



Title, Author

Why Are Women Completely Responsible, Yet, Unable to Make
Reproductive Decisions, Kristy Lisle



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Abstract

The U.S. is on the threshold of a momentous decision regarding women's constitutional right to end a pregnancy. The Supreme Court is poised to decide to stop abortions at 15 weeks or overrule *Roe v. Wade* entirely, potentially reversing 49 years of legal precedence. Fired up to create and visually communicate, the artwork presented was developed from a series of collage studies focusing specifically on the Texas new restrictive abortion laws through a lens that men must be held equally responsible. These collage studies were used for the larger canvas presented, titled, *Texas; Men Should Go To Jail Too!*

Keywords: Reproductive Rights, Abortion Art, *Roe v. Wade*, Texas Abortion Laws

The United States Supreme Court is poised to make a momentous decision in the most influential women’s reproductive rights case in decades, whether to uphold a Mississippi law that bans abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy. At the time of this publication, the court’s six-member conservative majority seemed divided about whether to stop at 15 weeks for now or to overrule *Roe V. Wade* entirely, allowing states to ban abortions at any time or entirely.



Texas; Men Should Go To Jail Too!, 2021 Collage on Canvas, 16” x 40”

According to a leaked draft opinion, in May 2022, prepared by Justice Samuel Alito, the court, in all likelihood, will vote to reverse the *Roe v. Wade* decision. The ruling to overturn would be completely at odds with what the court has upheld over the 49 years, that women and others who can get pregnant have constitutional reproductive rights and the ability to choose to terminate a pregnancy. Twenty-one states are poised to ban abortion if this ruling happens.¹

During the Supreme Court hearing on Wednesday, December 1, 2021, Justice Sotomayor urged her conservative Justice colleagues to follow precedent and not politics in deciding the abortion law. She believes that tossing out the landmark rulings establishing abortion rights would tarnish the court’s reputation and open the floodgates to other challenges to well-settled law. “Will this institution survive the stench this creates in the public perception that the Constitution and its reading are just political acts? I don’t see how it

is possible,” Sotomayor said while questioning Mississippi Solicitor General Scott Stewart.²

Women are on the threshold of losing the freedom to decide about their bodies. In Texas,



Texas; Men Should Go To Jail Too!, Close-up of the image.

they can no longer make decisions about their human reproductive rights. Women who end their pregnancy after six weeks will go to jail. Why is it only a woman’s responsibility? Shouldn’t men be held equally responsible if a pregnancy is ended?

Fired up to create and visually communicate, I developed this series of collage studies focusing specifically on the Texas new restrictive abortion laws through a lens that men must be held equally responsible. These collage

studies were used for the larger canvas title, *Texas; Men Should Go To Jail Too!*

The medium of collage allows ambiguity in the images, enabling me to engage the viewer in multiple interpretive possibilities. All the while, using symbolism and typography, I stay focused on the blatant injustice written into the Texas law that excludes the responsibilities of men and disregards the rights of all women and others that can get pregnant, especially those who are BIPOC and/or live in poverty.

Becky Sullivan, “21 States Posied to Ban or Severely Restrict Abortion if ‘Roe v. Wade’ is Overturned, NPR, Dec 2, 2021, Date of Access Feb 2, 2022, <https://www.npr.org/2021/12/02/1061015753/abortion-roe-v-wade-trigger-laws-mississippi-jacksons-womens-health-organization>

Gregorian Dareh, “Sotomayor Suggests Supreme Court Won’t ‘Survive the Stench’ of Overturning Roe v. Wade”, NBC News, Dec 1, 2021, Date of Access Feb 1, 2022, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/supreme-court/sotomayor-suggests-supreme-court-won-t-survive-stench-overturning-roe-n1285166>

About the Author

After working professionally for 30 years in higher education, Kristy Lisle decided to be a part of the great resignation of 2021, leaving her career to pursue her life-long goals of achieving a Master’s in Fine Arts degree and becoming a full-time artist. In May of 2022, she completed her first year of the three-year MFA program in Print and Narrative Forms. Moving from California back to the Midwest, Kristy is currently living in Milwaukee, attending the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee.