

# The politics of pregnancy: Is parenthood destiny or choice in America?



## IN THIS EPISODE

How have government policies *created inequitable access* to abortion? What's the *Hyde Amendment* and what has been its impact over the past 45 years?

What role are **some states** playing in the effort to assure abortion access? **And what can we do now to support reproductive freedoms?** To find out, we spoke to [Cat Duffy](#), policy analyst with the [National Health Law Program](#), who works on reproductive and sexual healthcare access and services, including abortion coverage and access.

## SHOW NOTES

## WE DISCUSS

*Was abortion always a political issue involving the government?*

"Prior to Roe vs. Wade, abortion was just treated as what it is, which is health care. It wasn't until Roe galvanized the religious right that abortion became this like deeply stigmatized taboo issue.

...The government should be involved insofar as they have an obligation to ensure that everyone has access to health care. The government should not be in the business of denying people health care, and we've seen at the state level, in particular, ideological legislators stripping away certain services because they've decided personally that it's wrong." - **Cat Duffy**

### ***Who is most harmed by unequal access to abortion services and why does this issue deserve attention?***

"It is deeply problematic that people will be denied access to care just because of where they live, or how much money they make. It will exacerbate the existing, like preexisting deep, deep inequities in the healthcare system and disproportionately harm people of color, people with low incomes, young people, people living in rural areas who already have restricted access to health care and others." - **Cat Duffy**

### ***What should advocates and legislators keep in mind when designing state-based single-payer systems?***

"...historically we've seen abortion get horse traded away in broader healthcare negotiations. You saw this during the Affordable Care Act and so it

would be very important to make sure that's sexual and reproductive health care is being centered in those negotiations and I think there are like a couple really important questions, like how to deal with the Hyde Amendment." - **Cat Duffy**

## Helpful Links

[National Health Law Program](#)

[Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization](#), **Ballotpedia**

[National Network of Abortion Funds](#)

[Find a Verified Abortion Provider](#)

[INeedAnA.com](#)

[The Hyde Amendment: A Discriminatory Ban on Insurance Coverage of Abortion](#). **Guttmacher Institute**

[Access Denied: Origins of the Hyde Amendment and Other Restrictions on Public Funding for Abortion](#). **ACLU**

[California Future of Abortion Council](#)

# Episode Transcript

*Read the full [episode transcript](#).*

## Cat Duffy Biography

Cat Duffy, PhD, is a Policy Analyst in the National Health Law Program's Washington, DC office. She works on reproductive and sexual health care access and services, with a particular focus on abortion coverage and access.

Before joining NHeLP, Cat was the Associate Director of Policy and Research at The Hub Project, where she managed the research supporting accountability campaigns on issues such as prescription drug prices, health care coverage, and abortion access. Previously, Cat was a State Policy Manager at Planned Parenthood Federation of America for several years, where she worked on several issues including abortion, telehealth, sex education, and gender-affirming health care access. In this role, she primarily focused on abortion policy, supporting the creation of advocacy strategies to protect and expand abortion access across the country.

Cat Duffy completed her PhD at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. Her research agenda focused on health care policy, including issues related to the Affordable Care Act, contraceptive coverage, and Medicaid. Her dissertation was a content analysis of media coverage of the 2017 efforts to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act. Cat was a COMPASS Fellow during her time at USC, where she spent a summer working at the Department of Health and Human Services. She also has a MA in Political Communication from Wake Forest University and a BA in International Relations from Michigan State University's James Madison College.

Outside of the office, Cat loves to read (pretty much anything but there's a special place in her heart for romance and fantasy) and is an avid fan of Survivor.

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