

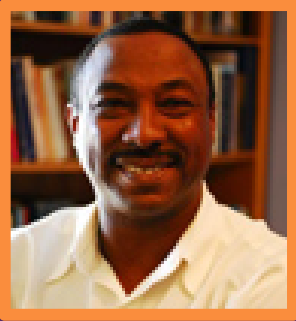
# *A THEOLOGY OF CHOICE*

Session: II

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The Black Church Initiative,  
program of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice*

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# *A THEOLOGY OF CHOICE*

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# THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

## The legal Situation

- ◎ Griswold v. Connecticut 1965 and Eisentat v. Baird 1972
- ◎ Roe V. Wade, 1973
- ◎ Doe v. Bolton, 1973
- ◎ Planned Parenthood v. Casey



# THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

## The ecclesiastical state of affairs

- ◎ What do the different faiths say about abortion?
- What do the different denominations say about abortion?
- African Methodist Episcopal



# THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

The demographic data on who has abortions (derived primarily from the Guttmacher Institute)

- ◎ Forty percent of all women will end a pregnancy by abortion at some time during their reproductive lives.



# THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

The demographic data on who has abortions (derived primarily from the Guttmacher Institute)

## ◉ Age of women having abortions

- ◉ Fifty percent of U.S. women having abortions are younger than 25.
- ◉ Women 20-25 are the largest age cohort of U.S. women who obtain abortions. They represent 33% of all abortions.
- ◉ Teenagers obtain 17% of all abortions.

## ◉ Marital status of women having abortions

- ◉ Two-thirds of abortions are obtained by women who have never been married.

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# THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

The demographic data on who has abortions (derived primarily from the Guttmacher Institute)

## ◎ Social status of women having abortions

- Women living below the federal poverty level (\$9,570 for a single woman with no children) have an abortion rate four times that of women above 300% of the poverty level (44 vs. 10 abortions per 1,000).
- Three-fourths of women obtaining an abortion say they cannot afford a child
- Three-fourths of women obtaining an abortion say having a baby would interfere with work, school or the ability to care for dependents.

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# THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

The demographic data on who has abortions (derived primarily from the Guttmacher Institute)

## ◎ Social status of women having abortions

- Half of women obtaining an abortion say they do not want to be a single parent or are having problems with their husband or partner
- Forty-three percent of women obtaining abortions identify as Protestant.
- Twenty-seven percent of women obtaining abortions identify themselves as Catholic

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# THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

The demographic data on who has abortions (derived primarily from the Guttmacher Institute)

## ◎ Race of women having abortions

- Most women seeking abortion are white (53%); 36% are black, 8% are of another race, and 3% are of unknown race.
- Black women are 4.8 times as likely as non-Hispanic white women to have an abortion
- Hispanic women are 2.7 times as likely to have an abortion as non-Hispanic white women.

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# THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

## Current medical options

**Fact: Most abortions are performed in an outpatient office setting (doctor's office, ambulatory clinic) under local anesthesia with or without sedation.**

◎ How are abortions performed?

- Medical abortions

- Medical regimens (e.g. RU-486) typically involve administration of one or more drugs in order to induce abortion. This method is available for pregnancies of less than nine weeks.

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# THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

## Current medical options

### ◎ How are abortions performed?

#### ■ Surgical abortions

- From nine weeks until 14 weeks, an abortion is performed by a dilatation and suction curettage procedure.
  - Early terminations are performed with cervical dilatation and using a hand-held syringe or a small-bore cannula (a tube) attached to a suction machine.
- At the point of the second trimester dilatation and evacuation is the safest and most common method.



# THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

## Current medical options

- ◉ When are abortions performed
- ◉ Why are abortions performed



# THEOLOGICAL EXPLORATIONS

- ◎ **A Theology of Choice by Madison Shockley**
- ◎ **Moral and Ethical parameters of a theology of choice**



# CONCLUSIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF A THEOLOGY OF CHOICE

- ◎ Questions and Answers from previous sessions
- ◎ What can we offer to the ongoing discussion of a Theology of Choice?