

Understanding Reproductive Justice

By. Cierra White

Reproductive Rights of Women :

1. - The right to decide about **marriage and no. of children**
2. -The right to **well being** throughout life for all matters, relating to reproductive health
3. - The right to a **responsible, healthy, safe, and satisfying sex life.**
4. -The right to have **unrestricted access to information** in order to make informed choices.
5. -The right to have safe, effective, affordable, and acceptable **family planning methods** of choice.
6. - The right to **safe pregnancy and birth.**
7. -The right to be free from **sexual violence and assault**
8. - The right to **privacy** in relation to reproductive health.
9. - A **wanted pregnancy.**
10. - A **responsible and empowered young husband.**

At the start of this course I viewed reproductive justice as the Pro-choice versus Pro-life debate. My understanding of Reproductive Justice has evolved since I started this course to begin to understand the framework that started this human rights movement. Reproductive Justice has three main components that includes the right not to have children, the right to have children, and the right to parent children in a safe and healthy environment. Reproductive Justice is a framework for activism and thinking about the experience of reproduction. Also, this course is starting to help me better understand the barriers that have prevented these reproductive rights throughout history such as laws against contraception, social pressure to have children, lack of access to health care, male dominated medical field, lack of educational literature, and criminalization of abortions.

My Understanding of Reproductive Justice has changed because of a better understanding of inequality for minority women in the health care system. Also, that women have been denied sexual autonomy and gender freedom for decades. A male dominated health profession has led to a loss of traditions, women-centered knowledge, experience, and discredited midwives. However, women have found ways to avoid conception, space births, and used different methods of birth control.

I have divided specific readings into subcategories that have factored in this evolution of my understanding of Reproductive Justice. "A Reproductive Justice History" shaped my understanding in providing the foundation of reproductive rights from the colonialism period to modern day history. The articles "Reproduction in Bondage," "Laying the Foundations for a Reproductive Justice Movement," and "Trust Black Women: Reproductive Justice and Eugenics" gave me a deeper understanding of the hardship that Enslaved women faced and how African Americans still continue to fight against these stereotypes and stigmas still in place today. Lastly, the chapters "One In Three and Genocidal Consequences" was very informal about the history of Native Americans on reservations. All of these readings have made me

understand that regardless of race, class, social status, or sexual orientation a woman should be able to make decisions regarding her own body.

Enslaved Women and African American Women Reproductive History



- Women of color started the reproductive justice framework.
- Enslaved women did not have the right to decide or raise their kids due to slavery.
- Enslaved women were raped by their owners to reproduce the next labor force.
- Enslaved women were unable to protect their children from slave owners and the slave trade.
- Enslaved women were worked hard during their pregnancies often leading to miscarriage.
- Enslaved women had to take drastic measures such as using herbs as a contraceptive, performing abortions on themselves, and some killed their newborns to protect them from a life in slavery.
- Enslaved women had no control over their bodies or fertility.
- Often slave children died from malnourishment because their mothers could not take care of them because they had to work in the fields.

Obstructed Health Care For Native American Women

- Native Americans are twice as likely to be sexually assaulted than any other US women.
- The inability to access health care.
- Barriers such as travel, racial profiling, cultural insensitivity, criminal status, shame from family, twenty-four hour waiting periods for abortions, and limited financial resources obstruct care for rape and sexual assault survivors.
- The PL 280 law prevents tribes from prosecuting nonnative people for rape, sexual assault, or domestic violence.
- On reservations the consumptions of alcohol are illegal, so women's blood alcohol level is tested before they can be examined for sexual assault.
- Sexual violence used as cultural domination of Native American Women.
- IHS facilities do not have proper protocols to treat survivors of sexual assault.
- IHS facilities lacks trained personal, treatment for injuries, psychological counseling, treatment for STD's, and emergency contraception.

History of Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Justice

- Comstock Law are the first laws that started to regulate things like contraception and emphasis a focus on abortions and abortion providers.
- Roe v. Wade legalized abortions. If the United States made abortions illegal than this violates a woman's privacy rights that is stated in the 14th amendment. Roe v. Wade also established a three-trimester system. This state the government cannot prohibit abortions in the 1st trimester. In

the second trimester the government can place restrictions and in the 3rd trimester abortions can be limited.

- In the 19th century birth rates fell low due to women using contraception and having abortions, limiting sizes of families. States started to get involved in regulating and controlling reproductive rights because of low populations from diseases.
- Global Gag Rule is instituted in the 1980s that prohibited any kind of US development aid from flowing to any kind of organization abroad outside the United States that was performing abortions or directing women to abortion providers as one of their options for Reproductive Health Care.
- Hyde Amendment states that federal funds can not be used for abortions.

I encourage you all to follow social media accounts that provide information about current reproductive justice rights. I have provided the link to a current social media platform that has been following allegation of immigrant women being sterilized in ICE facilities. This social media account also provides information about women's health services, racism in reproductive care, and important figures in women's history. [Femislav](#)

I also encourage you to take this quiz on Reproductive Justice so that you can have a better understanding of everything discussed in the blog. [Reproductive Justice Quizlet](#)

Word Count: 925