



Reading and Writing Law and Legal History: Privacy and Reproductive Rights

Lesson 1: Exploring Existing Knowledge/Learning about Courts (1-2 classes, 50 min. periods)

10-15 minutes: In-class writing – discussion of existing knowledge and understanding of civil rights/liberties (e.g., reproductive rights – *Roe v. Wade*, Right to Privacy, etc.)

The purpose of this exercise is to learn more about what the students think or know about a particular topic or subject and for students to feel comfortable discussing the topic or subject.

Hand out pocket US Constitutions and prompt questions (or write questions on classroom board).

Prompt Questions for writing and discussion:

- 1) When you think about reproductive rights in the United States, what comes to mind?
- 2) Have you heard of the Supreme Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade*? If so, describe what you know about this decision? What about Planned Parenthood? What do you know about Planned Parenthood and what is its purpose?
- 3) Do you have a fundamental right to privacy? If so, why? What is privacy? Explain.
- 4) Open the pocket Constitution and read through the Amendments section, beginning with the first 10 Amendments ("Bill of Rights"). Are privacy or reproductive rights included in the Amendments? If so, where? Are they directly mentioned or implied through interpretation?

15-20 minutes: Class Discussion of responses to in-class writing prompts.

Introduce lesson series – Learning about the origin and development of constitutional protections for privacy and reproductive rights through reading legal history and case law, and highlighting the role of New Yorkers, as well as New York law and courts in the origin and development.

15-20 minutes: Review New York and Federal Court System, Appellate Process (see attached). Federal Courts <https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure>; New York Courts <https://www.nycourts.gov/courts/structure.shtml>; Legal Term Glossary <https://www.uscourts.gov/glossary>

Homework Assignment: Read Maria T. Vullo's article, "*People v. Sanger* and the Birth of Family Planning Clinics in America" (2013), and write a 1-2 page response paper. What did you learn after reading it? Did anything described in the article surprise you? If so, what? What sources, background, law, and perspectives did Vullo include in her article about the *People v. Sanger*? Did you think Vullo's article was clear and effective? If so or if not, why?