PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

• Liz Owens
• Director of Community Engagement at Planned Parenthood Association of Utah/Planned Parenthood Action Council of Utah
PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

• Katie Byrd
• Volunteer Leader & Former Engagement Intern at Planned Parenthood Association of Utah
LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Introduce the origins and historical context of Reproductive Justice Theory.
The Origins and Historical Context

• Hundreds of years of **Reproductive Oppression** (the control and exploitation of individuals through our bodies, sexuality, labor), particularly at the intersections of multiple identities at risk for discrimination – such as class, race and gender.
  
  • 1654 African women in slavery had no rights over their bodies or families.
  
  • 1830 Indigenous women and children murdered as an act of war.
  
  • 1943 Japanese Americans sterilized without their knowledge while interred at Tule Lake.
  
  • 1956 clinical trials on early forms of birth control on women living in housing projects in Puerto Rico.
  
  • 2013 women in California prisons being sterilized without their informed consent.
The Origins and Historical Context

- 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, Egypt) and Pro-choice Alliance Conference (IL).
- African and African American women – caucused and challenged the utility of the language of “choice” for their communities.
- 1997 SisterSong Collective formed to educate women of color and policy makers on reproductive and sexual health and rights.
Every person has the human right to:

1. Decide if and when they will have a child and the conditions under which they will give birth.

2. Decide if they will not have a child and their options for preventing or ending a pregnancy.

3. Parent the children they already have with the necessary social supports in safe environments and healthy communities, and without fear of violence from individuals or the government.
Reproductive Oppression as a barrier to health access

• Many WOC engage with the health care system within the historical context of mistrust and trauma (i.e. Eugenics)
• Racism – Personal, Institutional and systemic affect care. The burden affects health outcomes (stress, trauma, etc).
• Systemic barriers – access to transportation, economic means, housing, healthy food, etc.
• Reproductive Health (Health in general) cannot be separated from the issues that affect the lives of women of color.
2 Most Important Takeaways

1. Understand the 3 foundational principles of Reproductive Justice.
2. Understand Reproductive Oppression as a barrier to reproductive health access.
QUESTIONS?
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REFERENCES

• SisterSong www.sistersong.net