



# Sexual and Reproductive Rights Timeline Facilitator's Guide

## OBJECTIVE

This is an interactive activity to inform the group of various events in the history of sexual and reproductive rights in the U.S. and internationally. This activity is best used as an introductory activity to energize group participants about issues that might be discussed further or presented by a speaker or film.

## TIME

30 minutes total

- 5 minutes, introduce activity and pass out folded cards
- 20 minutes, human timeline
- 5 minutes, discussion

## MATERIALS

- Event sheets, printed and folded
- Decade sheets (with 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, etc. printed on them)
- Tape
- Room to move around

## PREPARATION

- Select relevant and appropriate number of events from the timeline list and print them on brightly colored paper, folding them so the event appears on the front cover, and the date and further details are hidden inside.
- Print decades on separate sheets of paper and tape them high on the walls around the room, leaving space for participants to stand under the signs.

## INSTRUCTIONS

- Explain the activity. If you have more participants than event cards, ask for volunteers.
- Tell participants to only read the top page (to themselves), and not to open up the cards. Be sure to emphasize that they are not expected to know the dates for all the events, the activity is designed to surprise!

- Pass out cards to participants/volunteers.
- Tell participants to stand under the decade sign in which they think their event occurred.
- Go around the room and have the participants read aloud the text on the front of the card, then open it and read the actual date and additional details. Not all events will have additional details listed.
- Remember to collect your cards at the end so you can use them again.

## Discussion questions

- What was surprising about this activity?
- What kind of events weren't included that you thought would be?
- What kind of trends do the events reveal?

## FACILITATION NOTES

If you have a very active group, have them yell out the dates they think the event occurred after the event is read aloud but before the date is revealed.

If your group seems intimidated by the activity, use the variation below that encourages the group to guess the dates rather than the individual. If the group has no guesses for a particular event, don't force them to answer, simply ask the person with the card to read the answer. The activity is not designed to be a contest, but an opener for discussion or for another presentation.

## VARIATIONS

If you have a very small group, pass out all your date cards so that each participant has multiple cards. Instead of standing under the decade signs, have them stay in their seats and read aloud the event on the front of the card and have the other participants guess the date. Go around the circle until all the cards are read.

1918	<b>New York court decision legalizes use of contraceptives to prevent infection transmission</b>	1989	<b>Romanian law prohibiting abortion is liberalized, resulting in a 50% decrease in the number of deaths from unsafe abortion in the year following the reform</b>
1965	<b>Tunisia becomes first Muslim country to liberalize its abortion law and now permits abortion without restriction</b>	1994	<b>The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) is held in Cairo</b> The U.S. delegation is instrumental in formulating the language recognizing reproductive rights.
1969	<b>The Jane Collective is formed; it facilitates access to safe but illegal abortion services in the U.S.</b> Jane provided safe, effective and supportive illegal abortions for more than 11,000 women with a safety record comparable to that of legal abortions performed in medical facilities.	2002	<b>At an international conference, the U.S. delegation argues against stating that “consistent condom use” is a viable method of preventing HIV/AIDS transmission</b> Fifth Asian Pacific population conference The U.S. position was defeated by a vote of 32-1.
1970	<b>Title X, the U.S.’s national family-planning program, was established with bipartisan support in congress</b> The establishment of Title X fulfills President Nixon’s declaration that “no American woman should be denied access to family-planning assistance because of her economic condition”	2002	<b>Nepal’s king signs law permitting abortion on broad grounds</b> Immediately following legalization, more than 200 women and girls were released from prison where they were serving sentences for abortion-related crimes. A few still remain in prison awaiting pardon. Comprehensive abortion care is now offered in 35 of Nepal’s 70 districts.
1973	<b>U.S. Supreme Court delivers landmark decision in Roe v Wade, interpreting the constitutional right to privacy to “encompass a woman’s decision whether or not to terminate her pregnancy”</b>	2004	<b>Massachusetts becomes the first and only U.S. state to have full marriage rights for LGBTQ couples</b>
1973	<b>Federal legislation passes that prohibits use of U.S. funds for abortion care overseas</b> Helms Amendment	2005	<b>Gabriela Flores, a 22-year-old mother of three, is arrested in South Carolina for inducing a miscarriage using cytotec, an FDA-approved ulcer drug commonly used by health-care providers to induce abortions</b> Flores, an undocumented immigrant from Mexico, currently awaits trial. If convicted, she faces two years in prison and a \$1000 fine. In a handwritten police statement in Spanish, Flores said “I knew that I was not going to be able to support four kids — two here and two in Mexico...please understand me. They need me a lot. They are little. Please forgive me.”
1976	<b>Congress passes amendment banning use of Medicaid funds for abortion care</b> Hyde Amendment	2006	<b>U.S. secretary of state votes to reject the application of two LGBTQ organizations seeking consultative status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council</b>
1977	<b>Rosie Jimenez, a young mother, crosses the border from the U.S. to Mexico in search of an affordable, illegal abortion. As a result of the complications, she dies of sepsis in a hospital in Texas with an uncashed college scholarship check still in her purse.</b> The first documented case of death connected with the Hyde Amendment. Rosie was denied Medicaid funding for an abortion in the U.S.	2006	<b>Mexico City (Federal District) legalizes same-sex civil unions</b>
1979	<b>The convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) is adopted by the un general assembly</b> The U.S. has yet to ratify CEDAW	2006	<b>Colombia’s Constitutional Court decriminalizes abortion in certain circumstances, easing the country’s previous ban on the procedure</b>
1980	<b>Since Roe, first president with ties to the anti-choice movement elected to office</b> Ronald Reagan stacked the courts with anti-choice judges, enacted the Mexico City Policy (or Global Gag Rule), and on the 10th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, wrote that the decision was unconstitutional and vowed he would continue working to overturn it.	2006	<b>Nicaragua’s legislature votes to ban all abortions, eliminating exceptions for rape, fetal impairment and risk to the life or health of the woman</b>
1984	<b>The White House announces and enforces the Mexico City policy aka the global gag rule</b> The Global Gag Rule restricts international NGOs that receive U.S. funding from providing or referring for abortions or advocating for abortion reform, even with their own non-U.S. Funds. The gag rule was declared by Reagan at a united nations conference on population held in Mexico City. The gag rule was rescinded by Clinton and reinstated by George Bush.	2007	<b>The Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act, passed by Congress in 2003 to prohibit intact dilation and extraction as an abortion method, is upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court</b>
		2007	<b>The legislative assembly of the Federal District of Mexico City passes landmark legislation to decriminalize abortion during the first trimester of pregnancy</b>