

# e502 audio

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## SPEAKERS

Megan Goodwin, Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst

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Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 00:17

This is keeping it 101, a killjoys introduction to religion podcast for 2020 to 2023, Our work is made possible through both a UVM reach grant and a loose AAR advancing public scholarship grant. We're grateful to live teach and record on the current ancestral and unseeded lands of the Abenaki Wabanaki and Aqua Cisco peoples. As always, you can find material ways to support indigenous communities on our website.



Megan Goodwin 00:41

What's up nerds? Hi, hello, I'm Megan Goodman, a scholar of American religions race, gender and politics.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 00:48

Hi, hello. I'm Ilyse Morgenstein For Wow. "Incorrect" Ah. Who, who are you? you? Hi, hello. I'm Ilyse Morgenstein-Fuerst, a historian of religion, Islam race and racialization and South Asia. I'm apparently also someone who's so sleep deprived that I forgot my own name's pronunciation.



Megan Goodwin 01:10

That's rough. That's pretty rough.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 01:11

That's incorrect. In fact,



M

Megan Goodwin 01:13

Ah, and hey, so is today's episode. Ah, this is our new format "incorrect", where we kindly but firmly insist that religion does more and different work than you might think it does. On today, we want to challenge some basic assumptions about religion and reproductive justice.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 01:30

They are useful, give it to us.

M

Megan Goodwin 01:32

Okay. I will. You're welcome. One, people assume that the fight is always religion on one side and reproductive justice on the other. That is incorrect. And two, that the opposition to reproductive justice is only and everywhere a religious issue, also incorrect. "And this situation is not correct". So let's start with America, religion and reproductive justice. What the EverLiving fuck is going on? And how did we get here?



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 02:05

Yeah, enlighten us. Tell us some stuff.

M

Megan Goodwin 02:16

Great, I have a lot of stuff to tell. The most recent Supreme Court decision Dobbs vs. Jackson Women's Health Organization double tapped the last federal protections for abortion in June 2022. This is fucked for a number of reasons. But the one that really sticks in my craw, aside from the highest court in the land ruling that my body is not my own, is that many, many religions including Judaism, Islam, and a number of kinds of Christianity allow or even celebrate abortion. Which is fucking love abortion for the record.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 02:47

Yeah, no. And it's important that at the top, we say this loudly and clearly. And I'm gonna stick to Judaism and Islam for this little bit here, Meghan, okay, because those are the things I know. I know well. Both Judaism and Islam fundamentally prioritize the life of the mother in different ways. So Islam tends to and by Islam, I don't mean like the whole religion doing everything I mean, interpreters of Islam, clerics, legal, like Fiq, what's called fiq jurisprudence, histories of this and different brands of this and philosophical schools have almost always supported the being on the side of mercy, as opposed to some punitive nonsense. In the in a form where it's like a mother's life is at risk, and I'm going to use the gendered language here in both Islam and Judaism because quite frankly, those traditions use it but we can also think about pregnant people and uterus owners in this scenario. You're required to take care of yourself. Oh, sorry, what?



Megan Goodwin 03:51

Do we really own them or are we just carrying them around for the federal government just doesn't feel like ownership. Just okay. Anyway,



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 04:01

I never feel like I own it because it's like an unruly bitch. But anyway, in Islam, most Muslim interpretations hold that, A) be on the side of mercy, we are not going to punish women. And we are going to imagine that a woman's life, the maker of this human of this not quite human yet, is more important than the imaginary forthcoming human. And we'll talk more about that later on. Judaism is a little bit more explicit in some cases for some Jews, an abortion is religiously required. If the woman's life is at risk, and risk can mean psychological risk. Risk can mean mental health, risk can mean to the extent members of her family, because keep in mind, as I'm sure we'll get to, most abortion seekers in the United States are people who already have children at home.



Megan Goodwin 05:01

Yep, 60 plus percent.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 05:03

So risk does not just mean, I'm going to need a hysterectomy or I might die in childbirth, or the fetus is not viable, or there are any number of horrible and complicated things that happen in pregnancy. Now, Megan, I have been pregnant multiple times two of those pregnancies has resulted in children. All of those times have been horrible and challenging and frightening. And none of them have been with a government saying that either I breed or I don't, but all of them have also been with full support of my religious background saying, my body is to be valued and venerated, and that my body is priority. That is not what the US government is saying. So religion here, score US government, seven pits of hell.



Megan Goodwin 05:47

Yeah. Yeah. It's bad. It's it's, it's very bad. It's hard to overstate how bad this is. Because the bad that it is, is very. It's important to remember too, though, that this isn't just like Christianity on one side, Islam, Judaism, witchcraft. everybody else on the other.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 06:07

It's hard, it's real hard right now Megan, I've gotta be honest. No, my rage at the goy right now. Yeah. Sorry, goyam, I'm mad at you again. Sorry, I know. But I also know I'm sorry, #notallchristians. Yes.



Megan Goodwin 06:21

#notallchristians. There have been Christians involved in fights for Reproductive Justice, as long as there have been public fights about reproductive justice. A lot of the agitators for access to reproductive health care, autonomy over pregnable bodies, is being driven by Christian activists as well, folks are real mad about this. So we have a bunch of stuff in the homework, but it's important that you hear us call for nuance, even as I am truly about to go on a rage, tangent, because the reason we are here is white Christian nationalism.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 07:02

Yeah. So Megan, can you say more about how we got here, knowing that we're going to talk more later about global politics? And we're going to foreground the US, both because of the news, and because of the way that the US exports, as part of its global cultural and political imperialism, anti reproductive justice policies around the world.



Megan Goodwin 07:24

Yep. And has since Roe past I, yeah, this is me, trying not to go on a whole Reagan yelling thing, because I'm not sure that it's helpful. But the first chapter of my book is all about this, if you want to learn more than even that you're going to learn today. So you asked, how did we get here? I would like to respond to this question in a format I like to call rage history. It's like Drunk History. But instead of alcohol, I'm altered by my overwhelming anger about this nonsense



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 07:59

"Flames on the side of my face. Breathing, heaving breaths" So I take it that this is mostly your "Incorrect" episode. And I just like, hang out and like, make sure I don't get like, like stuck by lightning or something.



Megan Goodwin 08:17

Sure, I shall do the old US of A, since we are fucked right now. And you can tell us about the rest of the world later, I guess. Sure. Fine.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 08:27

Checks out, sure.



Megan Goodwin 08:28

All right. So there has been so much bullshit about reproductive justice, a term that we specifically owe to Black women organizers. And there's been a bunch of reproductive justice

since Supreme Court bullshit in 2022. But the Dobbs decision that struck down the constitutional right to an abortion is the one that really stuck it in and broke it off. So yeah, how did we get here? Folks seem particularly confused, because political opposition to abortion is overwhelmingly driven by white Christian nationalism, whether it's calling itself that or not. I'm getting a lot of questions on Twitterdon about the separation of church and state. I hear that all the time.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 09:10

That's a good question. Although little bit ignorant on the history of this country



Megan Goodwin 09:15

It is I mean, it's just yeah, we were never actually that good at separation of church and state but as of June 2022, we officially earned ourselves and F minus.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 09:26

Frankly, I actually think this this merits the old rally grad lounge grade of suck minus it below and f it just sucks Yes.



Megan Goodwin 09:36

Suck double minus. Correct. Correct. So So for thinking about how this could possibly be legal how a bunch of old mostly white mostly dudes, mostly Catholics, get to tell an entire fucking country what they can and can't do with their bodies. Let's go back to the text Alright so, "what about church and state?" is a good question with bad answers. Yes, sorry,



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 10:13

Tell us more...



Megan Goodwin 10:14

So we have three constitution protections with regard to religion, we've got Article Six, paragraph three of the Constitution itself, which ensures that you don't have to pass religious tests in order to participate in the government. And we have two clauses in the First Amendment, which read, you're welcome, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." This matters both for something called enumerated rights things that the federal government has dibbssed, right. But also, broadly speaking, the Constitution makes religion special. So when you are inevitably frustrated about the way that the Supreme Court is responding to religion in a way that it doesn't respond to, like, I don't know, science. Here's the thing, religion is in the Constitution and science is not. So that's fun for starters. Free exercise, sounds like everybody gets to do

what they want, as long as they're calling it religion. Turns out, this is not how the US has decided to interpret this clause. So but they also didn't define it specifically until 1878, and it's specifically not just about religion, but also sex. This is going to be a key theme here. So in 1878, Reynolds versus the United States says that you can believe whatever you want, but your religious practices have to fall within the law of the land. And by religious practices here, they very specifically mean Mormon polygamy. Yeah.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 11:46

And you know, what, nerds? If you're interested in that, we've got a whole episode dealing with it. It's 102, episode, Episode 102, way back at the very beginning of this podcast journey.



Megan Goodwin 11:54

Right, and again, like to underline this nerds, this is because religious sentiment is such that unmarried people should not be boinking. Long, long ago and the before times. So religion and sex have a long constitutional history. If we're going to flash forward through, you know, 200 years of American jurisprudence, you know, like you do. Lots of folks are often surprised to find out that folks who could get pregnant weren't guaranteed access to contraception until 1965. There's a court case called Griswold v. Connecticut, if you're not into constitutional law, I don't understand that. But there are links in the show notes if you want to read up more on this. So Griswold, 1965, guarantees married people access to contraception, and then unsteady buried in 1972. 1972, which is six years before I was born, guaranteed single people access to contraception.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 12:49

Right? So if you are not supposed to be boinking, then surely you have no need for contraception. So there is already a premarital sex, highly Christian, if not, and highly Catholic argument here.



Megan Goodwin 13:01

There is it is a very Catholic argument, but it's not the whole Catholic argument. It is because we, because I know, you know, but for our nerds, you have Catholics very, very excited and active in pushing for access to contraception. One of the main scientists that works on developing the pill, as it becomes called, is himself Catholic. And one of the anecdotal, but pretty convincing stories that filters around here, is the reason that you cycle off contraception for a week was specifically so you would still be getting a period, in part to convince the pope that this was all natural and should fall within natural law. So this has been a religious story all along. But again, it's not always and everywhere, religion on one side, and then reproductive healthcare and reproductive justice on the other



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 13:48

Way to underline the thesis

way to undermine the thesis.

M

Megan Goodwin 13:49

Hey, thanks. It's like I teach or something. Anyway. 1973 obviously, Roe v. Wade, gives people who can get pregnant the right to access abortion, not because their bodies have their own BTWs, but because they are entitled to what the court calls a "penumbra of privacy". Yeah, yeah, it's a lot about well, "your doctor should be able to tell you what's best for you, little lady" which, as you can see, has come back to bite those of us who are impregnable in the literal uterus. So that is bad, and then they start chipping away at it almost right away. This is overwhelmingly driven by a very conservative, overwhelmingly white Christian opposition that is coming together politically in concentrated and effective ways the likes of which we have never seen. Yes, that's gross. Couple quick notes before we move on to the 21st century. Until the 1970s, most 20th century, Protestants were absolutely fine with contraception, and they were largely ambivalent about abortion. That shit was for Catholics like this was not a fight that they were into. Most Christians outside Catholicism are theologically and socially supportive of sex, often within marriage, but specifically for companionship and pleasure as well as reproduction, that focus on sex equals repro is a very Catholic idea. Also, in the 1970s, after Roe passed, contraception and abortion access became a way to rally conservative white Christian nationalist support around quote unquote, "American values". And this happened in large part because the blatant racism that they had been using in the mid 60s and 70s, was increasingly less politically expedient on a national level. It never stopped being white supremacist but it stopped being so out loud about it.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 15:49

Yeah, well and all the all the arguments too about if you're aborting, if white women have access to abortions, then the replacement theory argument comes into play. Which is where I become a domestically supplied infant as an adoptive white passing or white baby. So, not to make this even more personal dear nerds, but and yeah, we're gonna get a lot of talk about various uteruses today. The ones that made me, the ones that supplied me to other uterus owners. Well, you know, you gotta you gotta replace Americans with Americans. Right? Keep going...

M

Megan Goodwin 16:25

Shop local, shop ethmart. Anyway, see, and you were worried this episode wouldn't be fun. My trauma is hilarious. Okay, by the early aughts, white evangelicals and Catholics are ensemble as one about religion or sorry about abortion and increasingly in accord about contraception. And this is especially where you start to see rhetoric around Plan B and IUDs. Being a board of fashions rather than contraceptive technology. That is scientifically and medically wrong. But religiously, they get treated as the same. I definitely picked a giant fight with my religion teacher senior year about this. Because I read a thing and like I swear to God, fuck, I'm like sassy, or some shit. Like, this doesn't make any sense to me. Like I'm pretty, I might have brought the magazine in. I'm not sure. Yeah, yeah, it was like, if you'll consult the text, it says here clearly that so what it's gotten, Oh, God. Anyway. Alright, so we're fast forwarding to 2010, Citizens United. That doesn't sound like it's about religion, and it's not technically. 2010 Citizens United is a decision that decides that corporations are people. Like I said, this is a lot

about religion. But it's not just about religion. It is also about corporations. It's also about privacy. I would I would suggest, though, that corporations are about religion on account of like, Protestant Ethic of capitalist consumption. Yes very much so. You're right. Like there is no capitalism outside white Protestant, specifically outside white European Protestantism as a larger thing that I yell about on the internet too. But why not? It's on its face.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 18:12

This is not actually a case. about religion, though our buddies, Marx and Engel, would probably beg to differ.



Megan Goodwin 18:19

They know what's up. Alright, so 2010 corporations get to become people. 2014, Burwell V. Hobby Lobby says corporations are people who are entitled to the free exercise of religion. What? Yes. Their sincerely held beliefs that plan B and IUDs are abortifacients is incorrect. Not correct. Let me say it again, IUDs, Plan B, these are things that prevent, not terminate, pregnancy. So Hobby Lobby and Conestoga, whatever the fuck it was, are medically and scientifically wrong. But they feel, I'm sorry, they sincerely believe that they're right. And the Supreme Court goes, "well, we couldn't possibly interfere or even adjudicate whether or not they're sincere in these beliefs. So we have to assume that they are". So yeah, they don't have to allow their employees access to contraception, even though we have, as a country demonstrated over and over again, that everyone who wants it having access to contraception means that they're able to more fully participate in the economy, leads to better quality of life, and also is it just people should be able to control their own bodies, they just should. God fucking dammit.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 19:43

And if I were to work for Hobby Lobby, my sincerely held belief would not be honored because the corporation's sincerely held belief is not just greater than scientific evidence it is also greater than the individuals or the employees' sincerely held belief. So this is fucked, it's like a fuck circus



Megan Goodwin 20:03

In so many different ways. It's just it's like a horrible bland potato salad with raisins in it, of robbing people of their right



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 20:15

That was great.




Megan Goodwin 20:16




 Megan Goodwin 20:10

Thank you. Thank you. That's what it tastes like. Right. And so we also get a definition that corporations are the people that own them, not the people who work at them, just like extra fucking suck. So this undermines the contraceptive mandate, that was such an important part of the Affordable Care Act, colloquially known as Obamacare. And the contraceptive mandate is then further undermined by the Little Sisters of the Poor decision in 2020, where the Supreme Court ruled that not only could they limit access to contraception, could corporations limit access to contraception, but also, they can't be made to fill out paperwork, requesting exemptions. They're just allowed to fuck you and then not give you contraceptive care. Anyway.

 Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 21:03

So what I hear you saying, Megan, is that there have been quite a number of legal interventions. And there are quite a number of ways that those legal interventions have worked. So some of them are like the death by banality, no one has to fill out paperwork, so like someone says, "no", and you just can't appeal. Some of it is about corporations becoming sentient beings whose beliefs are able to weigh more than scientific evidence and more than the individuals who comprise those corporations. And a lot of it is based on what religious sentiment and specifically Christian religious sentiment believes about things like sex and women's bodies and conception and personhood.

 Megan Goodwin 21:52

Yes, yes. Again, often flying in the face of medical science, and that is frustrating, but again, the Constitution protects religion, it doesn't protect science or medicine. So, big sum up moment, Constitution allegedly forbids the establishment of a state religion, meaning the US government is not allowed to pick sides or favor one tradition over any others. The place where this decision is a stupid, bad decision, not just for people who can get pregnant but also for people who care about the Constitution is that this Dobbs decision is de-jury about privacy and state right rights, which is disgusting, right? So on its face, it's a decision about privacy. But in reality, de facto, it's about further codifying white Christian nationalist sexual morality.

 Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 22:42

Yes.


 Megan Goodwin 22:43


This is a lot about Catholicism, which again, I'm not going to do a deep dive on here, but it is chapter one of my book. So as we said at the top, not only is the Supreme Court bugging all pregnant people, it is also flipping the bird to the establishment clause.


 Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 22:57


Yeah, so it sounds like what we want some of our needs to take away is that the United States


Yeah, so it sounds like what we want some of our heroes to take away is that the United States has a really long history of religion and sexual entanglements, especially when we think about the courts, correct? Yes. We're pretending and by "we", I mean, frankly, a lot of stupid journalists and white people, are pretending this decision isn't religiously motivated, but as a Jew and a scholar of Islam, I say fuck you. Incorrect!


 Megan Goodwin 23:26  
Incorrect.

 Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 23:28  
This stuff is pretty bad. But what else? Why else? Is it bad Megan? And what are the other kinds of takeaways? What's the slippery slope here? Why are people like you and I continuing, this is not new, but continuing to sound like the fascism alarm bells.

 Megan Goodwin 23:41  
Yeah, yeah, we are clanging like somehow trying to make more noise even though we've been freaking out for a while. So all of that is bad on its own. But it also endangers a number of other rights, including like, Clarence Thomas, straight up told us they were coming for same sex marriage, queer sex in general, contraceptive access. So it's, it is a bigger deal than just abortion, although that would be enough. But it's a bigger deal for queer people, for people who have sex, for people who don't want to have children. But also, there's a bunch of stuff that we're not really talking about, specifically about privacy. And this was really a banner week for the Supreme Court because, like a day later, two days later, the Kennedy versus Bremerton school district decision further shat upon the Establishment Clause specifically around praying in schools so we're like quadruple fucked.

 Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 24:34  
Indeed, we are. I have nothing to add, keep going.

 Megan Goodwin 24:38  
But also, this isn't as simple as just girls versus God, if we're quoting Florence and her machine, A) this affects anyone who can get pregnant, including trans men and be lots of religious folks are also pro abortion. And there's a long long history of Religious Action for reproductive justice. So check out the show notes for more info.

 Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 24:56  
Megan, that's a great place for me to add some stuff Please do. Okay, so I want to underline what you just said that, "abortion is a religious right". So I'm going to wreck a vice article that actually does that in a really teachable and readable way and takes religion granting abortion

as a right as a premise. But I also want to say that it is, it is basically Christians who claim that a person is a person at conception. Uh huh. Good for them, like, like good for you. And I say that in my like, go ahead New Jersey tone. May you choke on an onion, but that's a really hard, ethical, theological, moral and scientific question. When is a person a person right that we could, we could sit and point to all the philosophers and all the time who have thought about these things, so Christians, I don't agree with you, but you're allowed to have this idea. But guess what, nerds? That is not how Jews think about personhood, even though those goyim are jacking our text. And that's not really how Muslims think about personhood classically, either. Right? Hindu texts are clearer on how personhood works. But Hindu attachments to texts are not. And as friend of the pod, DHeepa Sundaram tells us Hindu notions of individual ethics often dictate personal beliefs and action far, far more than some ancient Sanskrit that not all Hindus have equal access to or have equal lineages around. Yeah, so I want to I want to see this more clearly. The idea that abortion is not a good thing is rooted in Christian theology. And there is no other way around it. Because we have all of these other religions who not only like I said, at the top, provide for wiggle room, provide for abortions at a certain rate, demand abortions if the woman's life is in danger, but also we have religions debating how and why ethically, morally, theologically, abortions, birth control, contraceptive methods would be favorable based on this idea of personhood. That is a theological concept, no matter which way we slice it. Yeah, so I'm gonna say this really clear in case it wasn't clear already. I'm actually not pro choice. I am pro abortion. And I was literally raised in a community, a faith community where that was the standard. So Christians, especially those fascist nationalist pieces of shit, controlling my body right now an the body of my daughter can literally choke on their own misreading of my sacred texts die as far as I'm concerned. Yes, more intellectually. I want to I want to bring it back to the intellectual in my moment of rage thunder, okay. Abortion and reproductive healthcare is obviously not just the United States issue, which is why the mix of American religious politics and American religious political framework plus whiteness plus Christianity actually matters a lot here, both because of how we export that around the world. And because of how we're not paying attention to what's happening in other places, yes. So let's be clear loads of other nation states have anti abortion laws, loads of places have Christians that aren't doing anti abortion work so heavily or quite so vociferously or with, you know, the bombing and murdering of abortion providers. Lots of places suggest that there is a major difference between stigma and disfavorability, "You should not get an abortion", and illegality, "this is not available to you under any circumstances or without a writ of an official, state based apparatus". And in some places that looks like hospitals or medical boards and other places that looks like the court. So if I may, Meghan, may I do like a quick little rundown of other countries?



Megan Goodwin 28:56

Yes, please teach me about the world. You know, I don't know anything about it.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 29:06

So I tried to pick a few places that look conservative and chat about them because America is a conservative place. So let's start in South Korea, which is a fairly conservative place.



Megan Goodwin 29:19

I'm sorry to laugh, but I like that you've brought your obsession with Korea into the pod. Please continue.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 29:25

Please don't make me more of a national like of a of like a Neo-Orientalist. Honestly, it's because I've been watching. As you know, I'm k-drama obsessed. But, like, frankly, more abortion storylines than you would think. And the storyline has been shocking to me, someone who does not study Korea professionally, where it's like, I will just go take care of this. And I was like, ah, that's interesting, because I remember reading in the newspaper that Korea did, South Korea did not fully decriminalize abortion until 2021.



Megan Goodwin 29:57

Oh, wow.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 29:58

So what's up? But it's more complicated. So there were exceptions on the books from the 1970s. Lots of sources claim in my, you know, again, superficial non-academic non-specialization reading, that despite it being illegal, or at least, like having some criminal connotation to it, it was actually commonly available even in hospitals and surgical clinics.



Megan Goodwin 30:21

Oh, wow.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 30:21

So like, it feels like, and you South Korea experts can correct me if I'm wrong. From what from literature I read to prep for this podcast episode, it seems like there were quite a lot of activist movements, but also quite a lot of blind eyes being trapped in particularly first trimester abortions,



Megan Goodwin 30:42

I'm also hearing a lot of like doctors just prioritizing care of their patients over the law, which frankly, I would like to see a lot more of locally.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 30:53

Yeah, and honestly, like each of these nation states has like its own particular background. And Korea is interesting place because it has a lot of laws on the books about marriage and like

Korea is interesting place because it has a lot of laws on the books about marriage, and like, who can marry whom and how those things have worked historically. And they're very complicated, but this part of bodily control is not an aberration, it is part of a larger social context, where there are more rules involved than we might be used to as Americans. Similarly, let's go to India, my other place of knowledge, you knew I wasn't going to let it go. No, I know, India, decriminalizes, abortion completely in 1971. But as early as 1966, there are laws on the books about the health and safety of the pregnant person and the viability of the fetus, being a space where women could access abortions, especially before the 12th week of pregnancy, so first trimester. I was going to pick up a Muslim nation state, a Muslim majority nation state, and I like did a whole write up on Turkey, and I did a whole write up on Iran, and I did a whole write-up where I did all this stuff. And then I thought, You know what, fuck it. I need you to hear out loud, that no Muslim majority country, even the ones that are extremely conservative has a total ban on abortions. I'm going to say that, again, zero Muslim majority countries, even the ones that you might think of, has a total ban on abortions, that doesn't mean that they are widely available. That doesn't mean that there aren't restrictions, but a total ban, like Ohio, non-existent. Because, as I said, at the top, most Islamic legal interpretations vouchsafed the life of the pregnant person above all else. And while Muslim interpretations vary widely about the acceptability of abortion, there is no specific ban within Islamic law on abortions.

M

Megan Goodwin 32:53

Yeah, I did a lot of yelling about this on Twitter, you're shocked. But people keep trying to use Iran is a go-to and like, oh, Iran has a...very incorrect... Iran has a lot more complicated and comprehensive relationship to contraception and abortion, then probably most of you are assuming if you're not from Iran or study Islam, so you're incorrect, incorrect. They also have, they also have more women in their elected government than we do so like, glass-houses friends. Anyway.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 33:27

To round it up in another place where religious nationalism rears its ugly head. Let's talk about Israel for a second. Sure. So Israel has had legal abortion since since 1977, with a really interesting caveat that the woman, seeking an abortion, and it is gendered here, needed approval form, like a little medical community, like a committee in ways that more or less reflect mainline Jewish legal interpretation. But as a response to SCOTUS, like three days after the Supreme Court ruling that overturned Roe, they loosened that law considerably, making it possible for Israeli women to access abortion care without this committee, which for the record, the committee, based on this newspaper article I read out of Jerusalem said that 98 The records for the last 15 years were that 98% of women applying to this committee were immediately approved. So how much of a hindrance this is, it's up for debate. But right after Roe got overturned, they said, yeah yeah yeah, let's be a bastion of liberalism. They loosened the law considerably, and now Israeli women and I say Israeli women, I assume that is not the case for Palestinian women, have access to abortion care at clinics and doctor's offices without this committee and without this hospital or surgical outpatient clinic mandate. So in short, reproductive rights is not just an American issue, although it seems that way right now, especially for those of us living in a dystopia Christian theocratic future that high for one absolutely will not abide and you can quote me on that. Yeah. Uh yeah, period.

M

Megan Goodwin 35:04

So we have to care about reproductive justice. We have to think about it both in terms of religion and not just in terms of religion. It is real fucking bad in the United States right now. But the US is not the entire story here either. Yes. Yeah. All right. Well, I feel gross, but don't pack up yet, nerds. It's, it's time for homework. Homework.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 35:32

Yeah, I mean, yeah, stay tuned for work from digital defenders of collaboration between the Women's March, Sacred and Auburn media, which is a budding thing of for lack of a better word that Meghan and I are actually both apart of.

M

Megan Goodwin 35:46

We are, we're working with a bunch of really interesting folks from different religious backgrounds, about more effective communication around religion and reproductive justice online. Stay tuned.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 35:59

I also want to cite our colleagues Zahra Ayubi's article. She is a scholar of Muslim bioethics and is working on projects around Muslim reproductive health care, and she has this really great article titled, "Authority and Epistemology and Islamic Medical Ethics of Women's Reproductive Health" in the Journal of Religious Ethics and I'll link you to that. I mentioned above this Vice piece on abortion as a religious right, which will be in the homework and previous guests, Dheepa Sundaram on Hindus supporting abortion even if classical texts forbid it. So that difference between what does "Hinduism" say as if it does one thing? And what are Hindus actually doing? Yes, yeah, I'll stop there. Because I see you've got more than that. So, what's your homework, Meghan?

M

Megan Goodwin 36:44

Okay. Well, I wrote an article about this called, "Costs of Christian or sorry, I wrote an article about Hobby Lobby and Burwell called the "Costs of Corporate Conscience" how women queers and people of color are paying for something like other folks sincerely held beliefs, it's very snarky and very angry. I wrote it in 2017. And yet, somehow, I'm even angrier today. So you can check that out. I also mentioned the first chapter of my book. You should look at that if you want to hear more about how Catholic thinking and Catholic moral law or sorry Catholic natural law are driving a lot of the judicial activism that we are seeing play out today. In addition to my own stuff, I am going to encourage you to look at some resources from Jill Frank, who has been really great both about highlighting the role that religious folks have played in fighting for abortion, access and reproductive justice. Patty Miller's got a great book called "Good Catholics", which talks about Catholic agitation for abortion, access and reproductive justice. Our dear friend Dr. Sajida Jalalzai, wrote a fantastic piece for Religion Dispatches, it says please stop using Islam to critique the abortion ban because A) incorrect B) is occluding and drawing

attention from this work as specifically work of white Christian nationalism. Samira Mehta has got some great stuff as, as does Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg link to both of them in the show notes. And then Mariamay Kaba who's prison culture on Twitter has a fantastic thread of action items, things that you can do if you want to get involved locally, to support folks seeking access to reproductive care. I also because I am a total dork, I'm going to link you to all the OAs for the cases that I mentioned today. These are just kind of summaries of like, here's what the case is about. Here's how it got decided. Here's why you need to care. And then finally, I will recommend at some kind of popular nonfiction called "The Story of Jane", which is about Chicago, pre-Roe activism, making sure that people could access abortions. It also just got turned into an HBO series, but I haven't watched it yet. The last thing I want to say in the homework section is that medical abortion is still legal in all 50 states. Check out plan C for more info on getting pills and look up drums out of the alley is a great illustrated kind of guide to managing your own medical abortion. And then Jewish Current also has a classic on how to give yourself an abortion if you find yourself in the position of needing one someplace where you can't legally access them.



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 39:28

On that heavy note, shout out to Evie Wolfe, Rachel Zieff, and Juliana Finch, the KI-101 team whose work makes this pod accessible and therefore awesome, listenable and social-media-able among many other things for which we are grateful.



Megan Goodwin 39:47

You can find Megan, that's me on Twitter at MPG PhD and Ilyse at PROF IRMF or the show at keeping it\_101 Find the website at keeping it101.com. Peep the insta if you want to, and drop us a rating or review in your pod catcher of choice. And with that,



Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst 40:03

Peace out nerds.



Megan Goodwin 40:05

Do your homework it's on the syllabus