



Reproductive Justice, Jewish Ethics, & Family Planning: Post-Roe Realities

Thursdays, April 20, April 27, May 4

KEY TAKEAWAYS AND POLICY-RELATED HIGHLIGHTS /RESOURCES

SESSION ONE: FOUNDATIONS--REPRODUCTIVE CHOICE AND JUSTICE ([Video](#), [Handout](#), [Slides](#))

- Jewish Ethics draws on *halakha*/law (not a monolith, and which individual Jews or communities may feel variously bound by, or not); Jewish texts, tradition, history, philosophy, and values in or that emerge from them; and shared values with communities in which Jews co-exist/intersect.
- Reproductive Justice, a movement forged in the '90s by women of color and esp. Black women, goes beyond the rights to access abortion and contraception to the right of all women to bear children and (significantly) to raise them in health, safety and dignity.
- Abortion (and increasingly contraception) access is directly impacted in many states by the Dobbs decision, via laws based on definitions of “when life begins” or when philosophical or legal “personhood” begins that are not scientific and differ from Jewish (and many other religions’ and religionists’) understandings and beliefs. [Resource: [NCJW](#)].

SESSION TWO: ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES POST-ROE ([Video](#), [Handout](#), [Slides](#))

- ART provides tools for many adults—perhaps disproportionately Jewish and LGBTQ+—to address physical or social infertility on their path to building families.
- Those tools involve ethical issues before complications via the Dobbs decision—from enormous cost and unequal access to paths to parenting, to impact-on/roles-of individuals engaged to help create a child, to potential effect of individual choices on demographic trends, to transparency of genetic identity and history for children. [Resource: [Center for Reproductive Rights](#)]
- The risk of slippage of “legal personhood” toward conception and away from birth make these tools (ethically complex but navigable) less accessible to those seeking them for many reasons.
- For LGBTQ+ prospective parents—whose families are already put at risk by the fundamental precedents overturned in Dobbs—this is disproportionately damaging to family-building options.

SESSION THREE: ADOPTION AND CHILD WELFARE POST-ROE ([Video](#), [Handout](#))

- After a history of sealed adoptions in the U.S.--and despite increasing “openness” in adoption--most adoptees still struggle for access to information on their genetic/biological origins, including access to their original birth certificates as adults. [Resource: [Adoptees United Inc](#)]
- Rhetoric in/surrounding the Dobbs decision that positions anonymous relinquishment for adoption as a “solution” to lack of abortion access (1) erases the trauma of that relinquishment, and (2) tosses us back to that earlier “closed records” era. [Safe Haven Baby Boxes](#) are a prime example of retrogressive policy on this front.
- Women who relinquish for adoption do so most often due to poverty/lack of resources. Families that are policed and separated are more often guilty of criminalized poverty (which often looks like “neglect”) than of abuse. Women refused access to abortion are far more likely to face family separation—traumatic to parent, child and other family members alike—whether through “voluntary” relinquishment or forced separation by a fundamentally flawed child welfare system. [Resource: [National Center for Child Protection Reform](#)]