

Voices from the Heartland:

Women's Perceptions of Abortion Regulation



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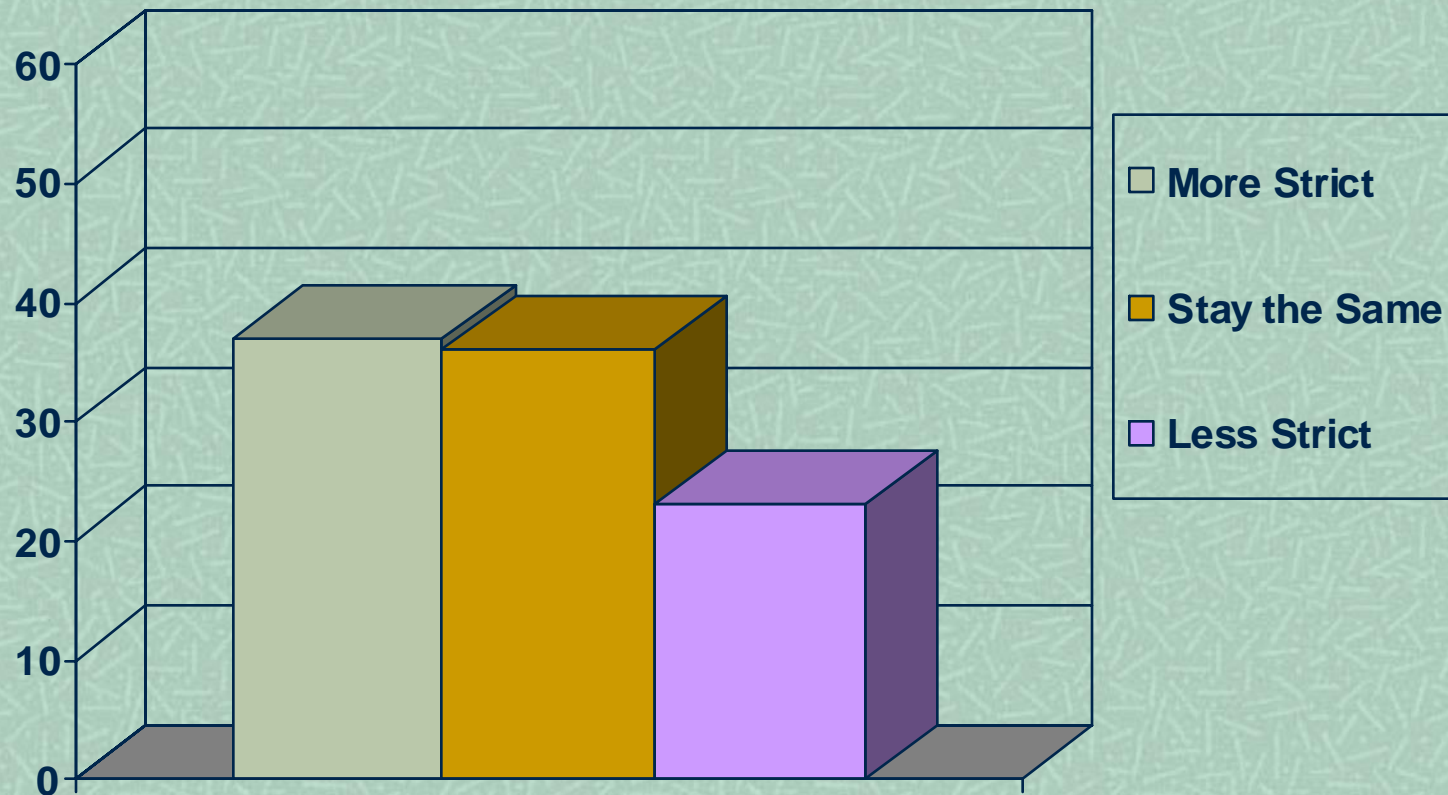
Background

- Roe v. Wade
- Webster
- Planned Parenthood v. Casey

Background

- Nearly every state has enacted laws placing restrictions on abortion.
- Public opinion polls on abortion consistently suggest that such limitations are supported by the American public.

Background: 2007 Poll



Gallup, 2007

Purpose

- Explore the impact of regulation on women's abortion experiences.
 - Understand what regulation “means” to the women who need abortion services.
 - Examine whether regulation presents an “undue burden” for the abortion patient.
 - Explore how perception of abortion regulation may shape the policy activities of abortion patients.
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Methods

- Selected two states
- Enrolled 3 clinical sites for recruitment
- Used flyers and clinic staff to introduce study
- Recruited 20 diverse women
- 1 hour interviews

State A

- Waiting period
- State-authored pamphlet including fetal development
- One parent consent
- Ultrasound
- Medicaid prohibition

State B

- Waiting period
- “Doc Talk” with state-authored material
- One parent consent
- Medicaid prohibition
- Hospital prohibition
- Insurance prohibition

Participant Characteristics

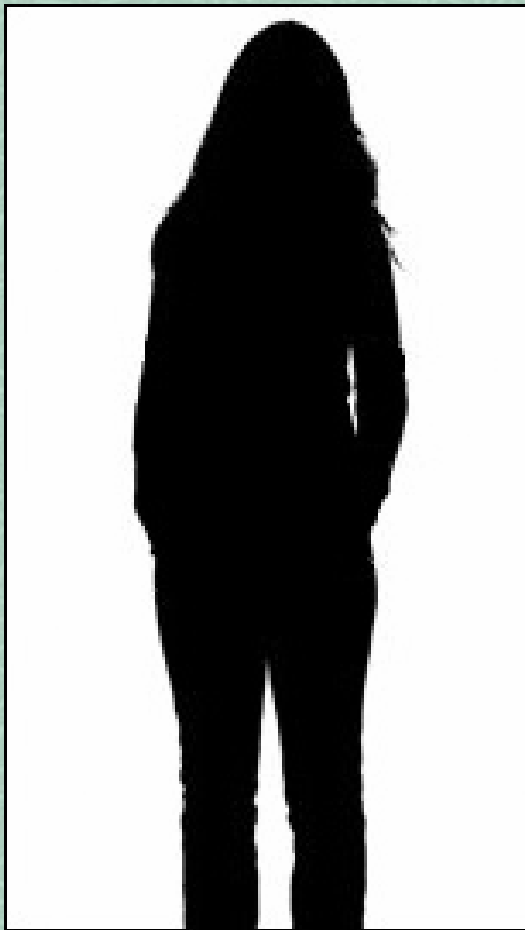
- Age Range: 18-43, most in 20's
- Race/Ethnicity: 9 white/Caucasian, 7 African American, 3 Native American, 1 Latina
- Education: 14 more than high school
- Pregnancy History: 12 had children, 6 had previous abortions

General Knowledge

Can you tell me what you know about the history of abortion care in the United States?

For example, for how long has abortion been legal? For how long do you think women have been getting abortions?

General Knowledge of Abortion



Lyndsay:

- 18 yrs
- White/Caucasian
- 1 previous pregnancy;
adoption
- Planning to go to college

General Regulation



Lisa:

- *23 yrs*
- *White/Caucasian*
- *2 children, 1 previous abortion*
- *In nursing school*

General Knowledge

- Aware that abortion was once illegal
- Aware that it has become safer
- Knew that it was controversial
- Estimated high prevalence

Informed Consent and Mandatory Waiting Period

- What was experience of following the regulation?
- Why do they think it exists?
- Who benefits?

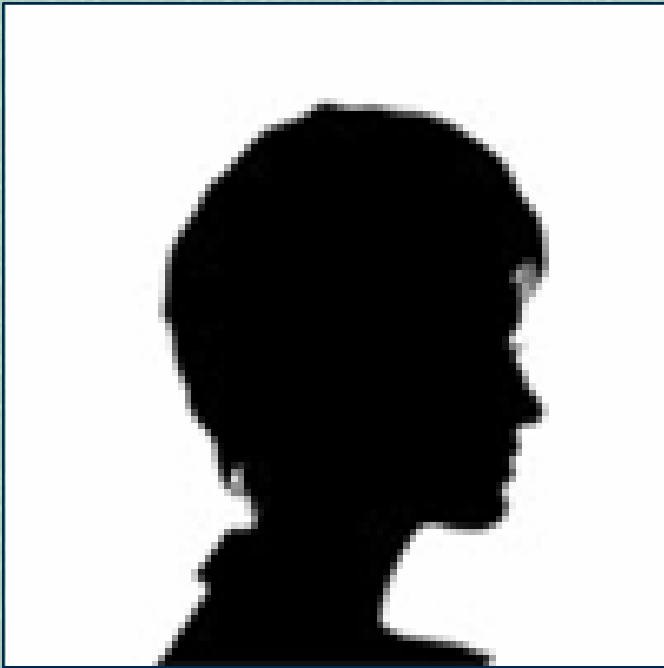
Informed Consent



Makayla

- 27 yrs
- African American
- 2 children
- In school

Informed Consent



Joy:

- 26 yrs
- White/Caucasian
- No children, 2 previous abortions
- In school and working

Waiting Period



Aisha:

- 25 yrs
- Native American
- 2 children, 1 previous abortion
- Sold drugs for abortion

Informed Consent and Mandatory Waiting Periods Overview

- Few were aware of the regulations
- Most favored informed consent
- Many favored waiting periods
- Most had made up mind before appointment
- Most were against waiting periods if women traveled

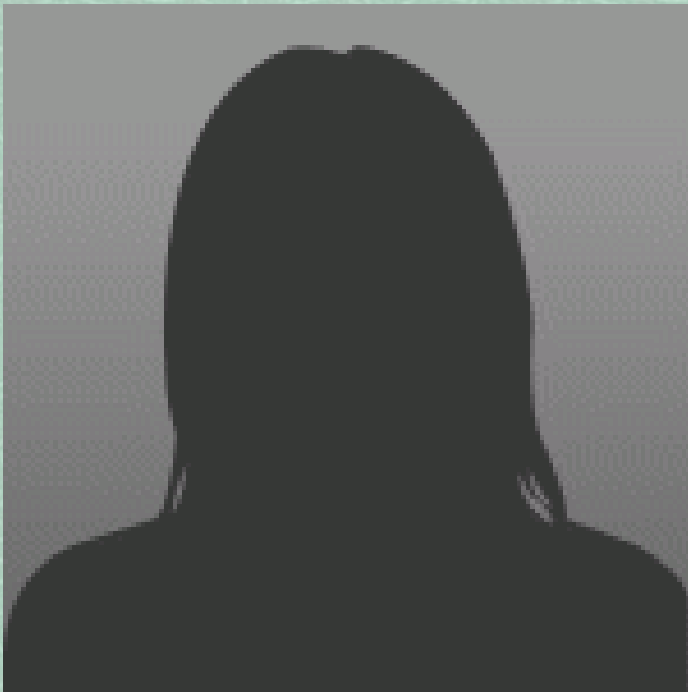
Parental Involvement



Sonja:

- 25 yrs
- African American
- 1 previous abortion
- College graduate

Male Involvement



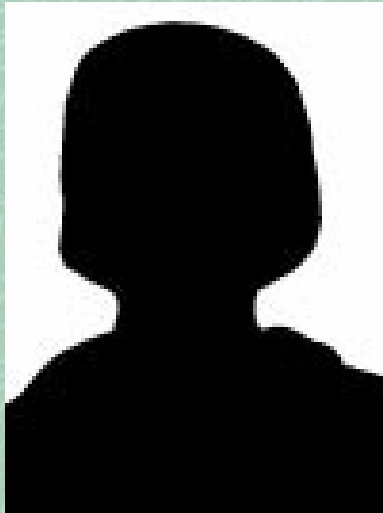
Tanya:

- *25 yrs*
- *African American*
- *4 children*
- *In nursing school*

Insurance/Medicaid Coverage



Jennifer:
27 yrs
White/Caucasian
No children
College graduate



Beth:
39 yrs
White/Caucasian
2 children
Some college

Insurance/Medicaid Coverage



Tricia:

- 19 yrs
- White/Caucasian
- No children
- Unemployed

Illegal Abortion



Jessie:

- 18 yrs
- American Indian/Polynesian
- No children
- Senior in High School

Discussion

- Limits on knowledge
- Favor regulation if it benefits women
 - Improves decision making
 - Helps women as consumers
 - Prevents “ignorance”
- Informed decisions are the best decisions
- Privacy is paramount

Limitations

- Study did not answer some of the original research questions:
 - Impact of regulation
 - Undue burden
- Other states may be different

Implications for Public Health

- Research
- Policy
- Resource allocation