

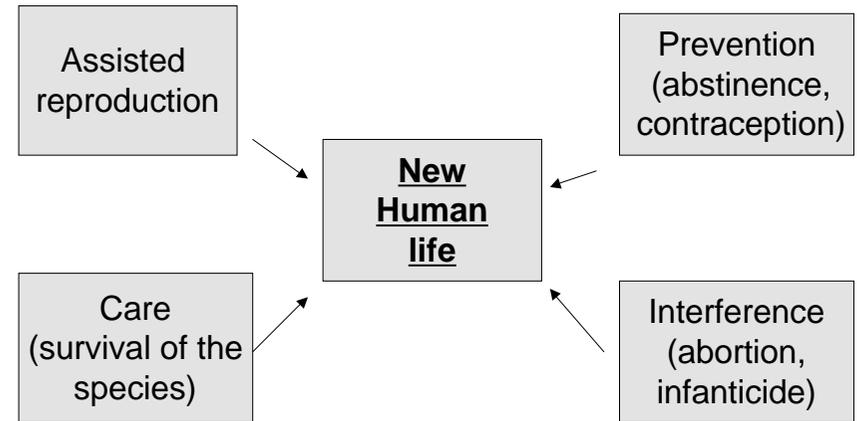
Who is afraid of a woman's right to self-determination?

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From choice, a world of possibilities

New human life

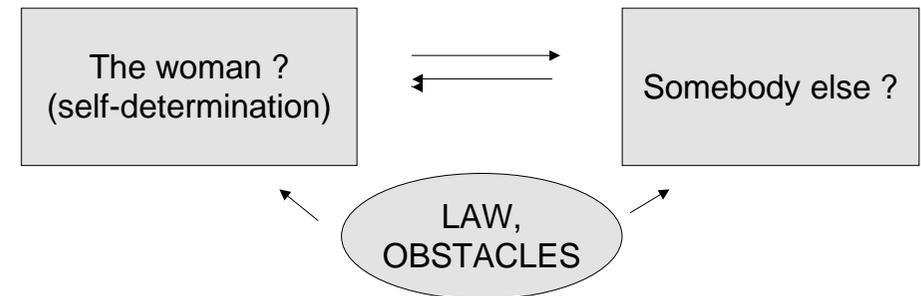


Decisions are made

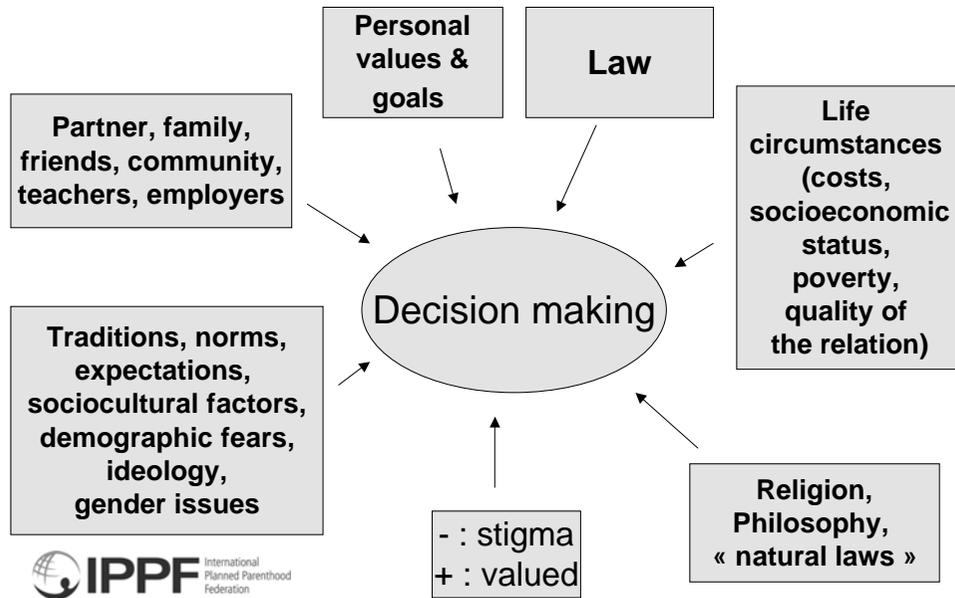
and have to be made

(e.g., time limit for abortion on request)

Who decides?



Determinants in decision making



Abortion: Determinants in decision making

Interferences can increase or decrease the capacity for self-determination

Decreasing the capacity to self-determination

- Who sets obstacles ...
- Who writes laws, norms, rules ...
- Who sets administrative barriers ...

... limiting the access to safe abortion ?
... increasing the morbidity and mortality

« Pro-lifers » are NOT « Pro-life »

- Pro-lifers
 - do not actively oppose
 - the death penalty
 - war
 - do not prevent energetically
 - environmental degradation and pollution
 - stillbirth (annually 4,000,000 mostly preventable deaths)
 - malaria (annually 900,000 deaths of infants < 5 years)
 - Do not support
 - universal access to health care
 - contraception

If it is not to protect life ... what is it for ?

In patriarchal societies, the (legal) system guarantees paternity

« *Sola mater certa est* »

by controlling the female reproductive life and thus sexual activity
and by law (husband IS father)

Controlling the female reproductive life (1)

- By imposing
 - prenuptial virginity
 - abstinence only education
 - arranged marriages
 - dowry systems
 - fidelity
 - harsh punishment of female adultery
 - confinement of women

Controlling the female reproductive life (2)

- By putting barriers to
 - access to contraception
 - Decreases in funding
 - EC, IUD, even pills = abortion
 - sex education
 - education of girls (muslim fundamentalists)
 - access to safe abortion

Controlling the female reproductive life (3)

- Humiliating women by
 - genital cutting
 - stigma on out-of marriage sex and pregnancy
 - stigma on infertility, on breast feeding in public
 - lower salaries, lower inheritance, lower pension
 - considering prostitution « normal »
 - sex selection
- Exerting violence on women:
 - domestic violence, domestic slavery
 - honour killings

Who keeps the system going = who is afraid of a woman's self-determination

- Laws, governments, international treaties, political parties, parliamentarians, lobbyists
- Religions, clergies, popes, sharia, dogms, fundamentalists, integrists, (dubious) natural laws
- Professional organizations, physicians, pharmacists, nurses, midwives, lawyers
- All kind of leaders
- Men and women, public opinion, media

Duplicity in Catholicism

- UK:
 - 65/100 Catholic priests defend the right to use condoms in HIV+/HIV- couples
 - Benedict XVI opposes the use of condom in these circumstances
 - The same 100 Catholic priests give Benedict XVI a 8.9/10 mark for his first year as Pope
Who does the Pope represent ???
Catholics abort almost as often as non-Catholics

Ref: Lancet 2006;367:1559.

Muslim women do not see themselves as oppressed

- Survey, Gallup.
 - Hijab, head scarf, burqa

Modern pro-natalism in front of an ageing population

[Japan] « The people should take their cue from the canine world and breed larger litters of offspring in the Year of the Dog. Dogs produce lots of puppies and, when they do, the pains of labour are easy ».

Prime Minister of Japan, January 2006.

In summary,
who's afraid of a woman's self-determination,
generally speaking ?

Many people,

Men and women,

Almost everybody,

YOU and ME ... but



When it comes to abortion...

... there is an exception:

if full confidentiality is ensured,

every woman will take it upon herself to
abort, if she feels obliged...

Even if she is anti-choice.



The End

Thank you

