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Spring 3-16-2016

# The Politics of Women's Reproductive Health

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## Publisher Citation

Bloomquist, K. & Gibson, A. (2016, March). The politics of women's reproductive health. Workshop presented at the 2016 National Association of Social Workers Social Work Chapter Spring Symposium, Columbia, SC.

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# The Politics of Women's Reproductive Health

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# Introductions and Self Reflection





# NASW Code of Ethics

- Value: **Dignity & Worth of the Person**
- Ethical Principle: Social workers respect the inherent dignity & worth of each person. Social workers promote clients' socially responsible self-determination. Social workers seek to enhance clients' capacity & opportunity to change & to address their own needs (NASW, 2008, Ethical principles, para. 4).



# NASW Code of Ethics

- Value: **Social Justice**
- Ethical Principle: Social workers challenge social injustice. Social workers strive to ensure access to needed information, services, & resources; equality of opportunity; & meaningful participation in decision making for all people (NASW, 2008, Ethical principles, para. 4).



# NASW Code of Ethics

- **1.02 Self-determination**
- Social workers respect & promote the right of clients to self-determination & assist clients in their efforts to identify & clarify their goals.
- “Self-determination related to reproductive health means that without government interference, people can make their own decisions about sexuality & reproduction” (NASW, 2009, p. 129)



# NASW

- NASW Supports
  - Fundamental right of each individual to manage his/her fertility & have access to full range of family planning & reproductive health services
  - School-based age appropriate, culturally informed sexuality & reproductive health education programs
  - Funding for development of sexuality education curriculums



# Information on Sex Education in South Carolina

- The State Board of Education approved the **South Carolina Academic Standards for Health & Safety Education** in 2009
- Comprehensive Health Education Act (CHEA) of 1988 requires each school board appoint a 13-member CHE advisory committee to assist in selection of curriculum & materials





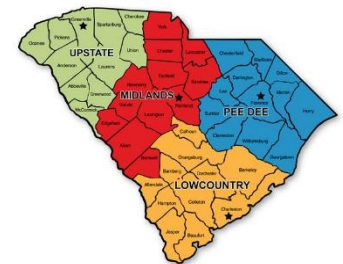
# Information on Sex Education in South Carolina

- Reproductive health instruction permitted before grade six at option of local school boards (CHEA, 1988)
- Family life & pregnancy prevention instruction is permitted in grades six, seven, & eight at option of local school boards; STD-prevention instruction is required (CHEA, 1988)
- Emphasis on abstinence & marriage



# Snapshot of Women's Reproductive Health in South Carolina

- Family Planning services in SC counties:
  - Pap smears when indicated
  - Contraceptive services
  - pregnancy testing & counseling
  - Abstinence education
  - Sexually transmitted infection services
  - Preconception health services
- Three women's health clinics that provide exhaustive services
  - Planned Parenthood – Columbia Health Center
  - Greenville Women's Clinic
  - Charleston Women's Medical Center





# Current Policies/Practices

- Minor's Right – can receive contraceptives without parents consent
- Currently state administers contraceptives
- Per referendum vote, the age of consent in South Carolina is age 14 (if partner <18)
  - Romeo's law: 16 years old to consent
- Exemption with ACA Preventive Health
  - Grandfather'ed policy – dependents cannot get birth control if parents work the state



# Current Policies/Practices

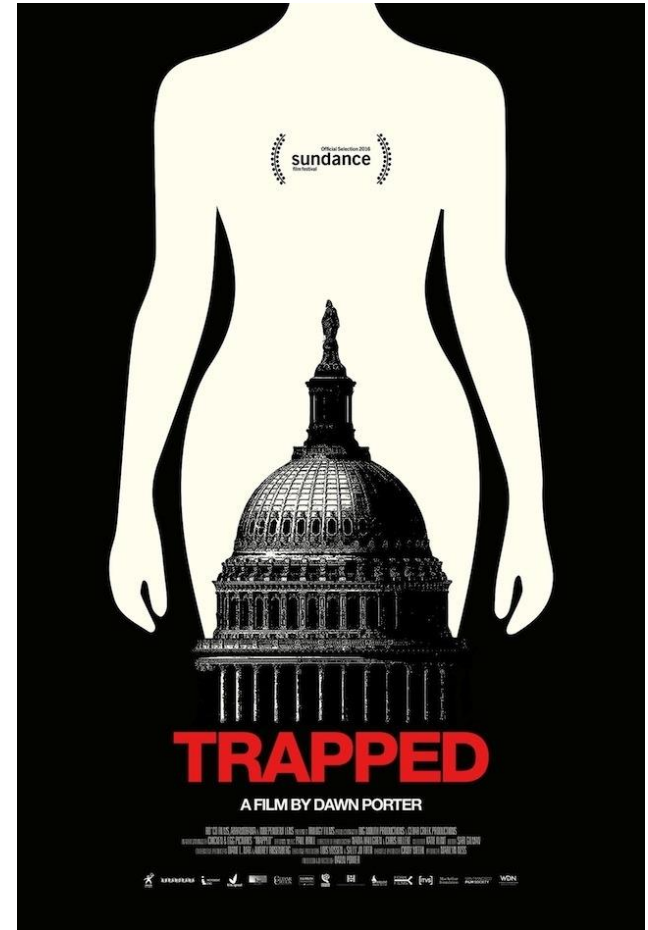
- Options Counseling –
  - Pre-Natal, Adoption and Termination
- 24 Hour Waiting Period
- Federal Funding and State Health Exchange funds can only cover abortion
- The parent of a minor, younger than 17, must consent before an abortion is provided unless the child has judiciary emancipation (DSS)
- Transportation challenges



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# Proposed Legislation in US

- Trends Nationally
  - Supreme Court Hearings & Decisions
  - TRAP Laws
- Projected Impact





# Proposed Legislation in SC

- H 3114/ S25/ S28/ S130 – *“South Carolina Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act”*
  - Makes it inaccessible to have an abortion after 20 weeks of gestation
  - **Will likely pass this week**
- H 4538 – *“Defunding the Abortion Industry and Advancing Women’s Health Act”*
  - Limit the types of facilities which can perform abortions



# Proposed Legislation in SC

- H 4629 – *“Woman’s Ultrasound Right to Know Act”*
  - Require physicians to show ultrasound to women before they can select pregnancy termination
- H 4634/ S 531 – *“Amends the code of laws of South Carolina, 1976, by adding section 44-41-90 so as to prohibit dismemberment abortions”*
  - Makes it a felony to perform an abortion



# Proposed Legislation in SC

- H 4759 – *“Unborn Infant Dignity Act”*
  - “The right of a mother to receive the bodily remains of her child” after an abortion; requires death certificate to be issued in cases of abortion
- S 96 – *“South Carolina Human Heartbeat Protection Act”*
  - Requires fetal heartbeat ultrasound test to be shared with woman before can have abortion





# Proposed Legislation in SC

- *S 34– “Amends section 44-41-10 of the 1976 code, to provide definition to abortion-inducing drugs”*
  - Makes it illegal to prescribe a pregnant woman an abortion-inducing drug
- *S 92– “A bill to amend section 44-41-10 of the 1976 code, relating to definitions concerning abortion”*
  - Physician that performs an abortion must also be a board certified in Obstetrics and Gynecology



# Proposed Legislation in SC

- S 1141 – “Teen Dating Violence Prevention Act”
  - “School districts may not offer programs, instruction, or activities including abortion counseling, information about abortion services, or assist in obtaining abortion, and materials containing this information must not be distributed in schools.”
- S 112– *“To amend article 05-11-01 of the 1976 code, relating to state employees and retirees insurance..”*
  - Makes it illegal for state health insurance plans to cover abortion, unless in the cases of rape, incest or the mother’s life is in danger



# Proposed Legislation in SC

- H 3447/ S 574– *“Comprehensive Health Education Act”*
  - Include the definition “medically accurate information” in comprehensive health education
- H 3204/ S 278 – *“Cervical Cancer Act”*
  - DHEC may over the cervical cancer vaccine to any student 7<sup>th</sup> grade or older in any private or public school



# Vulnerable Populations

- Families involved with domestic violence
- Trans community
- Individuals living in poverty
- Women of all ages, backgrounds, & circumstances



# Impact of Profession

- Social workers will deal with the consequences of these bills.
- We will be stretched even thinner to find new ways to serve the clients who can no longer access care.
- Our caseloads will grow as well as well as our list of responsibilities.



# Advocacy Avenues

- The New Morning Foundation
- <http://www.newmorningfoundation.org/impact-areas/>
- South Carolina Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
- <http://www.teenpregnancysc.org/get-involved>
- Planned Parenthood
- <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/get-involved>



# Special Thanks

- Stephanie Derr, Director of Women's Health, Department of Health and Environmental Control
- Stephanie Issacs, Project Manager, SC Initiative, Department of Health and Environmental Control
- Alyssa Miller, SC Director of Public Affairs, Planned Parenthood South Atlantic
- Lynn Teague, Vice President of Issues and Action, League of Women Voters of South Carolina
- Danielle Smith, Executive Director, NASW Ohio



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# Questions? Thoughts?

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