Abortion & Reproductive Rights Under Nationalist Regimes in Twentieth Century Europe

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Feminists and women’s groups around the world have been struggling to achieve some hard fought battles for equality and recognition for a very long time. Each success and each step forward has given many a reason to celebrate. But each success cannot be assumed to be complete, and “progress” is not inevitable. At specific points in time and geographic regions, strides forward in the battle towards equality have been followed by steps back—a re-patriarchalization of sorts. In polities across Europe, women won reproductive rights and choices and access to public life under some regimes, only to lose them with a change of government under specific political, economic and social circumstances. This paper assesses the impact of the rise to power of nationalist regimes, particularly during periods of ethnic conflict and unrest, on the reproductive rights of the women who lived through the periods. Four specific cases are presented: Germany, Italy, Yugoslavia (later Croatia) and Revolutionary (and post-Soviet) Russia. These four cases exemplify the transitions from non-nationalist governments to nationalist and back. At each point, population policies are altered and redrafted to reflect the political interests of those in power. This paper shows that one step forward for women can and is followed by two steps back when the nation’s “health” is put ahead of women’s health by nationalist regimes.

Over the past couple of decades there has been a greater focus on the profound differences that exist between diverse categories and groups of women around the world, with particular emphasis placed on the often overlooked women of “the third world” or “developing countries.” Today, there are numerous solid feminist collections which have included research on women and women’s struggles from around the world (Yuval-Davis & Anthias, 1989; Charles & Hintjens, 1998; Wilford & Miller, 1998; Yuval-Davis & Werbner, 1999; Kaplan, Alarcón & Moallem, 1999).

In contrast to this, popular and politically charged sources have used women’s issues from around the world to reinforce “us and them” dichotomies, as political needs arose. Despite vociferous efforts by international women’s groups to raise awareness, women’s battles for

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1 Material for this paper is culled from a much larger and broader project on the impact of the rise of nationalist regimes on family and gender policies in selected polities in twentieth century Europe (Albanese, 2003). Address all correspondence to Patrizia Albanese, Department of Sociology, Ryerson University, 350 Victoria Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada (e-mail: palbanes@ryerson.ca)
political rights and reproductive health often seem to get ignored by those who can legislate change, until fighting for women’s rights and health appear to be useful in achieving broader national goals. It is as if women’s health and related issues gain broader international attention when doing so appears to serve a larger political agenda. For example, when George W. Bush (Jr.) came to power, he declared that “there are no women’s issues” and closed the “women’s outreach office.” Apparently, in his view, equality between men and women in the United States had been achieved and there were no women’s issues worthy of his government’s attention. In sharp contrast, there was the clearly oppressive patriarchal Taliban in Afghanistan but even they were exempt from serious scrutiny, until after September 11, 2001.

The Taliban came to power in Kabul in 1996/97. They immediately placed restrictions on Afghan women. Up to this point, Afghan women represented about 70% of teachers and 40% of doctors (Brant, 2001) but the Taliban banned women’s education, employment and activism, severely restricting their physical presence in the Afghan society (Caiazza, 2001). American feminist groups like the Feminist Majority Foundation almost immediately launched what they called “the Campaign to Stop Gender Apartheid in Afghanistan.” They were virtually ignored for about 5 years. Not two months after September 11, 2001 —by mid-November, 2001 —The Feminist Majority was invited by high ranking State Department officials, along with a number of other women’s groups to the “executive floor” of the White House to discuss Afghan “women’s issues” (Brant, 2001). On the same day, top women in the White House held a “women only” conference call with members of Congress (Brant, 2001). A day later, America’s “First Lady” (Laura Bush) kicked off a media campaign highlighting the brutal treatment of women under the Taliban and Al Qaeda (Brant, 2001). She valiantly declared that “the fight against terrorism is also a fight for the rights and dignity of women” (Brant, 2001, p. 7). According to leaders like Bush, “our” women’s issues were supposedly solved, but “theirs” (years later) needed our assistance.

As we focused attention on “their” plight, we were seemingly expected to ignore some of the similarities between “us and them.” Many of these similarities, I will show, come in the form of patriarchal policies, which rear their heads at specific points in time and under specific political circumstances. There are socio-political milieus, in both the proverbial “here” and “there” which contribute to a revival of patriarchal policies, long after such policies were believed to be a thing of the past. This paper focuses on the impact of the rise of nationalist regimes in selected polities in twentieth century Europe, to show how fragile “our own” rights are and to show that and how nationalism contributes to a re-patriarchaization
of gender and family policies “here” (in the West), regardless of how far we think we have come on the rocky road towards gender equality.

The goal of this paper is to show that: 1) when women’s (reproductive) health issues gain considerable attention, they at times do so because they serve broader national agendas; 2) women’s reproductive health issues remain contentious and unresolved, even in the West, at specific points in time; 3) reproductive rights that have been gained do not come with a guarantee that they will be upheld in the future; 4) and finally, under nationalist regimes, women’s health is secondary (or worse) to national “health.” More concretely, this paper aims to demonstrate that some European nations under the control of nationalists can and have become un-developed, re-patriarchalized or archaized at points in their histories, particularly when it comes to women’s reproductive rights. This paper assesses the impact of a nationalist rise to power on women’s reproductive rights, which inevitably, has implications for women’s health, in selected European nations at two points in the 20th century.

The map of Europe was significantly altered in the twentieth century, not once, but twice. National borders within Europe were redrawn with the collapse (partitioning) of the Habsburg and Ottoman empires following World War I and the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, and again with the “collapse” of communism in the Soviet Union and other parts of Eastern Europe after 1989. At both points, one of the instruments used in the carving up of Europe was nationalism.

**DEFINING NATIONALISM**

According to Anthony Smith (1991), nationalism is an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential “nation.” Much of the current literature on nationalism defines nation as a group of people who share objective (language, religion, etc.) and subjective (identity, myths, beliefs, a sense of historical continuity, etc.) characteristics (Nootens, 1998). Nationalism posits a special relationship between state and people, whereby nation is equated with a people, united by *some* combination of history and sentiment. Nationalists use religion and other characteristics which evoke strong sentiment, to create a sense of unity and belonging. Gellner (1983) noted that “nationalism uses the pre-existing, historically inherited proliferation of cultures or cultural wealth, though it uses them very selectively, and it most often transforms them radically” (p. 55). In other words, nationalists selectively use ethnicity, religion, race, language, and other cultural artifacts to construct national unity (Gellner, 1983).
Nationalism encompasses at least two key ideas. It demands the congruence of political and national units (Gellner, 1983); and includes the idea that the political duty of nationals to the nation-state overrides all other public obligations (Hobsbawm, 1992). It elevates the nation-state to a place of primacy - “one that transcends class, kinship or regional affiliations in commanding popular loyalty” (Kupchan, 1995, p. 2). Nationalism entails a perception that states have “natural” jurisdictions and legitimacy, which are dictated by, or are expressions of, the will and unity of the nation, and despite actual inequalities that exist within a group, nationalism delineates the nation as a deep, horizontal comradeship or super-family. Like (patriarchal) families, the nation provides a sense of belonging and place, but also commands respect and obedience. Thus, traditionally fragmented, dissimilar and stratified social groups within a polity come to see themselves as a united “brotherhood of nationals” (Smith, 1991, p.76). But where does this leave “sisters,” the women of a nation?

The word “nationality” is derived from the Latin word *natio*, meaning “to be born” —implying a common biological origin and descent. In many cases nationalists take this quite literally by viewing the entire group as a biological self-perpetuating group (Calhoun, 1993). In societies charged with nationalism women are often seen as biological reproducers of the nation and carriers of culture (i.e., “mother tongue”), and in times of heightened tensions, men are seen as defenders of the nation and martyrs, while women are viewed principally as mothers. This becomes especially clear during nationalist drives for self-determination, as nationalists press for the creation or maintenance of a homogenous population.

Under these circumstances, when a group defines itself as a nation there is often a reification of the national “self” and a creation of boundaries between “us” and “them” (i.e., religiously, ethnically or racially, we are what they are not). When nationalists strive to achieve self-determination, the boundary between “self” and “other” becomes more pronounced and national homogeneity becomes a goal. As a result, a population’s “purity” and growth becomes a focus of state attention. Reproduction of new nationals becomes seen as essential for national “health” and longevity, and becomes increasingly less likely to be seen as a woman’s health issue.

National “health” is perceived as far too important to be left in the hands of individual women and thus comes to be seen as something that is or should become regulated by the nation-state. The right kind of men (“our” men) should partner with the right kind of women (“our women”), and all other combinations -(homo)sexual, bi-ethnic/-racial, etc.- are treated as undesirable and unnatural.
Tensions intensify the drive to maintain national purity, on the one hand, and produce a steady supply of “brothers/warriors” and “sisters/mothers,” ready to secure and defend the future glory of the nation and ensure the nation’s longevity. Thus, with this emphasis on the preservation and perpetuation of the “self” at the expense of, or in competition with the “other,” pronatalism becomes a key part of nationalist family policy. Women’s reproductive rights, and individual women’s health as a consequence, are jeopardized, to ensure the “good health” of the nation.

Following this line of thinking to its “logical” conclusion, debates around liberal access to abortion, the regulation of family size and the use of contraception become analogous to treason, “race suicide” and genocide, that is “crimes against the integrity and health of the race” (De Grazia, 1992, 55). This is precisely what transpired in parts of Europe throughout the twentieth century. This work shows that even after women won reproductive rights, the rise to power of nationalists resulted in the actual or attempted removal of these rights, all for the “good of the nation.”

Comparative case-oriented research is commonly used in the studies of nationalism. According to Theda Skocpol (1995), comparative historical analysis can proceed in two important ways. First, one can try to establish that several cases having in common the phenomenon one is trying to explain, also have in common a set of causal factors, although they vary in other ways. This approach has been called the “Method of Agreement.” Second, one can contrast the cases in which the phenomenon to be explained and the hypothesized causes are present with other cases in which the phenomenon and causes are absent, an approach known as the “Method of Difference.” She added that taken alone, the “Method of Agreement” is better suited for establishing valid causal associations, but combining these two comparative logics is certainly “desirable” (Skocpol, 1995, p. 37). This paper does the latter.

By comparing cases where nationalists have come to power, with cases where they have not, I control for the effects of global structural trends that may have an overall effect on women’s rights at that time. For example, all the cases selected (nationalist and non-nationalist) experienced tremendous loss of life in World War I, but did all respond with pronatalist/anti-abortion measures in the inter-war period? I selected two relatively concurrent cases where nationalists came to power, compared to two concurrent non-nationalist cases, in order to control for nation-specific economic and social trends. Controlling for this helps to isolate the effect of nationalism per se. I also chose to focus on two historical periods in order to control for changes over time.
This work therefore focuses on four European cases: Germany, Italy, Yugoslavia (later, Croatia) and Revolutionary Russia (later, post-Soviet Russia), at two points in time: the inter-war and the post-1989 periods in the twentieth century. These particular cases were selected because two cases, Italy and Germany, that were both identified as nationalist by numerous authors (including Lipset, 1963; Nolte, 1963; Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1990; Greenfeld, 1992) in the first time period, were non-nationalist in the second time period (post-1989). The two cases ruled by non-nationalist (which had internationalist/multinational beginnings) in the inter-war period, Yugoslavia and Revolutionary Russia, were ruled by nationalists early on in the post-1989 period (see Marsh, 1996; Burlatsky, 1998; Tishkov and Olcott, 1999). That is, about post-Soviet Russia, Tishov and Olcott (1999) explain that “today, ethno-nationalism compensates for lack of democracy and civic loyalty” and add that “the notion of the Russian nation in its ethnic form is both relatively new and of elite design” (p. 84). Similarly, Franjo Tudjman, independent Croatia’s first (post-Yugoslav) leader was a self-declared nationalist (see Tudjman, 1990).

**Table I: The Research Model**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period I - Interwar Period</th>
<th>Period II - Post-1989</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nationalism’s Highs</td>
<td>Nationalism’s Highs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nazi Germany</td>
<td>Revolutionary Russia</td>
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<td>Fascist Italy</td>
<td>Kingdom of Yugoslavia</td>
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<td>Nationalism’s Lows</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-Soviet Russia</td>
<td>Independent Croatia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent Croatia</td>
<td>Today’s Italy</td>
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This comparison was done to assess whether despite the passage of time and the supposed “progress” that comes with it, where nationalists take power, we see an actual or attempted re-patriarchalization of women’s reproductive rights. Clearly, no two cases are perfectly comparable as actual nations cannot be pure ideal types. There are always differences between cases, nonetheless, there is something to be gained from comparisons despite the difficulties in making perfect generalizations. From my point of view, this model will assist in assessing whether the rise to power of nationalist leaders resulted in an actual or attempted removal/re-patriarchalization of women’s reproductive rights.
FOUR CASES

Italy - Before Mussolini (Decriminalization of Abortion)

On February 18, 1861, an all-Italian Parliament in Turin bestowed the title of King of Italy upon Victor Emmanuel. It took almost a decade, until September 20, 1870, (Italy’s national holiday) before Italian troops entered Rome and declared it the capital of a unified Italy (Albrecht-Carrié, 1950). During Crispi’s leadership (his first term: 1887-1891), Italy experienced a number of progressive reforms dealing with matters of local government, education and social legislation. In this period, there was the establishment of the Zanardelli Code of 1889. The code resulted in the decriminalization of abortion, however the Code prescribed harsh sentences for abortion done late in a pregnancy (Quine, 1996). Although Italy was still profoundly patriarchal, abortion, early in a pregnancy, was decriminalized, contrary to the wishes of the Catholic Church (DeGrazia, 1992), and decades before Fascists came to power.

Italy - Mussolini’s Rule (Nationalism’s Highs: Criminalization of Abortion)

The Fascist era began October 29, 1922, with Benito Mussolini’s violent seizure of power in Italy. Fascism, an intensified form of nationalism (Breuilly, 1994), took hold in Italy, under Mussolini’s rule for the next two decades. Throughout the period, the Italian nation was constantly perceived and depicted, especially by Mussolini himself, as being in danger, threatened by both internal and external enemies (Durham, 1998). According to Mussolini, something would have to be done to protect the Italian population from its inevitable demise (Mussolini, 1964 - large scale emigration and WWI losses were major concerns, Ipsen, 1996). In one of his often cited speeches, Mussolini stated,

_The birth rate is not simply an index of the progressive power of the nation; it is not simply as Spengler suggests, “Italy’s only weapon”; it is also that which distinguishes the Fascist people from the other peoples of Europe as an index of vitality and the will to pass on this vitality over the centuries. If we do not succeed in reversing this trend, all that the Fascist revolution has accomplished and will accomplish in the future will be perfectly useless, as at a certain point in time fields, schools, barracks, ships, and workshops will be empty_ (Mussolini, 1964, 216).

In his pre-fascist, anti-clerical, socialist period, Mussolini was a supporter of birth control (despite war losses). Not long after this,
however, in 1924 he introduced penal sanctions for anyone who advocated such measures. He specified twelve children as the ideal number for a family—as the only way Italians could provide the soldiers necessary for future wars (Birnbaum, 1986). In 1927 Mussolini set a twenty-five year goal of increasing the Italian population to sixty million from forty. As part of this, he imposed a tax on “unjustified celibacy” and childless marriages. Despite his early efforts, it was estimated that in 1929, abortions were thought to be running as high as 30 percent of all conceptions (Birnbaum, 1986). As a result, the state banned abortion outright, and banned the sale of contraceptive devices and sex education (DeGrazia, 1992). Interestingly, now fascist family policies came to codify the Catholic Church’s invariant conservative views on marriage, reproduction and the patriarchal family.

The Royal Decree adopted in 1931 prohibited the sale of contraceptives and publication of birth control propaganda (Gauthier, 1996). The penal code of 1931 prescribed heavy penalties, including jail terms of two to five years for anyone procuring or abetting abortion and one to four years for women who performed the abortion herself (DeGrazia, 1992, 58). Doctors were also ordered to report and register all pregnancies. As a result, women often paid for their own clandestine abortions, which carried with them a serious risk of infection and permanent health damage (DeGrazia, 1992). The actual number of these extremely risky abortions remains unknown, as the vast majority of them were never discovered by the authorities, nonetheless, many women experienced serious health problems and death (Detragaiche, 1980).

Ironically, Mussolini equated the health of the individual with the health of the nation but at the same time, women’s own health knowledge was dismissed. Fascist scientists set out to demonstrate that women were “ill-prepared for the sacred and difficult mission of maternity” (DeGrazia, 1992, 54). Fascists took it upon themselves to revamp views of female physicality, the female body and reproduction, all with the goal of boosting birth rates (Ipsen, 1996). Despite all efforts to do the contrary, the birth rate declined. In the period from 1921 to 1925, there were 29.9 live births per 1000. Just over a decade later, from 1936 to 1940, the birth rate fell to 23.1 (DeGrand, 2000). Clearly, Fascist efforts failed in their goal to change fertility patterns.

On April 29, 1945, after 22 years in power, the Fascist era came to an end in Italy, with the bodies of Mussolini and his mistress hanging in Piazzale Loreto in Milan. But the legacy of Fascism, particularly in the area of women’s reproductive rights remained long after that day.
Italy - Post-War Modernization (Nationalism’s Laws: Decriminalization of Abortion)

It was not until after 1968 (like many other Catholic and Non-Catholic Western nations) that Italian feminists achieved their goals of changing legislation around reproductive rights. A major legal and political challenge connected to family life surrounded the legalization of abortion and access to various forms of contraception. Major changes on this issue came about in the 1970s but until then, abortion in Italy was strictly illegal, under all circumstances (Keates, 1994). Despite it being illegal, it was widely practised, often even under medical supervision. For example, Dr. Giorgio Conciani ran a gynaecological clinic where he was said to have performed approximately 10 “illegal” abortions per day in the early 1970s, at the cost of L100 000 to L150 000 (Keates, 1994), just under $100 CND.

Until the 1970s, in Italy, abortion was treated as a crime “against the race” (Gauthier, 1996). This was clearly a remnant of nationalist and pronatalist ideas of the Fascists of the 1930s that were maintained by the Catholic church and Catholic political parties throughout the 1950s and 1960s. It was not until 1969 that there was an extensive debate on lifting the ban on family planning activities and the sale of contraceptives that had been in place since 1931 (Livi-Bacci & Landes, 2001). As a result, liberal access to contraception was legally authorized in 1971 (same year as in the United States), replacing a Royal Decree adopted in 1931 prohibiting the sale of contraceptives and publication of birth control propaganda (Gauthier, 1996).

It took a number of years more before the abortion law was changed. It was the passing of Law 194, in 1978, that rendered abortion legal in the first trimester. The 1978 law stipulated that abortion be allowed, in the first trimester, and only when a woman’s physical and psychological health was at risk (Bettarini & D’Andrea, 1996). Even with that stipulation, there was a great deal of opposition to the law, to the point where a proposal to repeal the law was seriously considered in 1981. Like divorce legislation a decade earlier, the abortion law and the proposal to repeal the law were dealt with through a referendum vote. In 1981, the proposal to repeal the law was rejected by nearly 80 percent of Italian voters, and the law legalizing abortion was thus confirmed (Hobsbawm, 1995; Bettarini & D’Andrea, 1996; Livi-Bacci & Landes, 2001). Nonetheless, even though abortion is now legal, abortions performed by doctors but not properly reported are viewed as illegal (Bettarini & D’Andrea, 1996).

Since the early 1980s, the number of abortions performed in Italy have been declining. Abortion rates peaked in 1983 at 16.9 abortions per 1000
women of reproductive age but dropped to 9.8 per 1000 in 1993 (Bettarini & D’Andrea, 1996). It is interesting to note that compared to rates in other European nations, abortion rates among Italian adolescents are considerably lower (Bettarini & D’Andrea, 1996). The abortion rate for Italian women, ages 15-19 was 4.6 per 1000 in 1987, while in Finland it was 15.7 and in England and Wales it was 20.9 (Bettarini & D’Andrea, 1996). In part, this may have to do with legislative restrictions calling for parental consent for the procedure to take place. If they cannot obtain parental consent, young women under the age of 18 can also have abortions if they obtain the authorization of a judge.

Like in many other countries, the abortion debate has not been completely settled. It was rekindled in Italy in the late 1980s and again in the early 1990s (Keates, 1994), and it appears to show no signs of settling, even today. Abortion remains controversial in Italy, particularly given the conservative views of the Catholic hierarchy (Bettarini & D’Andrea, 1996), but to date, no changes to the law have been made. The proportion of those who oppose the current law remained unchanged between 1988 and 1994, at about 24% (Keates, 1994).

There is no doubt that since the 1970s there has been a tug-of-war between groups seeking to “modernize” laws and policies surrounding family and gender issues, and conservative elements fighting to prevent change. Nonetheless, today’s Italy is vastly different from the Italy under Mussolini. Clearly, under fascist rule, and in keeping with nationalist pronatalist sentiments, women’s reproductive rights were sacrificed for the “greater good of the nation.” Nationalist efforts were a failure, as birth rates continued to fall throughout the 1930s, but the lives of women who lived through the period were severely altered: many experienced serious health problems and even death (Detragaiche, 1980). Following the fall of Fascism, Italy did “modernize” but it took considerable effort and time to do away with remnants of Fascist patriarchal family policies.

**Germany - Weimar Republic (Decriminalization of Abortion)**

The first few decades of the twentieth century were tumultuous for Germans. They fought and lost the First World War, and almost immediately found themselves in the middle of civil unrest resulting in the abdication of the Kaiser and the proclamation of the Weimar Republic. With the establishment of the new Republic, there was the introduction of a new constitution in Germany. Among other things, the new Weimar Constitution of 1918/19 stipulated that men and women shall have basically the same rights and duties. Women’s groups in Germany waged vigorous campaigns, especially after 1902, with the establishment of the Deutscher Verband für Frauenstimmrecht (German Union for Women’s
Suffrage) to win the right to vote (Evans, 1976). With the new Weimar Constitution, women were eligible to vote, hold public office, and pursue careers. The Republic introduced female suffrage in 1918, before most other European nations. Between 70% to 90% of all eligible women took advantage of this and voted in Weimar elections (Koonz, 1977). In the Weimar republic, due to the sex ratio imbalance caused by World War I, there were over one million more women voters than men voters (Evans, 1976). Furthermore, women made up between 6% to 9% of elected delegates in parliament. Therefore, when it came to implementing social policies, women were, at least to a certain extent, a force to be reckoned with. Women’s groups pressed parliament for progressive legislation, including the promotion of “voluntary motherhood” and heightening of women's sexual freedom.

In 1926, the government liberalized abortion laws by reducing the severity of sentences for women and abortion providers (Quine, 1996). Though this was not a fundamental change, it effectively made abortion a misdemeanour rather than a crime. One year later, in 1927, the German Supreme Court ruled that abortion for medical reasons was legal if the pregnancy posed a danger to the mother. This allowed for a wider interpretation of the law and as a result, there was the creation of abortion clinics throughout Germany. Birth control clinics were also set up to provide cheap contraceptives to the working class (Quine, 1996). The entire German system of nationalized welfare was one of the most advanced of its day (Quine, 1996). Much of this changed after 1933.

**Germany - Hitler’s Rule (Nationalism’s Highs: Criminalization of Abortion)**

On January 30, 1933, President Hindenburg entrusted the chancellorship of Germany to Adolf Hitler, marking the beginning of Nazi rule in Germany. National Socialism, like other nationalisms, promised its people unity, pride and future glory in return for obedience and loyalty. Its demands on its citizens began posthaste. One of the demands had to do with correcting what was believed to be Germany’s “impending shortage of parents” (Kirkpatrick, 1938). Hitler (1943) stated “German boy, do not forget you are a German, and little girl, remember that you are to become a German mother” (p. 12). To assist the “little girls” in their path towards motherhood, Hitler advocated early marriage, promised special marriage loans and better chances of promotion for engaged couples (Thomas, 1943). Increasingly harsh restrictions were placed on the use of contraceptives. While these seemed in line with the goals of Catholic leaders at the time, the Nazi Party’s ultimate goal was to boost “racially pure” birth rates. Hitler appeared to support Christianity in general, but in *Mein Kampf*, he clearly outlined his goal of not
destroying religious faith without first creating something better. His idea of “something better” was to establish the “Nazi faith” (Koonz, 1981), and this faith required a large and growing number of followers. Gellner (1983) noted that “Nazi Germany did not worship itself by pretending to worship God or even Wotan; it overtly worshipped itself” (p. 56).

National Socialists used both “positive” and “negative” measures when it came to boosting “racially pure” birth rates. The most obvious example of the regime’s negative measures was the introduction of what became the most severe legislation against abortion and birth control in all of Europe (Quine, 1996). In May 1933 abortion became seen as “a crime against the race” and was punishable by a maximum sentence of fifteen years. Supreme judicial authorities recommended capital punishment for second offenders, as abortion (of Aryan fetuses) came to be seen as a form of treason (Bleuel, 1973). This was especially promoted during the Second World War, when special courts were established with the power to impose the death penalty for those who performed illegal abortions. Records show that a number of women who were convicted of being abortionists were indeed executed during the war (Quine, 1996).

There were other negative measures introduced to establish and maintain a new “racial” order based on the idea that there existed hierarchies of human worth. Some of these measures involved the systematic depriving of individual reproductive rights and freedoms, which included forced sterilizations and abortions for “undesirable groups” (Quine, 1996). Thus, while there were pronatalist policies implemented to boost birth rates of “desirables,” there were anti-natalist measures introduced to limit and diminish birth rates among “undesirables.” Jews were especially targeted as “undesirables” (see Arendt, 1951), and treated particularly brutally after 1938 (Koonz, 1981). That year, a nationwide pogrom began in earnest (Koonz, 1981). The situation became more dire as years passed. In the summer of 1941 the “Führer’s order” was issued to annihilate German Jews (Ayçoberry, 1999). As much has been already written about, millions perished as a result.

In Mein Kampf, Hitler wrote that “the mightiest counterpart to the Aryan is represented by the Jew” (1943, p. 300). In the Weimar Republic, even before his rise to power, Hitler spoke out fiercely against “the ethical

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2 It is widely accepted that race is a social construct and not a biological fact (see Montagu, 1974). This is especially obvious in the German case (see Arendt, 1951). Extreme nationalism uses “race” (superior/us and inferior/them) in propaganda drives to rally the masses. According to Arendt (1951) “Nazi propaganda was ingenious enough to transform antisemitism into a principle of self-definition...This gave the masses of atomized, undefinable, unstable and futile individuals a means of self-definition and identification which not only restored some of the self-respect they had formerly derived from their function in society, but also created a kind of spurious stability which made them better candidates for an organization” (p.365).
and moral contamination of the body politic” (Bleuel, 1973, p. 31). When he spoke of “contamination” he was often specifically referring to syphilis, which, according to Hitler was a typical Jewish attribute, set in place to debilitate the German people (Bleuel, 1973). For example, Hitler wrote “with satanic joy in his face, the black-haired Jewish youth lurks in wait for the unsuspecting girl whom he defiles with his blood, thus stealing her from her people. With every means he tries to destroy the racial foundations of the people he has set out to subjugate” (1943, p. 325). Consequently, according to Hitler, the miscegenation with Jews would result in the contamination of the German “race.” Hitler (1943) wrote: “it [nature] shows with terrifying clarity that in every mingling of Aryan blood with that of lower peoples the result was the end of the cultured people” (p. 286). Forced abortions and sterilizations for “undesirables” would help to prevent this in the future. Thus, once in power, Hitler implemented policies aimed at ensuring “sexual hygiene.” He wrote: “For me and all true National Socialists there is but one doctrine: people and fatherland” (Hitler, 1943, p. 214). He added:

What we must fight for is to safeguard the existence and reproduction of our race and our people, the sustenance of our children and the purity of our blood, the freedom and independence of the fatherland, so that our people may mature for the fulfilment of the mission allotted it by the creator of the universe (Italics in original. Hitler, 1943, p. 214).

Therefore, while miscegenation was condemned and precluded, often through brutal means, including forced sterilization, things were quite different for those considered to be of the “proper racial stock.” For these, the Party promoted the idea that the activities of women should be restricted to “traditional womanly” (read “motherly”) pursuits. Comparing mothers to soldiers, Hitler declared that “every child that a woman brings into the world is (equivalent to) a battle, a battle waged for the existence of her people” (Baynes, 1942, p. 529). Hitler stated “the programme of our National Socialist Women has in truth but one single point, and that point is The Child” (Baynes, 1942, p. 530). Nazis thus promoted compulsory motherhood for “valuable” German women, for whom abortion was illegal, and compulsory sterilization for those deemed “racially unfit.” This was a key policy of the Nazi Party throughout its dozen years in power.

Throughout this period, crude birth rates did increase, at least until 1939. On the other hand, throughout the Second World War, rates declined (United Nations, 1949). In the end, not only did the Party lose the
war, but also, it lost its battle to boost birth rates. An SS official estimated that despite laws banning them, in 1936 as many as 500,000 abortions had been performed, and by the end of the 1930s estimates ranged from 500,000 to 1,000,000 abortions (Koonz, 1981). Because of the clandestine nature of the procedures, many women experienced serious health problems. Those fortunate enough to have them performed by doctors were putting the lives of doctors at risk. Female physicians were especially under scrutiny by state officials. Koonz (1981) noted that “although less than five percent of all physicians were women, the majority of physicians arrested on charges of abortion were women” (p. 186). Many women’s lives, patients’ and doctors’ alike, were adversely affected. Fortunately, the Nazi Party’s demise loosened the pronatalist yoke placed on German women. This was especially true in East Germany following the war.

German - Post-War, Post-Nationalist (Nationalism’s Laws: Decriminalization of Abortion)

The Second World War ended in September 1945. Soon after, Germany was carved up into four administrative zones. The Russian occupied zone eventually came to be East Germany and the American, British and French zones became West Germany. As a result of the divide, the two Germanies became socially, politically and economically distinct polities. While both sides clearly distanced themselves from Nazi pronatalist policies, separate and diverse population policies developed on the two sides of the border.

After the Second World War but before the German Unification, family policies in East Germany (the GDR - German Democratic Republic) and West Germany (FRG: Federal Republic of Germany) were quite distinct. In the GDR (East Germany) abortion on demand, in the first trimester, was introduced in 1971-72. It granted free and legal abortion on demand during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy (Adler, 1997). The law also required that women have access to free contraception (Funk, 1993). In sharp contrast, in the FRG, abortion laws were among the most restrictive in Europe at the time. The FRG permitted first-trimester abortions with compulsory counselling in 1974, although with much opposition. By 1976, the FRG law was changed to make abortions even harder to obtain. Abortion was seen as especially inaccessible in Catholic areas like Bavaria.

With German re-unification in 1990, the two states were left with the difficult task of unifying and standardizing family policies, and one of the most contentious issues was abortion. At the time of the unification, a battle raged between those wanting to
restrict abortion and those wanting to liberalize it. A compromise was reached in the German parliament in 1992, more or less keeping the FRG law and changing the more liberal GDR’s law, only to be struck down in 1993. Another compromise was reached in 1995, but by 1996, individual provinces like Bavaria, placed restrictions on abortion. Today, the issue is simply avoided in the parliament.

It should be clearly noted that while abortion remains a highly contested issue in Germany today, it does not carry the same significance it did during the Nazi era. Today, many argue against abortion on moral grounds, whereas, the National Socialists of the past argued against abortion on nationalist grounds. To them, abortion was seen as an affront to the nation, treasonous, and a step towards racial suicide. Clearly, in nationalist rhetoric, the abortion issue is of especially grave importance.

Revolutionary Russia (Nationalism’s Laws: Decriminalization of Abortion)

For centuries, Russia was ruled by a feudal aristocracy. This changed early in the twentieth century with the coming of the Russian Revolution in 1917. The Revolution marked the definitive end of feudalism in Russia, and the beginning of a transformation into a large-scale socialist economy. A key goal of the Revolution was the internationalization of the proletarian movement for emancipation. Especially in its early phases, the Revolution had a profound impact on the lives of women who lived through the period. One of the first things the Bolsheviks did after taking power included the removal of legal barriers to equality between Russian men and women. Furthermore, the Family Code of October 1918 abolished all distinctions between children born in and out of wedlock, and gave each parent equal authority over children, while giving children more rights vis-a-vis their parents (Rosenthal, 1977). Throughout the early 1920s, there was a serious commitment to women’s emancipation, which included things like the sanctioning of common-law unions and legalization and simplification of divorce. Furthermore, paid maternity leaves were introduced, granting women paid leave of eight weeks before and eight weeks after the birth, and did not count against a woman’s continuous work record (Ilic, 1996).

Throughout the Soviet period, there was also interesting and important changes surrounding women’s control of reproduction, although this was an area plagued by oscillations and contradictions. Soviet policy on abortion underwent a great deal of change, but in the early period under discussion here, abortion was viewed as a necessary evil and legalized in 1920, while under Lenin’s rule (Ilic, 1996). In 1936, under Stalin, it was deemed illegal, under fear of falling birth rates and negative population growth (Williams, 1996). Family policies in general became more
traditional and patriarchal, even divorce became harder to obtain (Kochan & Keep, 1990). Abortion was legalized again in 1955, following the change in leadership from Stalin to Khrushchev (Lissyutkina, 1993). In November 1955 after the law “On the Annulment of the Prohibition of Abortion” permitted abortion on request during the first three months of pregnancy and for as long as it was carried out by qualified medical personnel (Williams, 1996). From that point on, abortion remained legal and one of the few options available for family planning, since the availability, quality and variety of contraceptive devices were low (Rankin-Williams, 2001). By the mid-1980s, the Soviet Union ranked highest in the rate of abortions among developed countries with similar birth rates (Olson & Matskovsky, 1994). According to official Soviet sources, in 1987 there were 115 abortions for every 100 births (Maddock & Kon, 1994). This remained unchanged until the era of glasnost and perestroika.

Post-Soviet Russia (Nationalism’s Highs: Attempts at Restricting Abortion)

Glasnost and perestroika marked a new and widely celebrated phase in Soviet history. On the other hand, the period was also marred by a rise in nationalist sentiment across a number of Soviet republics, which eventually led to the Soviet Union’s demise. According to Zaslavsky (1993) “with the advent of perestroika and the collapse of centralized control, nationality emerged as the most potent base of social mobilization” (p. 72). Gorbachev pronounced the first declarations of national sovereignty by autonomous republics illegal and invalid, but Yeltsin, in contrast, strongly supported especially Russian sovereignty. Nationalism triumphed as Gorbachev ceded to Yeltsin’s pressure (Burlatsky, 1998). What resulted, according to Marsh (1996) was “an area of tremendous chaos, dislocation and disparity,” plagued by “the revival of nationalism and a situation of economic crisis” (p. 15).

The political and economic changes that took place at the time were said to have been accompanied by a “celebration of masculinity” and the “denigration of the strong capable woman worker glorified in the first decades of Soviet history” (Attwood, 1996, p. 255). In fact, the “over-emancipation” of women in Soviet Russia was blamed for a myriad of contemporary social problems in the new Russia (Kay, 1997). As a result, there were some state-supported efforts to assist women to, as Gorbachev (1987) put it, “return to their purely womanly mission” (p. 117) in the domestic sphere. Numerous Russian nationalists believed that “communism, sexual permissiveness and women’s emancipation have destroyed the country’s moral foundations” (Vanden-Heuvel, 1993, p. 491). These attitudes were reflected in Russia’s population policies.
Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, when it came to abortion and contraception, higher quality services and contraceptive devices became available, but only to the limited number of Russians who could afford them (Marsh, 1996; Sargeant, 1996; Rankin-Williams, 2001). At the same time, Marsh (1996) noted that in Russia “the issue of abortion is revisited, with some sections of society seeking to ban it in order to increase the indigenous population and prevent it from being overwhelmed by alien immigrants” (p. 15). She added that “in Russia, the population decline in the 1990s, along with the diminishing proportion of ethnic Russians in the population, helps to reinforce this nationalistic message” (Marsh, 1996, p. 16).

In March 1994 the Russian government issued bureaucratic directives to increase birth rates and reduce abortions. One of the directives was to remove most abortions from medical insurance coverage and introducing fees for them (Sargeant, 1996, 281). This would make it virtually impossible for many women to be able to afford the procedure. One of the “unforeseen” consequences of this would be for women to opt for illegal abortions, which can (and did) result in the death of many women—as was the case in Romania (see Baban & David, 1994).

Simultaneously, in post-Soviet Russia, there was the beginning of a largely-male, vocal, anti-abortion movement (Koblitz, 1995), partly supported by the Russian state (Vanden-Heuvel, 1993). According to Vanden-Heuvel (1993), the Ministry of Social Protection (similar to a Department of Health and Human Services), Yeltsin’s Office of Family Affairs and the Moscow city government distributed Christian Right books and paraphernalia to secondary schools. Vanden-Heuvel (1993) noted that state officials claimed that the Christian Right material that was distributed was expert, unbiased information about reproductive health and sexuality. She also reported that the Minister of Social Protection at the time, Ella Pamfilova, consulted Focus on the Family, a conservative Christian group, to develop a curriculum for social workers, and sought its advice on family and social policy (Vanden-Heuvel, 1993). The state’s goal was clearly not to spread Christianity but rather to promote changes in attitudes towards fertility and abortion. Religion was used to serve broader national goals.

According to Rebecca Kay (1997) “in the independent Russia, scaremongering politicians have linked the ‘demographic crisis’ to a possible threat to national security” (p. 88). Although Yeltsin’s government did not actually ban abortion, in trying to redress the dramatic fall in the birth rate and encourage women to have children, the 1994 directive to remove most abortions from medical insurance coverage put legal abortions virtually out of reach of most women (Marsh, 1996;
Sargeant, 1996). This additional cost came at a time of economic crisis and high unemployment, particularly among women. Given that legal abortions in Russia carry high health risks for women (Williams, 1996), imagine the risks faced by women who were forced to turn to illegal abortions (which, in many cases, went unreported). Estimates placed death rates from abortion in Russia at 2.4 per 100,000 in 1965-66. Death rates (for the known cases of abortion) increased to 4.3 per 100,000 some thirty years later, in the early 1990s (Williams, 1996).

In sum, it appears that the official and non-official ideology of post-soviet Russia came to emphasize the domestic roles of women (with larger families) and a “return to the family” campaign (Issraelyan, 1996, p. 166), similar to the other (nationalist) cases presented throughout this paper. And, like the other polities of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, the pronatalist measures were not very successful. On the one hand, it is true that the number of abortions was decreasing. For example, in 1992, there were three million registered abortions compared to two million only one year later. However, but the ratio of abortions to births remained the same (3 to 1), which means that birth rates were declining as were the abortion rates (Sargeant, 1996, 280). In other words, women were avoiding both “registered” abortions and childbirth, resulting in falling birth rates. Again, nationalists tried, but were mostly unsuccessful in altering reproductive patterns.

Yugoslavia - (Nationalism’s Lows: Eventual Decriminalization of Abortion)

The Kingdom of Yugoslavia emerged from the ashes of the First World War and the demise of the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires. As a result, it was a unique combination of Eastern and Western cultural and religious traditions. Its cultural pluralism was manifested in the diverse modifications of its name: the “Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes” (1918), “the Kingdom of Yugoslavia” (1931) and later “Yugoslavia,” literally meaning south (“jug”) slavs (Singleton, 1994). It was also a testament to the co-existability of three, often clashing religions: Orthodox, Catholic and Muslim (Vucinich, 1969).

Because of its religious and cultural diversity, civil and family law was also quite diverse throughout the newly unified territory, early in the century. Family life in the Northern and Western regions were bound by the Austrian Civil code of 1811. The Serbian Civil Code of 1844 governed the eastern parts of the country, and Montenegro had its own customary laws (Chloros, 1970). Bosnia and Herzegovina were subject to the Austrian Civil Code when it came to civil matters but retained religious privileges. This region included a large number of Moslems of Slavonic, Albanian and Turkish origin who were subject to Mejelle, the code of
Islamic Law (Chloros, 1970). As a result of all this and the country’s predominantly rural nature, there were no unified population policies that regulated birth control and reproduction when the country was formed. Women were subject to local traditions and “private patriarchy” (Walby, 1996).

Yugoslavia did not become a truly unified and modern state until after the Second World War, when it was recreated as a socialist state under Tito’s leadership. The new socialist state that emerged after the Second World War, under Tito, gave women the right to employment and increased power within marriage—at least on paper (Morokvašić, 1998). Marriage and family were placed under the protection of the state and civil marriages were introduced, putting relations between marriage partners on an equal basis. In the Family Act of 1946, parental authority was assigned equally to both mother and father, legal discrimination against “illegitimate” children was abolished and property acquired after marriage was considered to be owned jointly by both partners (Chloros, 1970). In citizenship law, women (like men) were given the right to declare their own nationality (Jancar-Webster, 1990). In other words, the formal legal structure of post-war socialist Yugoslavia was egalitarian.

In socialist Yugoslavia, all women were entitled to free health care during pregnancy, childbirth and after childbirth. Employed women had from 180 days to one year of maternity leave, shorter work hours and other entitlements in the old system (Reeves, 1995). Abortion was legal and in the most populous areas of socialist Yugoslavia abortion was the most commonly selected form of birth control. This changed following the country’s break-up.

Break-up of Yugoslavia (Nationalism’s Highs: Attempts at Restricting Abortion)

In the early months of 1991, the six Yugoslav republics held a series of summit talks to try to avert civil war, but by this point, Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia had already declared their sovereignty and were making preparations for independence. Later that year, their independence was achieved and civil war was not averted. Throughout the early 1990s, most of the republics that had made up Yugoslavia were entangled in war and ethnic clashes. In the end, what resulted was a series of small, relatively ethnically homogenous polities, each struggling to establish its own unique political, economic and social system. One of the new republics that found itself in this situation was Croatia.

Croatia is the predominantly Croat, Catholic country that came to be ruled by former-communist-turned-nationalist, Franjo Tudjman. Once his dream of an independent Croatia was realized, he quickly set out to cast its new identity. To secure Croatia’s future, Tudjman felt he needed the
help of Croat women. In one of his State of the Nation addresses, he proclaimed (like Mussolini, almost 70 years before him) his fear of his people’s future extinction. He declared “it is such that the Croatian people would face extinction if we were not to take resolute steps” (FBIS, 1994, 67). One of his proposed steps was to pay mothers of large families a salary for devoting their lives to bringing up future Croats. He added that “[F]amilies with more children should be given concessions when it comes to the resolution of their housing issues. Single people should pay higher taxes” (FBIS, 1994, 68). Furthermore, the Ministry for Renewal established a Department of Demographic Renewal which called for, among other things, the re-definition of the notion of womanhood, which was to be more closely connected to domesticity and motherhood (McKinsey, 1992).

The Croatian government considered a variety of ways to “boost” its birthrate, including the suggestion to tax unmarried adults or married adults who do not have children (Germinal, 1995). Other attempts included making abortion more difficult to obtain. This campaign was mostly ideological. For example, one feminist noted that “in Croatia the streetcars carried posters reading: ‘each unborn baby is an unborn Croat.’ Likewise, after a political meeting “brother Croats” were urged to “go home and make a new Croat”’ (Morokvašić, 1998, 76).

Although abortion was still legal, doctors in many hospitals refused to perform them (B.a.B.e., 1994a (Be active, Be emancipated); Morokvašić, 1998). According to feminist, Slavenka Drakulić, prohibitions on abortion took hold in Zagreb in November 1991, when the largest hospital in Zagreb prohibited its doctors from performing abortions -despite there being no law against abortion (Drakulić, 1993). At that time, contraception became unavailable and the cost of abortions skyrocketed. Changes were enacted in all forms of health care for employees and their families. Abortion was one medical service for which the patient was now expected to pay full cost, with the fee for abortion being twice the average monthly wage (Milić, 1995). Feminists noted that the number of anti-abortion groups increased and state and church officials were given a great deal of public space for advocating “demographic renewal” (B.a.B.e, 1994a). Furthermore, the phrase “everyone has the right to life” was inserted into the new Croatian Constitution (Article 21/1, Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, 1991), which feminists believed was in preparation to outlaw abortion (B.a.B.e., 1995).

This was not unique to predominantly Catholic Croatia. Throughout the republics of the former Yugoslavia nationalist governments, backed by religious organizations (Orthodox, Catholic, etc.), battled women’s groups over the right to abortion (Reeves, 1995). The new governments’
intentions in Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia were to forbid abortion entirely (Milić, 1995; Reeves, 1995). However, anti-abortion campaigns, like the one in Croatia, were not very successful, revealing that religious leaders’ campaigns to ban abortion may be present but are not sufficient in implementing change. Croatia’s Catholic and nationalist leaders were only marginally successful.

The number of abortions registered each year in Croatia did decline following its independence. The number of registered abortions in 1991 was 53,351, but the rate dropped to 26,223 in 1992, 25,179 in 1993 and 19,673 in 1994 (United Nations, 1997). However, the abortion rates throughout Europe at the time were also declining. On the other hand, the crude birth rate in Croatia did register a slight fluctuation when Croatian nationalists came to power. Just prior to its independence, Croatia’s crude birth rate was 10.8 (in 1991). It declined to 9.8 in 1992 but increased to 10.2 in 1993 and 1994 (United Nations 1997).

Anti-abortion campaigns resulted in the rise of feminist lobbies, in protest. In Croatia, feminist organizations such as B.a.B.e. were founded to lobby for the recognition and improved status of women. It included a human rights centre for women, located in Zagreb (capital of Croatia), and initiated by the Zagreb Women’s Lobby in 1994. One of B.a.B.e.'s goals was to ensure women’s rights over reproductive choices. Their international campaign in 1994-5 specifically noted that women’s health is suffering as a result of their political circumstances (B.a.B.e., 1995). Similarly, in Slovenia, feminists succeeded in preventing the implementation of a proposal on the prohibition of abortion (Rener & Ule, 1998). Milić (1993) noted that women became more politically involved in response to this proposed prohibition of abortion. Soon after independence in Serbia, the Women’s Party (ZEST) was founded as the first and only party of women. There was also the Women’s Lobby and a Women’s Preliminary Parliament in Serbia (Milić, 1993). Although the parties were short-lived, their timely reaction was effective —abortion legislation was not changed, and while perhaps now costly, it was still not illegal, as nationalist leaders had desired.

**CONCLUSIONS**

This research shows that despite the many differences that exist between groups of women, there are still many things they have in common. The first thing that should be noted is that no matter how far a group of women has come in its fight for reproductive rights and improvements in reproductive health, successes are fragile and not always permanent. It seems like women’s reproductive rights are put on
and taken off the political agenda to suit national interests. Although some cases were more “successful” than others, all four cases clearly demonstrate that with a nationalist rise to power, there was a conservative anti-abortion drive, and parenthood, especially motherhood, was treated as compulsory. Interestingly, these cases also show that states can and do ally themselves with the existing religious group, if the values religious leaders are promoting serve national interests. Religion (and other characteristics for that matter) can be used to evoke a shared sense of belonging but it is not necessary or sufficient. For example, Catholicism existed in Italy before, during and after Mussolini’s rule, but the nation’s family policies most closely reflected Catholic values during Mussolini’s rule. The same was true in modern Croatia. Arendt (1951) showed this by using an interesting juxtaposition. She noted that Hitler stated “God the almighty has made our nation. We are defending His work by defending its very existence.” At the same time, his opponents echoed that “the German monsters are not only our foes, but God’s foes” (as cited in Arendt, 1951, p. 233). On the other hand, religion alone is inadequate in explaining changes in abortion laws in these specific cases. That is, the anti-abortion views held by religious leaders remain constant - invariantly culturally conservative - but an actual or attempted re-patriarchalization of abortion laws accompanies a rise of nationalism. Furthermore, it should be noted that whereas, in general, ‘pro-life’ groups today usually condemn abortion on the basis of the right to life of the fetus, many nationalists base their opposition to abortion on the nation’s need to proliferate. Abortion thus becomes treated like a crime against the nation and an attack on “national health” (at the expense of women’s health).

One of the overall lessons and main findings of this research is that we can never assume the “job” of achieving gender equality is “complete.” That is, while one government may champion the rights of women and families, its successor, particularly if it has a nationalist inclination, may attempt to substantially regress women’s rights to an earlier age. Recent history, and the bulk of this work teaches us that “progress” today may not result in progress tomorrow. Women in the Weimar Republic, in the early twentieth century, enjoyed more reproductive rights than many of their contemporaries in other parts of Europe, only to lose them with the rise of nationalism. Similarly, at the end of the century, women in Croatia, prior to the nationalist victory, were not the most privileged or “equal” in Europe, but they did enjoy a number of rights which were under threat when Tudjman came to rule the newly independent Croatia.

Nationalist pronatalist sentiment is not a “thing of the past.” Traditional, conservative, patriarchal (and anti-abortion) zeal is a constituent part of the four cases analyzed here. While there are a number
of profound differences that exist between the four cases, this analysis reveals that more “liberal” abortion laws that were in place before a nationalist rise to power became a focus of state attention immediately after a nationalist rise to power. Although the intensity of the effort and degree of “success” in re-patriarchaizing abortion laws varied across the cases, nonetheless attempts were made when the political changes took place.

Future research could and should look at the implications of nationalist uprisings on women in other parts of the world, while at the same time, we should be keenly aware of the fact that even for those of us who live in North America are not immune.
REFERENCES


