largest Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raid in United States history up to that time places more than 389 immigrant workers under arrest and more than 90 children into the foster care system. (Postville, Iowa). In 2019 Ice raided work sites in Mississippi, arresting 680.	rights
2009	Dr. George Tiller murdered	While serving as a Sunday usher at his church in Wichita, Kansas, Dr. George Tiller is shot through the eye and killed by anti-abortion activist Scott Roeder. Tiller was the medical director of a women's health clinic -one of just three locations in the United States where late-term abortions were available to women. His patients were almost always physically endangered by, or had extraordinary difficulty with, their pregnancy.	health
2010	Affordable Care Act	The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is signed into law by President Barack Obama, providing the most significant policy response to race-, gender-, and class-based health care inequalities to-date. The ACA also significantly broadens access by U.S. citizens to prenatal and preventative care, including contraceptive services.	health

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2010	First national strategy on HIV/AIDS	The cause of death for well over half a million people in the United States, HIV/AIDS is targeted with a “national strategy” for the first time, though advocates criticize the sponsoring presidential administration for a lack of commitment to its funding.	health
2020	Forced sterilizations at ICE prisons	A whistleblower alleged that a for-profit ICE detention center forced sterilization procedures on immigrant women, This shocked many people and drew comparisons to Nazi sterilization campaigns. The ICE detention story reflects a long pattern in the United States of the coerced sterilization of marginalized populations, particularly of Black, Latinx, and Indigenous peoples. In fact, the Nazi’s borrowed ideas for their sterilization regimen from eugenic sterilization laws adopted in the U.S. in the early 20th century.	justice

Next page: completed timeline, after seminar participants assign events to proper dates.

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