

The TRUMPocalypse

vs. Women's and Reproductive Rights

JOYCE ARTHUR
ABORTION RIGHTS COALITION OF CANADA
JOYCE@ARCC-CDAC.CA

Election is huge loss for all women

- Clinton's name and candidacy was synonymous with a push for stronger women's rights.
- But she lost to a blatant sexist who showed contempt for women. It's a **backlash** that legitimizes misogyny.
- Symbolism of first woman president in America lost. Glass ceiling intact.
- Role model effect lost; hope and optimism for women and girls diminished.
- Loss of hope for any foreign policy where women's rights would be enshrined in law and values.
- Stagnation and retreat on women's rights and equality throughout world.
- Undermining of current work to improve women's lives and safety.
- Under Trump, increased threat of war and environmental degradation, with more devastating consequences for women and children.

Things Trump has said about Clinton

- "Frankly, if Hillary Clinton were a man, I don't think she'd get five percent of the vote. The only thing she's got going is the women's card."
- In one of the debates: "Such a nasty woman."
- At his rallies, allowed his supporters to stoke violence against her.
- Joked that only "Second Amendment people" (gun rights)" could stop Clinton from appointing anti-gun judges to Supreme Court.
- Suggested her Secret Service detail should stop carrying guns and "see what happens to her."

Things Trump has said about women

- He has called women “pigs” “slobs” and “dogs.”
- He has a habit of reducing half the population to a hotness score.
- He bragged about how he could sexually assault women and then dismissed it as “locker room talk”.
- “He told a breastfeeding mother at a rally, “You're disgusting!”.
- When FOX News anchor Megyn Kelly asked Trump about previous misogynistic comments, he called her “unprofessional” and said, “You could see there was blood coming out of her eyes, blood coming out of her wherever.”
- Trump said of Republican Presidential candidate Carly Fiorina: “Look at that face! Would anyone vote for that? Can you imagine that, the face of our next president?”
- On his reality TV show Celebrity Apprentice, Trump said to a female contestant: “Must be a pretty picture, you dropping to your knees.”

Things Trump has said about abortion

- In late '90s, he described himself as “**very pro-choice.**” Later says it was “**in a meek fashion.**” Now says his views have “**evolved**” and “**I am pro-life**”.
- “**There has to be some form of punishment**” for women who have illegal abortions. (later retracts and says only providers would be punished)
- Says Roe vs. Wade was wrongly decided and wants to see it changed. “**I will be appointing pro-life judges**” to the Supreme Court.
- “**I will protect it [sanctity of life] and ... the biggest way you can protect it ... is by electing me president.**”
- If Roe v. Wade were overturned: “**It would go back to the states.**”
And women who won't be able to get an abortion? –
“**Yeah, well, they'll perhaps have to go ... to another state.**”
- Asserted that under current abortion law, “**You can take the baby and rip the baby out of the womb in the ninth month, on the final day.**”
- He's promised to sign a federal ban on abortion after 20 weeks.
- He plans to defund Planned Parenthood, which is “**like an abortion factory**”.

Increase in threats against providers

- Anti-choice protesters at clinics:

- "Their behavior has become incredibly more aggressive to the point we've had to call the police the last 3 to 4 weeks. There's much more condemnation than I've ever seen before. They're pushing cellphone cameras into patients' faces."

— Camille Barbone, vice president of operations at Choices Women's Medical Center in Jamaica, New York (Dec 15)

- Since election night:

- A Kentucky clinic had to replace its windows after a protester threw rocks through them.
- A clinic in North Carolina saw 2,500 protesters on one day holding Trump/Pence signs saying, "We won, you lost."
- Online threats against abortion providers in November more than tripled the yearly average (Vicki Saporta, president of National Abortion Federation).
- Texas, Ohio, Indiana, Oklahoma, other states have introduced wave of anti-abortion bills, from bans on abortion at 6 weeks to fetal burial requirements.
- 2017 will see an "onslaught" of bills restricting abortion in many states.

Increase in threats against women and minorities

- Southern Poverty Law Center counted **867 hate incidents** across US in 10 days after the election.
- Muslim women wearing hijabs were “particularly vulnerable to threats and assault” .
- Harassment and crimes against Hispanic Americans, black people, visible minorities, and the LGBT community – many against women and involving sexual threats.

Short on promises to help women

- Has called pregnancy (and maternal leave) “an inconvenience for business.”
- Ivanka Trump’s maternal leave plan is only 6 weeks and limited to legally married women. Excludes fathers, same-sex partners, male couples.
- Unclear how the Trumps will deal with childcare or pay equity issues – if at all. Poor track record in their own businesses.

Trump's Cabinet

- **Vice President-elect Mike Pence**, governor of Indiana, authored the first bill to strip all federal money from Planned Parenthood during his time in Congress. Has signed multiple anti-abortion bills into law as governor of Indiana, including an unprecedented measure to ban abortion in cases of genetic abnormality. Has said Roe v. Wade belongs on "**the ash heap of history.**"
- **Jeff Sessions**, Alabama Senator and nominee for Attorney General, advocates defunding organizations that perform abortions, has supported bans on various abortion procedures, voted against a security and safety fund for women's healthcare clinics.
- **Tom Price**, nominee for Health and Human Services Secretary, ardently opposes abortion and Affordable Care Act's no-cost birth control mandate. He said there's "**not one**" woman who cannot afford contraception. He has 100% anti-choice voting record.

Trump's Cabinet (continued)

- **Mike Pompeo**, incoming CIA director, voted against reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act in 2013, which funds shelters and services for victims of domestic violence.
- **Elaine Chao**, nominee for transportation secretary, opposed Paycheck Fairness Act (to strengthen federal equal pay laws for women) and during GW Bush administration, opposed raising the minimum wage
- **Betsy DeVos**, nominee for education secretary, opponent of abortion and LGBT rights, as well as public education.
- **Nikki Haley**, nominee for ambassador to the United Nations, as Governor of South Carolina, signed a law banning abortions from 20 weeks (unconstitutional)
- **Ben Carson**, nominee for Housing and Urban Development, is a longtime abortion foe.

Global Gag Rule

- A 1984 Reagan policy that prohibits NGOs that receive U.S. aid from providing abortions, or even counseling patients or referring them, even with their own funds.
- NGOs cannot even engage in advocacy within their own countries to liberalize abortion-related policies.
- Back-and-forth political football, traditional “first step” for incoming president:
 - President Bill Clinton revoked it right after taking office.
 - President George W. Bush reinstated it shortly after his inauguration.
 - President Barack Obama revoked policy as soon as he entered White House.
- When in force, GGR has led to closure of many family planning programs and women’s clinics (or reduced staff and programs). It decreases access to basic healthcare for women, as well as contraception.
- GGR leads to an increase in unsafe abortions and maternal death. During Bush era, abortion rates more than doubled in African countries most reliant on U.S. funds.

Helms Amendment (global)

- Passed in 1973, bans use of U.S. funds for abortion in other countries.
- “No foreign assistance funds may be used to pay for the performance of abortion as a method of family planning or to motivate or coerce any person to practice abortions.”
- In practice, NO abortion care is funded because of misinterpretation of the amendment by USAID – which also does not support purchase of equipment and commodities that could be used to perform abortions or provide post-abortion care.
- Already many barriers to accessing abortion care in developing countries - Helms Amendment adds an additional one.
- The cost:
 - 22 million unsafe abortions a year in developing countries.
 - 22,000 women die each year.
 - More than 7 million women suffer complications, but 3 million never receive care.

Hyde Amendment (domestic)

- A funding appropriations bill that prohibits federal funding from being used to pay for elective abortions in U.S.
- Passed in 1976, introduced by anti-choice legislator Henry Hyde. Reapproved by every Congress since then.
- State governments can opt to fund abortions through their own Medicaid programs, but only 17 states do so - 4 voluntarily (HI, MD, NY, WA), and 13 after being forced to do so by the courts.
- The Democrats and Hillary Clinton had (finally) made a campaign promise to repeal it.
- Republicans will likely make it a permanent law.

Effects of Hyde Amendment

- Denies funding to poor women for abortion through Medicaid, except for life endangerment, rape, incest.
- Affects mostly women of colour.
- In non-funded states, 18 to 35% of Medicaid-eligible women have been forced to carry their pregnancies to term.
- To pay for an abortion, nearly 60% of women on Medicaid were forced to divert money from funds they needed for rent, utility bills, food, and clothing for their families.
- Many women delay their abortions, increasing their medical risks, while they scrape funds together.

(ACLU: <https://www.aclu.org/other/public-funding-abortion>)

Others hurt by denial of federal funding

- Besides poor women on Medicaid, those denied access to federally funded abortion under Hyde Amendment include:
 - Native Americans
 - Federal employees and their dependents
 - Peace Corps volunteers
 - Low-income residents of Washington DC
 - Federal prisoners
 - Military personnel and their dependents
 - Disabled women who rely on Medicare
- Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) provides expanded health insurance to children under 19, but bans the use of federal funds for elective abortion.
- Balanced Budget Act of 1997 permits health maintenance organizations (HMOs) serving Medicaid recipients to not fund counseling or referrals for services on "moral or religious" grounds.

Punishment for Abortion

- National Advocates for Pregnant Women have identified at least 800 cases between 1973 and 2015 involving the arrests, detentions, or equivalent deprivations of pregnant women's physical liberty.
- In Alabama, conservatives on Supreme Court are using drug laws as a testing ground for anti-abortion "personhood" arguments. 479 pregnant women have been prosecuted for "chemical endangerment" of a fetus since 2006.
- In 2013, Purvi Patel of Indiana was sentenced to 20 years in prison for inducing an abortion. She had ordered abortion pills from the Internet but it was never proved she took them; she claimed to have a miscarriage. She served two years before her conviction was overturned .
- Anna Yocca of Tennessee sought help from a hospital earlier this year after she attempted to terminate a late-term pregnancy using a coat hanger in her bathtub. She was charged with first-degree murder, which was later reduced.
- In 2014, Jennifer Whalen, a low-income Pennsylvania mother, was jailed for up to 18 months after ordering abortion pills for her teenage daughter on the Internet. They couldn't afford an abortion , the closest abortion clinic was 75 miles away, and a state law would have required two separate visits with hotel stays.

Contraceptive Coverage

- **Affordable Care Act – “Obamacare”** – Trump says he will “repeal and replace”
- A key sticking point for Republicans is that it provides contraceptive coverage.
- This means loss of insurance for up to 22 million people, and loss of contraception coverage, as well as maternity coverage. Also maybe on chopping block:
 - Federal subsidies (tax credits) for low- and middle-income Americans
 - Mandatory nature, subject to tax penalty if you didn't buy in
 - Insurability for individuals with preexisting conditions
- In past few years, anti-choice movement has successfully deprived women of contraception based on their “religious freedom” arguments.
- Hobby Lobby case – Religious owners of the store were against birth control and refused to provide coverage to employees. Supreme Court accepted Hobby Lobby's false claim that some contraceptives were “abortifacients” as a protected religious belief.

What are women doing?

- Planned Parenthood was flooded with “unprecedented” donations from over 80,000 people (as of Nov), many of them in Vice President–elect Mike Pence's name.
- Huge increase in women getting long-acting birth control methods, such as IUDs, while still covered under Affordable Care Act.
- “The election really brought a daunting challenge to our doorstep but we women – low income people, people of color, immigrants – we are used to fighting against impossible odds.” — Destiny Lopez, co-director of All Above All, a network of reproductive rights advocates that is leading the push to repeal the Hyde Amendment.

What are abortion advocates doing?

- **Fighting back hard!!**
- Vowing to keep clinics open, and Planned Parenthood operating
- A leg up: Won major victory in June with Supreme Court decision in *Whole Women's Health v. Hellerstedt*.
 - Court ruled that states can't impose overly burdensome regulations on abortion. Struck down "TRAP" laws such as admitting privileges requirements, upgrading to "ambulatory surgical centres".
- Three new lawsuits just filed to fight state-level abortion restrictions. (by ACLU, PPFA, and CRR):
 - North Carolina 20-week abortion ban
 - Alaska – 40-year old restriction limiting abortions to first trimester and forcing women to travel out of state
 - Missouri restrictions similar to struck-down Texas laws

What are abortion advocates doing?

- Women's March on Washington – Jan 21, 2017
- www.womensmarch.com/
- 149,000 signed up to go on Facebook alone



**WOMEN'S MARCH ON
WASHINGTON**

REGISTER

DONATE

Conclusion

Questions:

- What are the chances that Trump can appoint at least two Supreme Court justices?
- After 44 years, can Roe v. Wade still survive?
- How bad will things get, really?
- How do we fight back? What will it take to reduce Trump's impact?
- Who will really wield the most power – Trump, or his extreme right-wing Cabinet?
- Will the U.S. cease to be the world's greatest superpower?