

Data Privacy Behaviors in Post-Roe American Women

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Abstract:

Women's data privacy habits have changed and shifted in response to the United States Supreme Court opinion in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, where previous precedents were overturned. This decision shifted abortion rights away from Federal law, leaving the decision up to the states' discretion. Many states have already begun to implement abortion bans, trigger laws, and heartbeat bans. With this new development, many individuals feared that they may be prosecuted for seeking or obtaining an abortion.

Simultaneously, data privacy concerns are coming to light in regards to the *Dobbs* decision. Many apps, sites, and technology products collect data from consumers when they use any form of technology. These data collection rules are either explained in the fine print of the terms and conditions to use the app or site, or the company tracks individuals without their knowledge. Many companies are then selling consumer data, and this includes information that can be used to prosecute individuals seeking abortions. The aim of this study is to determine the relationship between data sharing habits and abortion rights, specifically after the *Dobbs* decision. This includes emotional responses to the decision, data sharing habits, shifting ideas about abortion and data privacy, societal expectations and narratives, power dynamics, and social support. The research below indicates that many individuals are concerned about the new data privacy implications but are not heavily changing their technology habits.

Introduction:

This research aims to address the intersection between abortion rights and data privacy. After the reversal of *Roe v. Wade* in June 2022, there have been circulating questions through social media, activists, other media platforms, and personal conversations around how state governments can prosecute women seeking abortions. A plethora of media sources discussed how this new enforcement will lead to using data from period trackers, digital location services, and financial documents to prosecute individuals seeking abortions. With this discussion, fear and uncertainty has been expressed publicly about the future and what data is safe, which also prompted the question of how data privacy habits have shifted after *Dobbs*.

One part of the decision determined whether privacy includes the right to an abortion under Federal law. The precedent cases of *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Casey* originally had interpreted privacy to include the right to an abortion, but the 2022 *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* case overruled this right. With this recent overturn, many states have implemented abortion bans or had trigger laws in place, which are laws that would ban abortion the moment *Roe v. Wade* was overturned. With the states now in control of abortion rights, many women are left with no access to reproductive health care, regardless of whether they are seeking an abortion or not. They are also under surveillance by the state government via technology and data selling.

In regards to surveillance, data privacy concerns are alive and thriving. Data privacy refers to how technological data is protected or not protected. With a rapid increase in technology use over the past decade, consumers are agreeing to privacy settings without realizing what agreeing to terms and conditions entails. Many individuals are unaware where their data goes, who has access to it, and who has a right to sell it. Some entities, like financial institutions

or healthcare institutions are limited by Federal restrictions, but data brokers are able to sell this information because they are a third party and have no restrictions limiting them. Personal data could possibly be used to determine whether someone is seeking an abortion. This study seeks to understand how the abortion rights change as a new part of U.S. law will impact data habits.

This study also provides evidence of how women, or those identifying as women, speak about abortion and privacy rights. By analyzing the different speech patterns and recurring themes, this research determines how the language around privacy overall is framed and how it has changed. How will communication techniques shift in accordance to sensitive topics, especially a topic that is changing itself in relation to legal application? By studying these changes, scholars have the ability to interpret how legal alterations lead to a division or complete transformation in communication surrounding health and other personal information. This study aids in highlighting the adjustments and developments made to communication surrounding these topics in an evolving society.

The research below indicates that many individuals are concerned about the new data privacy implications but are not heavily changing their technology habits. This study also develops the idea that privacy and legal communications not only converge, but simultaneously affect one another in a plethora of ways. Lastly, the results provide additional insight on intrapersonal communication methods, family and social support communication, and political and health communication. There may be existing assumptions that all of these differing branches of communications have their own framework, structure, and patterns, but this research highlights how they also have much in common. To conclude, the goal of this research is to study the interconnectedness between abortion rights and data privacy habits, including methods of communication and what information women choose to share.

Literature Review:

Abortion Rights: History, Stigma, and Narratives

Although the precedent cases of *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Casey* covered abortion rights as privacy in the past, the stigma around abortion has remained alive and well throughout history. Many individuals view abortion as “uncommon and abnormal”, which “perpetuat[es] a social norm that abortion is deviant, and thus generating further silence around abortion decisions” (Hessini et al., 2009, as cited in Seewald et al., 2019, p. 76). Many individuals seeking abortions thus remain silent due to the fear their decision may be attacked or frowned upon (Seewald et al., 2019). Instead of focusing on the abortion seekers, Sorhaindo and Lavelanet (2022) instead highlighted the perspective of providers and how they felt pressured to hide they provided abortion services because it would threaten their reputation and lead to additional pushback. The combination of stigma and the lack of discussion about abortion leads to more secrecy, fear, and ultimately a lack of abortion resources and support. Some scholars focused more on the abortion seeker themselves, while others tended to address providers and how they feel stigmatized as well.

While some providers were helpful but did not want their name attached to abortion procedures, Sorhaindo and Lavelanet (2022) also add that some providers would not help those seeking abortions due to their own beliefs or concerns, and some would create avoidable delays. For example, some providers required consent from other family members before one could have an abortion, and other abortion seekers needed to go through a five day reflection period with their decision before officially having approval to receive an abortion (Cárdenas et al., 2018, as cited in Lavelanet and Sorhaindo, 2022, p. 9). As mentioned above, providers also play a role in this scenario, especially as some of these providers hold personal beliefs that limit them from

providing abortion procedures. For example, one provider indicated extreme concern that their abortion services and resulting complications would reach the media, ultimately threatening their credibility and other family members (Seewald et al., 2019). At the point in time of this study, abortion was legal in the United States, but this particular reference highlights the stigma still present around abortion, even with laws seemingly protecting individuals from repercussions.

Before the *Dobbs* decision was passed, entertainment media representations of abortion created additional stereotypes and expectations that were not accurate, prompting people to either fear abortions or view them as dangerous. Herold and Sisson (2019) dissected how television portrayals of abortion ranged from 2008 through 2018, providing perspective on how the procedure itself was seen. In the study, Herold and Sisson (2019) analyzed the plot lines of abortion scenes, ultimately concluding that many women will overestimate the risks associated with abortion because of how the media represents the procedure and social risks overall. Additionally, some media representations did not physically show the procedure occurring, but instead portrayed this scene with women screaming behind doors, or characters would briefly mention their experiences with a friend or family member (Herold and Sisson, 2019). After assessing the study Herold and Sisson (2019) conducted, it is evident that many media representations were inaccurate and only created false narratives surrounding abortions. This false narrative may have included fear and uncertainty of abortions overall because of the media's limiting visual interpretation of abortions. As for their method choice, their careful analysis of media representations provided a plethora of examples and highlighted how abortion stigmas change over time. This study also aims to address stigmatization of abortions through the media, similar to the study outlined above.

The Intricacies of Data Privacy

When considering data privacy habits and the security of data, many individuals may not know where to look for additional information regarding selling data. Valentino-DeVries et al. (2018) argue that permission/consent forms on many electronics and apps are confusing and misleading, and there is no direct mention that said company can sell data if the consumer agrees to the terms. Additionally, it has been discovered that some electronics collect updated information “...as often as every two seconds”, and sometimes have their data profile update “14,000 times a day” (Valentino-DeVries et al., 2018). With the amount of reliance on technology in the U.S. increasing, the industry is booming. It is estimated that the location-tracking market has sales reaching approximately \$21 billion (Valentino-DeVries et al., 2018). Because the consumer consents to the terms and conditions, this industry is legal. There are also limited rules restricting this data industry.

As technology became more advanced and many individuals expressed concern regarding data privacy and its lack of regulations, the Federal Trade Commission (2021) prepared a statement in regards to data privacy. The Statement addressed the rising concern with data privacy and the easy ability to sell personal data without the consumer’s knowledge. The Federal Trade Commission (2021) also created a Health Breach Notification Rule, which stated that any entity not covered by HIPAA (Health Information Protection Act) will now face accountability when confidential information is shared. Although this updated rule provides necessary legal protection for confidential data, it lacks specification regarding data brokers and other types of data. Many entities may still continue to find loopholes, as said entities were not expressly outlined in this Statement. Especially in regards to period tracking apps and other apps not covered by HIPAA, these platforms are not obliged to follow these rules.

When advanced technology was first on the rise in the earlier 2000s, the Federal Trade Commission previously exposed a lack of transparency in these data brokers and published a document addressing initial concerns. Back in 2014, Ramirez et al. through the Commission summarized the legal rules around data brokers (2014). For example, they described the Fair Credit Reporting Act, which covers consumer data in regards to insurance and employment, but unfortunately this rule does not extend to advertisers or marketers, which is where the majority of data is sold (Ramirez et al., 2014). While this document thoroughly dissects and describes the legal rules, the authors also note that this is a complex industry with large webs of data brokers providing information to other data brokers (Ramirez et al., 2014). As mentioned above, data brokers are not as covered by restrictions, so they are able to sell the data without repercussions or avoid detection. Finally, Ramirez et al. argue that Congress should work to pass additional laws in this realm and said laws should enable consumers to see how much data these brokers have, require brokers to acknowledge they are using this data, disclose the names of the data sources, and ultimately provide an opt-out option for consumers if they do not feel comfortable with their data being shared (2014). By adding an opt-out option, consumers would hold more power in this relationship, as data brokers currently are controlling every piece of data these consumers offer without consumer knowledge. There are a plethora of other Acts and Statutes that work to prevent data from being widely spread without consumer knowledge, but the majority of them lack specificity and enforcement. Lastly, at this time, there are no rules protecting information collected on period trackers. Financial apps have some restrictions, but it depends on the app/source. This data can also be sold to law enforcement through a third party without a legal breach.

The Intersection: Data Tracking Habit Changes in Response to Abortion Rights Reversal

The background and history of abortions is already complex, and the *Dobbs* decision prompted additional uncertainties regarding the future of abortions and pivotal realizations of privacy. In the decision, Justices determined that the *Roe* and *Planned Parenthood* cases were decided in error and therefore should not be considered as precedent for abortion cases (*Dobbs, State Health Officer of the Mississippi Department of Health, et al. v. Jackson Women's Health Organization et al.*, 2022). Continuing with their verdict, the Court also did not find abortion as a topic that is “deeply rooted in the Nation’s history and traditions”, and that the Constitution makes no direct reference to abortion rights in its text (*Dobbs, State Health Officer of the Mississippi Department of Health, et al. v. Jackson Women's Health Organization et al.*, 2022, p. 33). In terms of how abortion is viewed in relation to privacy, the Court holds there has been controversy over abortion for decades, and that “26 States have expressly asked this Court to overrule *Roe* and *Casey* and allow the States to regulate or prohibit high pre-viability abortions” (*Dobbs, State Health Officer of the Mississippi Department of Health, et al. v. Jackson Women's Health Organization et al.*, 2022, p. 12). Many of the states that requested the overrule have trigger laws in place, which would immediately ban abortion in said state the moment that the precedent cases were overruled (Linebaugh, 2022). Therefore, the Justices ruled the right to regulate abortion is now passed to the states, as the Constitution makes no direct reference to protections of abortion. Based on this decision, it is apparent that privacy is a widely debated and broad term, which has led to continuous argument over what rights it entails.

After this decision became public information, a plethora of emotions including fear, uncertainty, sadness, anger, and overall distrust towards the United States government were shared publicly through social media, protests, and other media platforms. In response to the

public uproar from the *Dobbs* decision, President Biden issued an Executive Order regarding abortion bans and abortion rights. In said order, he emphasized the fact that “fundamental rights - to privacy, autonomy, freedom, and equality - have been denied to millions of women across the country” (Exec. Order No. 14076, 2022, Section 1). Not only does the Order mention how freedom is revoked for women in America, but Biden also connects this recent change in legislation to “devastating implications for women’s health and public health more broadly”, including the closure of many reproductive clinics that have more than abortion procedure options (Exec. Order No. 14076, 2022, Section 1). With this safety net now gone, many individuals may lack the appropriate resources for any type of reproductive healthcare. Biden also adds that “these deeply private decisions should not be subject to government interference” (Exec. Order No. 14076, 2022, Section 1). Ultimately, this Order highlighted how the overturn of *Roe v. Wade* will have a plethora of negative effects for women seeking healthcare, specifically reproductive healthcare.

Along with the increasing hysteria with abortion bans, people began connecting how personal data could be used to determine if someone was seeking an abortion. In an interview with Andrea Ford and Guilia De Togni, Kwong et al. (2022) discuss how pregnant women’s data is worth 15 times more to data brokers than regular data, as these women can be advertised and are looking to buy baby products. Additionally, they mentioned that these so-called free apps are not technically free; instead, the consumer’s data is the company’s profit (Kwong et al., 2022). With the lack of protection over data, the question arises of whether individuals will stop using period tracker apps or change their habits because their data could be sold or used against them.

On the topic of personal data, financial data tracking is also a threat for abortion-seekers. The government is required to send over subpoenas for financial information, as financial

institutions are an entity that cannot sell personal data, but the government can send over gag orders which prohibit the financial institution from telling their customers about the investigation (Lieber and Siegal Bernard, 2022). By tracking consumers' credit card charges and data, state governments can use this to prosecute anyone seeking abortions in a state with an abortion ban. Lieber and Siegal Bernard provided the argument that some banks have released statements saying they will scrutinize said subpoenas and will only grant them if they are absolutely necessary (2022). The government can also gain access to Venmo or Paypal requests, alongside credit card data (Vesoulis, 2022). Based on the plethora of data tracking and surveillance, many individuals may attempt to use more underground types of payment forms, such as cryptocurrency, but Lieber and Siegal Bernard debunk this method by mentioning that the government is able to track cryptocurrency as well (2022).

If abortion-seekers did find a roundabout way to avoid any payment trail that the government could track (i.e. cash or another secretive payment method), the data tracking does not stop at financials. Electronic devices and apps can track location data and sell the data to third-party brokers. These third-party brokers can be regular citizens taking the situation into their own hands. For example, with Texas' abortion ban now in place, there is an additional incentive to confirm this law is enforced: residents have the power to sue anyone who assists in an abortion procedure or seeking abortion resources, including clinics, providers, and individuals driving them to said clinics (Picchi, 2021). This additional enforcement is meant to hinder clinics from providing underground abortion procedures and limit the support system for abortion-seekers to deter anyone from pursuing these procedures (Picchi, 2021). Many scholars refer to these individuals that are attempting to sue or aid in prosecuting abortion seekers as bounty hunters. Insurers can also be targeted under this enforcement if they provide help to

individuals seeking abortions, and Picchi specifically mentions Cigna, Aetna and Blue Cross Blue Shield as examples (2021). With this new rule, abortions are further stigmatized, threatening people outside of the abortion seeker themselves.

The Texas ban is not the only way that regular citizens hinder individuals from seeking abortions. Location data can be bought by anyone, and Vines et al. (2017) highlights one of the main concerns is that third parties can purchase ads to gain personal information on individuals. This information includes how many users are in a particular spot, when a particular individual is in a specified location, what apps the individual has, and how long the apps are used for (Vines et al., 2017). The above example highlights how both of these fields are highly personalized and many individuals are taking matters into their own hands based on their beliefs. Lastly, Cox (2022) provides a specific example of this in action: particular data brokers are selling location data of individuals visiting abortion clinics. Cox (2022) also predicts there will be an increase in vigilante activity regarding surveillance and harassment because of how limited data privacy restrictions are. Similar to what Vines et al. mentioned (2017), Cox (2022) highlights that information is anonymous, but it is easy to individualize the data and find the identity of the person. Data privacy, or lack thereof, has now become a targeted way of surveilling those seeking abortions.

Many individuals have expressed severe concern for the lack of control over data privacy and data brokers, ultimately leading to additional fear, uncertainty, and anger towards this situation. For example, Booker et al. (2022) wrote to the Federal Trade Commission Chair Lina Khan urging the Commission to investigate Apple and Google for sharing data because it is a deceptive act. The letter also emphasizes that any individual with a credit card can get access to the personal data of others, and now private actors (specifically bounty hunters) can benefit from

this by buying data of women seeking abortions (Booker et al., 2022). Others hope that Congress will step in to take action. Vesoulis (2022) notes that public officials and administrators are attempting to pass new Acts in this field: Mind Your Own Business Act sponsored by Senator Ron Wyden, Not For Sale Act, Online Privacy Act, and the Banning Surveillance Advertising Act. Although all of these Acts aim to protect data privacy and personal information, none of them have passed at this point in time (Vesoulis, 2022). Finally, abortion clinics themselves are taking a plethora of precautions to protect their clients due to the lack of legal protection at this point. Collier (2022) spoke with multiple individuals who run or work with abortion clinics, and these individuals are all taking precautions. For example, Alabama Women's Center is planning to move fully to encrypted emails to protect privacy, and another individual mentions that they are now using paper for any personal information (Collier, 2022). Overall, multiple entities feel that protection for consumers is not sufficient due to data privacy issues.

Finally, abortion bans and data privacy issues continue to affect certain groups disproportionately. Jarvis and Temple-Raston's (2022) interview with a privacy researcher revealed that it is easy for individuals living in rural areas to be identified because their houses are far apart. Data brokers are able to sell anonymous profiles regarding location data, but it is easy to tell who the profile is if there is only one individual living in a rural area, far away from other houses (Jarvis and Temple-Raston, 2022). These additional threats push more stress and fear onto individuals who are trying to seek abortions or remain anonymous in their abortion-seeking methods. Additionally, Rotenberg and Talukder (2022) wrote to The New York Times highlighting that people of color will also be affected by the abortion surveillance more than other groups because of the existing and encroaching police surveillance on these individuals.

After dissecting the background of both of these fields, the following question is posed:
How have recent changes of abortion rights impacted data sharing habits related to health in women?

Methods:

This study has a heavy focus on emotional reactions and how the recent abortion rights decision has affected individuals personally. Therefore, the chosen method for the research was conducting interviews. The interviews are with women (including those who identify as women, and non-binary individuals), aged 18-35. This particular population was chosen because around 25 years is the median age for childbearing and pregnancy at this time, and this study group encapsulates ages before and after this age because every individual has a different experience (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014). Therefore, the *Dobbs* decision ultimately has the most repercussions for this population.

The approach to choosing participants was non-random using purposive sampling. There was an intentional focus on a specific target group (women aged 18-35), excluding individuals who did not fit these particular characteristics (Huston and Merrigan, 2012). Particular elements of the population group were predetermined (age and gender) in order to specify the research results. The study will also be limited to individuals located in the United States, as this decision is related to United States law. For additional protection of participants, which will be described in-depth below, this study only used data from individuals not currently residing in a state with a complete abortion ban in place. If an individual has residency in a state with a full abortion ban but is residing in another state, this was discussed with the participant and their participation was chosen based on their comfort level. Complete abortion bans include trigger bans or heartbeat bans.

The recruitment method was a combination of recruiting via Reddit and via University of Washington students. This did include snowballing, which entails one participant asking other people they know if they would like to be interviewed (Oregon State University, 2017). The

Reddit recruitment was achieved through particular sub-groups, such as prochoice, lgbtstudies, Feminism, sex, and more. The sub-groups were chosen by the researcher through messaging the moderators and asking for additional information and approval to post. Posts were moderator-approved and sent out to sub-groups. Individuals were able to comment or message the researcher for more information and to express interest in the study. Email addresses were obtained to schedule interviews, but no other identifying information besides their profile name was obtained, unless their name was in their email or profile.

For the University of Washington recruitment, professors were emailed in two lectures, an Education class and a Psychology class, asking for approval to post via their Canvas page, which is the main communication platform used for teachers and students at this university. Students were able to email the researcher for more information and to express interest in participating. In total, 12 interviewees completed interviews. 11 of these interviews were coded and analyzed, and one interview was removed from the selection because they did not reside in the United States. There were approximately 30 individuals who expressed interest in total, but many were not interested with no compensation, did not respond to research emails, or were from states where abortion was completely illegal.

As for the interview itself, the design was structured. This indicates there were predetermined questions asked to the subject, and the flow of the interviews was based on question and answer (Berger, 2011). This is to eliminate inconsistencies between the interviews, which may introduce bias or misinterpretation. Instead, by using this structured approach, the interviews measure the responses from these women without the interview set-ups changing depending on the subject. The interview was conversational to increase comfort, but all questions remained the same. The interviews ranged from 15 to 50 minutes long, and they were recorded

via Zoom. A Zoom interview invite was sent out to the interviewee's email, and the interviewee was able to keep their camera off during the interview if they chose for comfortability.

The recordings of the interviews were used for transcription and data analysis. These recordings were kept on a University of Washington Google drive, and their original copies were recorded onto the computer of the researcher. The Google Drive contains all coding information, transcriptions, audios, and videos of the interviews. All name and contact information of the interviewees are stored with a non-technical method, which is kept on paper, stored safely. This mitigates the chance of a data breach occurring or a technological device issue. The data from the Google drive will be removed when the University of Washington's Institutional Review Board approves, which is when this study is fully completed. The Institutional Review Board will not have access to the data of individuals unless an issue arises. This data will not be kept for future studies or future University of Washington research. Additionally, the advisor of this study reviewed a sample of coding from the researcher's codes to ensure the data categories and analysis were done neutrally. Due to time restrictions, the study did not implement intercoder reliability, which is a researching process that would confirm the content analysis is not biased (Cronn-Mills and Croucher, 2018). This study also did not conduct secondary intercoder reliability with an outside coder due to timeline restrictions of the study mentioned above. The codes were sampled and cross-referenced by the advisor, but the lack of intercoder reliability may lead to hidden biases in coding.

This research method is the most fitting for the chosen topic because it allows the researcher to analyze both emotional responses to the *Dobbs* decision, as well as quantifiable changes these individuals made to their daily habits in response to the case decision. Kwong's (2022) interview with scholars on surveillance and period trackers, as mentioned in the literature

review above, provided ample evidence that interviews were effective in capturing both emotional and quantitative results in an approachable way. Finally, because this is an under-researched topic, this method provides a broader understanding of the intersection between abortion rights and data privacy concerns instead of focusing on a specific subset or issue within these topics.

With this in mind, it is also important to address any limitations to this approach. Analysis from interviews does not address the *why* of these results (Cronn-Mills and Croucher, 2018). Individuals may specify why they felt a certain way or why they made a choice, but analysis by itself will not include this. Therefore, to mitigate this limitation, the interview questions provided the interviewee with the opportunity to expand on why they feel the way they do or why they acted the way they did. This allowed the research to attempt to answer the *why* of the situation.

Data Analysis:

Before coding and analysis began, the researcher transcribed the interviews using AssemblyAI, an AI transcriber. This platform requires an account, which was done using the researcher's email and account information. The account also assigns a personalized AI key, which is used for privacy purposes. There were no names, email addresses, or any other identifying information uploaded to this site. For any additional information regarding the privacy policy of this platform, please visit <https://www.assemblyai.com/legal/privacy-policy>.

For the interview response analysis, this research conducted inductive content analysis, which indicates that the researcher created data categories as they coded (Cronn-Mills and Croucher, 2018). These categories then determined what the researcher looked for in the interview responses. Within these sections, the researcher conducted in vivo coding, which entailed taking phrases or words directly from what was said in the interview as code categories (Delve, n.d.). The researcher also used descriptive coding at this time, which is taking words from the interview but the code words are descriptive phrases or terms derived from the interviewee's response instead of an exact replica of what was said (Delve, n.d.).

The second pass of coding was done through selective coding. In this stage, themes were analyzed and developed based on the codes from the first round. The codes from the first round were combined, categorized, and analyzed to develop said codes, also known as thematic coding (Delve, n.d.). The last round consisted of additional analysis. These two rounds of coding were also rooted in a combination of the grounded theory and phenomenology. The grounded theory develops a theory around a particular social issue, while phenomenology focuses on explaining how particular people experience a phenomenon (Hoover, 2021). The goal of this research was to describe how people reacted and experienced the *Dobbs* decision, but it also aimed to go

in-depth regarding how data privacy habits changed in response to the decision, social expectations and issues, communication, data privacy, and long-term effects.

For the coding process, the researcher began by identifying codes through in vivo coding and descriptive coding. Approximately 40 codes were found, ranging from topics on privacy, data, emotions, and power narratives. After these codes were solidified, the second round of coding took place, placing these specific codes into themes and analyzing their meaning and relevance. The results section below will dissect said relevance and the meaning of the patterns found.

Results:

The first section of the interview asked questions about data privacy. This included privacy habits when using technology. The questions were intended to discover how women are changing their preferences on sharing digital location, finances, period tracking information, and other personal information. Code words and phrases found here included *information, security, trust, little information, birth control, period, consent/terms and conditions, marketing, restrictions, protection, irrelevant data, and virtual access to banking*. The next section dissected abortion rights and what individuals had to say about the topic. Codes found here were *health care, and right*. The remainder of the interview discussed the decision in *Dobbs* and personal thoughts and emotions surrounding this decision, including future implications. Codes found here include *overturn, state, complication, and risk*. In terms of societal changes and expectations now and into the future, interviewees discussed *watching, uncertainty, religion, social, public opinion, lack of education/support, controversial, power dynamic, comfort level, hesitant, upset, long-term effects, necessity, empowerment, privilege and men's role*.

Data Privacy Sentiments in General

The interview questions aimed to understand how these individuals felt about data sharing and data privacy in general before the *Roe v. Wade* reversal. The results indicated uncertainty about the future, but simultaneous confidence that data is not safe in any way. One participant noted that “I don’t feel like I have any data that is important enough to care about if it was compromised other than passwords” (Interview 1008). Many participants said they didn’t think their data was relevant or would be searched for because it isn’t important or illegal. For example, one interviewee mentioned “...if you're Googling cute puppy videos, then no one's going to give a crap” (Interview 8391). Another stated, “I'm aware that I feel like I'm definitely

being watched by the companies that make my phone and the companies that make the apps on my phone, but I think being Gen Z, I'm just numb to it. I'm like, what are you going to do, watch me binge eating in my underwear?" (Interview 8391). Many participants noted that their data was mainly normal and daily routine information, and therefore their data wouldn't be used against them or pose a legal concern.

When discussing financial apps, others indicated they trust larger corporations more, such as Zelle. One individual mentioned that "...Zelle is backed by some of the biggest banks, and even though you shouldn't blindly trust the big corporations, in my opinion, I think it's safe enough that it's not a huge concern for me" (Interview 1008). Others added that banks have stronger regulations, and Interviewee 2009 noted that "...there's, like, a lot of federal regulations and a money course because it's money transferring. And the way you have to use your bank account to link to it makes it feel a little more, like, secure, like your bank would deal with it if something happened". There was less trust towards unsupported apps or those apps that they didn't know much about. Others indicated that they knew about their data being taken from them. One interviewee mentioned, "I feel like data is so sold...I feel like it's never really as secure as you might think it is, and you should expect it to be not secure, especially at this age where people can just hack into you or whatever" (Interview 2009). Overall, more prominent and well-known financial platforms are more trusted at this point, but it depends on how many regulations are behind the apps or technology, and some individuals already expect their data to be used without their knowledge.

Other participants mentioned that they are skeptical but mainly trust and hope their data is safe. One interviewee added that they knew "next to nothing [about data privacy]. No, I'm kind of under the assumption that anything I put on my phone, like hoping for a prayer, that it doesn't

fall into the wrong hands, but it's out there” (Interview 7746). Another questioned what the word *secure* truly meant, adding that if “secure...[means] can people access it? No, it's not secure. If you mean secure, like, it's not going to hurt me? Yeah, I'm secure” (Interview 8391). Many individuals seemed nonchalant and not terribly concerned about their data. Interview 8851 brought up that “I probably could take more precautions, but sometimes I'm just like, whatever”. There are others who are much more concerned and note that they've seen breaches in the past and hold skepticism towards technology. Lastly, Interviewee 7746 communicated that “...it's just a matter of I understand the law is complicated and the law is constantly trying to circumvent privacy for its own benefit. And that's just the way it goes”. Based on this data, many individuals are skeptical and know that data is being shared and taken advantage of, yet it is seemingly the norm, and they trust and hope that their data won't be valuable or the main focus of investigation.

One major theme that recurred throughout the interviews was the idea of the government having control over all individuals. Interviewee 4278 admitted that “in the U.S., we're very much kind of like at the mercy of the privacy policy, whether you read it or not, what that says. And then I think there are some regulations over what they can do, but I'm not well versed on that”. Many indicated they don't read the consent forms or terms and conditions because “...they are way too long and way too technical. So it's like half the time you don't even know what you're agreeing to. Most people just click it and sure, whatever...” (Interview 8851). With the additional complications and lack of knowledge, people feel that they don't have much control. As noted in the previous section, many expressed skepticism and concern about data selling, combined with nonchalant feelings towards their data because it is normal and would not get them into trouble. People also noted their lack of knowledge regarding this topic, besides the fact

that their data is not safe. Not understanding the inner workings of data privacy or its repercussions ultimately led people to blindly trust and hope for the best with their data, even if they knew it was not completely private.

Overall, from the questions regarding data sentiments in general, interviewees expressed concern over the fact that the U.S. government has control over privacy, but simultaneously noted that they weren't worried because their data wasn't important enough to be the focus of surveillance or because they weren't breaking any laws with their data. Many individuals also stated that they felt some types of data were more secure than others, such as financial data. This dialectic of concern regarding surveillance but also recognizing that their data isn't relevant to abortions or to any illegal practices highlights that concern is present, but it may not necessarily be enough to change individual's data privacy habits in relation to the *Dobbs* decision. Another reason may be that individuals did not see the connection between abortion and data privacy at this time until additional conversation occurred regarding the intersection.

Abortion Conversation

The majority of individuals expressed that abortion was a right, and that it was part of women's autonomy. Interview 1008 described this definition by saying that "abortion rights, in my opinion, is a human right. I think that everyone deserves to have a say in what they are supposed to be carrying and bringing to this world, regardless of anyone else's opinions or religion or laws that we may come up with. I think that it's just the basic human right that we should be able to choose". Tying in with the definition of abortion as a right, Interviewee 4278 addressed the dependence of the child, indicating that abortion rights are "...the idea that it should be up to the person carrying the fetus, what they do with it, because it's dependent on

them”. Noting this dependent relationship also highlights that the mother’s decision holds an ample amount of power, as it is her body.

This significance and emphasis on abortion as a right continually reappeared throughout the interview, indicating that abortion is seen as something integral to an individual’s sense of freedom. Interviewee 430 adds to the conversation by noting “...it’s the right to accurate information, actionable information, and also safety, because when you remove those rights, the need doesn't automatically disappear, but the ability to access it safely typically does”.

Interviewee 430’s response highlights that the need for abortions will not decrease if its legality disappears, but instead the safety of accessibility to women’s health resources will decrease.

Within this research, reliable information has been a substantial theme developed throughout, and the interviews continued to identify its value and prominence in both abortion rights and data privacy realms.

Others highlighted the stigma behind abortions and why it exists. One individual mentioned that “...I feel like a lot of anti-abortionists, they focus on the part of it where it's like a crime. They stigmatize it by calling it murder, because I've heard a lot of arguments that there's scientific evidence” (Interview 1008). There is also a religious undertone in this discussion, and Interviewee 2009 added that “[religious individuals] feel like they're setting a standard that's to their morals but doesn't align with everyone. I feel like it's over-generalizing something that is health care”. Many of the individuals highlighted the connection between abortions and women’s health care. Some indicated that women’s health care overall will become harder to access and will become more complicated, ultimately hurting individuals’ access to health care, especially reproductive care. This ripple effect of lack of access will hurt all women seeking health care, not only the ones seeking abortions. Another interviewee vocalized that “...one fourth to one

third of pregnant women the first time they get pregnant ends in abortion. I was like, that number might not sound like a lot, but when you scale it up to the population level and the number of people who do end up pregnant, that's a lot of women. It's a lot" (Interview 8851). This once again adds to the discussion of how prominent abortion is and how much need there is for it. Interviewee 8851 also noted miscarriages in this statistic, adding that abortion has "...become a taboo subject. It's even so taboo that miscarriages can't be taught, and those are natural abortions. It's looked at as you did something wrong. And my view on it is, okay, for a natural, spontaneous abortion, you have no control..." Not only are abortions stigmatized when they are intentional, they are also stigmatized when it is accidental or when an individual plans to have the child but a miscarriage occurs. This stigmatization only furthers the complications and misinformation surrounding abortions.

From this section, it is apparent that many individuals feel abortion is a right and part of women's autonomy. Additionally, many interviewees highlight that abortions are highly stigmatized due to incorrect information or assumptions regarding abortions. These results indicate that abortions are not only misunderstood by many individuals, but the discussion around this topic is polarized heavily, with one side believing abortion is a women's right, while the other side views it as wrong or unnatural. Lastly, the mention of abortion as health care reaffirms the idea that many see abortion as a right, as part of bodily autonomy. As mentioned in the literature review above, stigmatization of abortions is alive and well, which is demonstrated through the data from this section.

Emotions and Thoughts Surrounding *Dobbs* Decision

In response to the decision, emotions expressed included fear, anger, confusion, betrayal, and hesitation. One individual noted abortion as a topic can now be weaponized and was worried

that “...there's always that concern, and there's always that question in the back of my head of, like, is this person going to somehow target me? Or if I say something about where I volunteer or just my general thoughts, how could this hurt me in the future?” (Interview 430). Another indicated their fear, saying “[I was] super scared, super upset. I've done reproductive rights activism for a while, like, before I went to law school, so it really was disheartening to feel like we're going backwards. It was kind of, like, shocking and hard to process” (Interview 4278). Many also expressed profanity and fear from this decision. For example, Interviewee 8391 said “Oh, shit... oh my God, I'm about to go to college. I was literally getting ready to finish my senior year of high school and go to college, and I was like, oh my God, I'm going to get raped and then get pregnant, and then I'm going to what am I going to do? Oh, no”. Spiraling thoughts and a lack of control circulated this discussion, and many felt fear for the future and for women in general. This decision, regardless of whether or not interviewees lived in an abortion ban state (most of them were located in liberal cities), caused extreme panic, fear, and upset feelings over the loss of women’s rights.

Another issue that arose was the concept of privacy as discussed in the legal framework of the decision. One individual dissected the case in the interview, explaining that “...before *Roe v. Wade* was ruled as a ruling on privacy rights, or the whole stance of abortion was to be a privacy. But *Dobbs v. Jackson* came up because there's a right to life or something, or it's not a private decision if it's like a fetus or whatever. And I don't agree with *Dobbs v. Jackson* because I feel like *Roe v. Wade* was a really important precedent, and the way that it was overturned really didn't help the rights of women” (Interview 2009). The continual definition of women’s rights arose with this abortion discussion, even with the decision technically giving states the power to take away abortion as a right. This indicates people’s opinions regarding abortions as a right,

regardless of whether states see it the same way. The specific connection here also highlights that many individuals do not agree with the U.S. government, possibly leading to distrust as well. Privacy's specific definition in the Constitution (or lack thereof) is also exposed here. Another individual noted that pro-choice is a much deeper label than what meets the eye, explaining that "...even if you're like pro-choice or whatever, it doesn't mean you're pro-abortion. It just means you're pro, like, having the ability to choose between electing to have an abortion or not" (Interview 2009). The interview responses continued to solidify the idea that abortion was first a right, and that right was secondly a choice for an individual to make.

Continuing on the rights discussion and on privacy overall, many participants argued that abortion should not be watched by the government. Instead, it "...should be a discussion with you and your doctor, and the two of you decide what the best medical care for you would be in that situation...I already thought we had a separation of some degree of medical privacy, and they're turning around and saying, well, no, you actually don't. So it's very disheartening, and I feel like it's a huge step backwards in equality, in humanity" (Interview 8851). Many interviewees saw this decision as a major step back for the United States and for the rights of people, specifically women. Another illuminated this issue by mentioning that "...I feel like a lot of things in our world have been progressing and getting better, but I don't understand how we literally went back. We had these rights. We already had them. I just don't get how they got taken away. That would literally be like if segregation came back. It's the same thing with discriminat[ion] against groups" (Interview 9486). By comparing this decision with segregation, these interviews once again highlighted the discrimination at play in this decision and how it is taking away basic human rights from women, as abortions are health care and a private matter.

Other responses indicate that abortion should be a private matter, like the rest of health care, and it should not be watched over and preyed upon by state governments.

Contradiction within the Supreme Court decision was also highlighted by participants. One indicated that the ban is “...awful. We're going backwards in history because there are definitely states that were and wanted to implement it, but they couldn't. And it was like, this is harming women's health. Even if you are pro-life or anti-abortion or whatever...label you want to put yourself as, you're also harming pregnant women who want to be mothers with it. You are hurting the very people you're claiming to protect” (Interview 8851). Another looked at the contradiction of the U.S. being a democracy, expressing that “...what doesn't make sense to me is, like, HIPAA exists, and I know that's between a provider and a patient, but you would think the same processes would apply with the government looking at your data. Like, people are talking about, like, China's, you know, China spying on us. Well, okay, if we're trying to separate ourselves as a democracy, then how is this acceptable?” (Interview 430). Lastly, Interviewee 8851 mentioned how this ban is an attack, adding that this was “[a]...reasonable-ish abortion ban and turned into witch hunt, basically”. By noting the contradiction with the definition of democracy and instead describing this as an attack, interviewees expressed severe concern and disappointment towards the lack of democratic values present in the decision.

Lastly, some individuals mentioned that the long-term effects were the major concerning part of the decision. Interviewee 7746 worriedly explained that “...I've lived under this [law] my whole life...I was like, okay, I don't know what to expect now...Who knows what the precursor looked like. So I was like, all right, great. The next 30 years of reproductive freedom are a giant question mark”. Others felt belittled or silenced by this decision, ultimately erasing many individuals' experiences. Interviewee 8851 said the decision “..makes me livid, but I feel like I

wouldn't be able to talk about it. I'd feel like I was silenced on my personal experiences". This decision fueled uncertainty and fear going forward for women's rights, and also both erased and stigmatized a plethora of experiences for women that are monumental, traumatic, and impactful for an individual. This once again highlights the restriction on women's experiences and autonomy.

From the results outlined above, this decision created panic, fear, and uncertainty for the future going forward in many of these individuals. Additionally, contradiction of the U.S. government was exposed here, and many argued that this decision is only hurting individuals it intends to protect. Here, the results highlight that many feel betrayed or upset by the lack of protection from the U.S. government. As for *Dobbs* privacy behavior changes, this data focuses more on the emotional responses to the decision itself, not necessarily data privacy habit changes. Lastly, this section signifies the loss of control this decision led to and how many felt powerless and uncertain.

Changing Data Privacy Habits

The purpose of this research was to determine if data privacy behaviors are changing and why they would be. The following interview questions aimed specifically to decipher how the decision would impact individuals' data privacy habits. Some indicated blatant fear and mistrust towards technology, and Interviewee 9486 outright says "it makes me want to get a flip phone and go off the grid". Comfort levels using technology, especially in abortion ban states, also decreased substantially. Hesitation, uncertainty and fear laced these individuals' responses in regards to health care in general and data privacy. In one specific example, Interviewee 7746 said "I think every time I walked into a pharmacy, I'd be nervous about double checking that the pills I was buying for a non-related issue did not also have abortion as a possible side effect or fetal

malformation as a possible side effect. And am I using cash or credit card and is my face on camera and security camera and no, I don't think so at all. I don't think I feel comfortable at all". Lastly, another interviewee mentioned that "it feels like they're overreaching to prosecute. It would definitely make me be more wary of the technologies I use and how that could possibly be used against me even in cases of spontaneous abortions. And it makes me uncomfortable really and just makes me...more hesitant..." (Interview 8851). Overall, from these responses, it is clear that mistrust, fear, uncertainty, and hesitancy towards technology and medical access is prominent with this decision.

Another significant theme presented was a lack of information/knowledge. When asked about if there was a relationship between abortion rights and data privacy, one participant noted that "this will bring us all a little bit closer to realizing how much we need to control our data instead of letting it control us" (Interview 7746). The lack of public knowledge regarding data privacy and data protection (or lack thereof) may be playing a role in this, as people are not aware of how this can now be used against them. Others indicated that they see a relationship forming in the future between data privacy and abortion rights. One participant noted how marketing will look different now because "...women will be easier to target through the data collected from these apps. And since abortions aren't as accessible, other methods such as Plan B might try to expand their reach, increase their marketing" (Interview 9941). Many companies may try to make a profit off of this decision and women's fear and uncertainty regarding abortions. Another indicated that "...people are going to have more negative perceptions of people who've had abortions. And if their data is available that they've had an abortion, if [a] flag checks out, like, oh, this person had [an] abortion, they're going to think that their morals are compromised or something. And I can feel like that could be used against them" (Interview

2009). This feeling of future concern and fear only worries individuals more now with this decision. The lack of public knowledge, combined with fear for the future, ultimately highlights the negative consequences of this decision, regardless of whether someone is in a state with abortion bans or not.

For specific precautions going forward, many indicated they will be taking a closer look at some of their privacy settings on their technological devices. Interviewee 9941 admitted that “I will definitely take the steps to try to be more secure, maybe put a hotspot shield on my phone as well. And I think also you can ask the apps not to track in Apple settings. I might take that precaution as well”. Others highlighted that they would change *how* they use their apps, whether that be providing less information, choosing only specific apps/sites to use, or refraining from inputting certain data into a technological device.

On the other hand, some interviewees noted that data privacy concerns are not a new phenomenon, and that data has never been safe. The real significance and difference here is *how* data is being used and *what data* the government is looking for. Interviewee 8391 brought up the point that “our phones have been being tracked since their inception. Data is tracked. It's been tracked for decades since the Internet was made. I think people are going to start caring a lot more [about] what's being tracked, because no one gave a shit about period trackers until Roe v. Wade was overturned...” The combination of additional precautions implemented now mixed in with the fact that data privacy issues have been alive for a while highlights the cruciality of particular information and its accessibility, specifically to the public and the government. Lastly, it exposes a crucial idea that individuals are worried about data being stolen and used against them, but now particular data, like period tracking information and potentially financials, are the treasure of the database in abortion banning states. This also raises a consideration about the data

market, where anyone can buy data: will there be a significant increase in data bought on the market to prosecute people for seeking abortions? This section of the interview was revealing of both the data market and the value of particular information, as well as the fact that many individuals will now be implementing more precautions with their technology.

Lastly, another perspective offered regarding data privacy and data habits instead focused on empowerment. Interviewee 430 emphasized that “...we still need technology and these apps and the information you can get is still empowering and can support people to make the decisions they need. So if that's what we're going to do, then let's use those resources...” Instead of focusing on the data that can be used against them, this interviewee instead chose to focus on the positive information that holds power as well, ultimately posing a power dynamic between these two forces of information. This also provides perspective on how technology’s impacts can be mutually beneficial and destructive within the same issue.

In general, the results indicated that yes, privacy habits are changing, but not by much. Some individuals are taking precautions or changing their privacy settings on devices going forward, but some indicated they probably would not change their habits or aren’t worried about this because they don’t have data the government is looking to track and use. This is relevant because it shows how individuals will behave going forward when using technology, but there are social issues immersed here as well, as dissected below. Lastly, as indicated from the literature review, many individuals are concerned with where their data is going because of the lack of restrictions on many third parties. At the same time, they don’t feel their data is valuable enough to pose a safety threat.

Social Issues

The last section addressed in the results is about social issues brought to light and the corresponding themes introduced. The themes have been divided below. These results indicate how U.S. individuals are interacting with the world and in turn how that is affecting data privacy habits.

Government Control:

As mentioned earlier in the results section, participants highlighted the betrayal of democratic values with this decision. One interviewee described the government's ability to track anything related to abortion and prosecute as "...crazy. Just looking at people's data, I think that's just so much they have so much control over us. That's just insane that all these apps are tracking every single thing that we are doing. I think it really violates the freedom rights of every person" (Interview 9072). Others note that the Federal government may not be indicative of how many people feel, which highlights a disconnect in values between the United States government and many of the citizens living within. This also can lead to distrust in general towards the government. Interview 4278 puts this sentiment perfectly, explaining that "...our Supreme Court is maybe not representative at this time of what the general population actually wants". This disconnection also fuels how many individuals see social issues, such as abortion. One interviewee mentioned, "knowing that the government, the federal government, is basically saying, we don't want abortions to exist, so we're just leaving it up to the states, is definitely going to affect the way that people feel about abortion, because if the government is basically saying no, then they're going to think they're doing something wrong" (Interview 430). This quote emphasizes how the government's influence over its people may start to sway many individuals. By banning abortions, many may see abortions as a bad thing and immoral. This

could ultimately lead to more issues with health care access and additional stigma to abortions overall. The disconnect also touches on the power dynamic between the government and its citizens.

Lastly, many interviewees described blatant betrayal and disappointment towards the government, one that claimed to protect human rights with a democratic stance. Interviewee 7746 illustrated this discontentment and government disloyalty by arguing "...I could be forcibly impregnated and then falsely accused, all in the same government, all under the same laws". This powerful quote not only illuminates how people feel out of control and unprotected, but it also demonstrates an individual's frustration and anger towards the government. It also emphasizes that there is decreasing trust towards the legal system and false prosecutions could soon arise with this law. From this section, it is evident that many individuals living in the U.S., specifically those directly impacted by the *Dobbs* decision, are unprotected by the government and feel betrayed by its claim to serve as a democracy.

Power Dynamic:

The next noticeable theme mentioned was power dynamic. This was a recurring theme throughout and was referenced in multiple aspects. As described above, many participants indicated an unfair power imbalance between the government and its citizens, even though the government claims to protect its people. Additional power dynamics mentioned are geared more towards social issues. For example, one woman described a story she heard about a scary health care experience abroad. "In the story about [the individual] and what happened to her, she had preeclampsia. She went in because she felt like something was off. The doctor spent more time trying to figure out and get law enforcement involved than actually treating her as a patient that she ended up losing the baby, a baby that she wanted. And this baby could have potentially been

saved if the doctors were actually concerned about their health care rather than the laws about it and surrounding medical care” (Interview 8851). This power dynamic between the right and access to health care and law enforcement is exposed here. This interviewee also expressed concern over the fact that soon the U.S. will follow in this story’s footsteps, focusing only on prosecuting individuals and not taking care of the individual at risk. Prioritizing legal implications and restrictions against women instead of prioritizing their health and their potential child’s health is something that highlights an abuse of power.

Another power dynamic brought up was the idea of social media and technology’s necessity. With most of society today becoming cashless and relying on technology, it is a necessity to use some devices. This expectation means “...our lives rely so much on technology, but there's no safe procedures. There's no procedures in place for these social media and these apps to guarantee that our data and information is safe, but we have to use them...your whole life is on your phone and on your computer, so you can't just say, I'm not going to use that. I don't want them to have my data... Yeah, you pretty much can't. Places are cashless. You have to either have a card or Apple Pay or whatever. We have to use these things and they're being weaponized against us” (Interview 9740). The fact that technology is “weaponized against us” highlights this power dynamic with technology itself. With limited options outside of technology use, it is hard to keep up with society, work, and education without technology, which ultimately keeps track of any data it is given. This power dynamic in relation to abortion rights highlights the fact that society today is almost entirely dependent on technology. There is no clear way of avoiding its use. Ultimately, the forced use of technology at this point in time is a necessity, and this means that women’s autonomy is at risk and will be tracked at every move for any trace of an abortion.

Misinformation:

Another frequently recurring theme was misinformation. The power dynamics that are alive and well ultimately thrive off of this misinformation, and many participants indicated that the abortion stigma is fueled off of this misinformation as well. Interviewee 7746 described this truth and dissected the different sides of the argument, specifically pro-life and pro-choice. “It's the convenience abortion phrase. It's the people walking into abortion clinics at eight and a half months phrase. I think the misinformation campaign has been very effective and honestly...you can boil the pro-choice argument down to bodily autonomy and health care decisions, but I feel like it's easier for pro-lifers to put their frame into, like, a bumper sticker blurb than it is for us to. [It is hard to] make our argument that briefly because pregnancy and health care is so much more complicated than what they're making it out to be purposefully. And we're acknowledging the truth about the complication. And that's part of why we're pro-choice. And so when you're lying about the simplicity of no one ever dies in pregnancy and this never needs to happen, you can make things short like that” (Interview 7746). The fact that many individuals see abortion and pregnancy as straightforward have been taught this framework, whether through past education, religious views, social expectations, or another format. This also raises the issue of the contention between the two groups in the abortion discussion and the different arguments for each side. Labeling abortion as a “bumper sticker conversation” is an analogy highlighting how some individuals may simplify it in order to further their point, but abortion is much more complicated than what meets the eye. This misinformation also represents an issue within communication itself, including health, political and interpersonal communication.

Another individual highlights that pregnancy, although a happy experience for some, has many more complicated side effects and additional trauma. Misinformation also fuels this argument of simplicity, and Interviewee 4728 describes it as “...when people are very against

abortion, they're really just missing a lot of facts. Like, they don't understand maybe they haven't experienced pregnancy or they don't know how risky it can be. They don't know the history of things that have happened to women, like forced C-sections where they die when they ask for them not to have it". By describing this experience of pregnancy in black-and-white terms, many individuals do not understand the complexities of pregnancy and abortion, including sexual assault, dangers to the health of the parent or child, or emergency surgeries, such as C-sections. Another issue that is a subset of misinformation is a lack of information completely. The abortion discussion and topic itself is not addressed as often one might assume, and this decision only raised the issue because of its hypocrisy and contradiction. This dynamic between the two groups in the abortion contention creates a political and hostile environment as well, which means that more misinformation will continue to spread. Interviewee 7746 adds that the issue with abortion rights is not "...one of the main issues that are being talked about honestly. That might be an issue in itself...The issue could be that it's not being talked about enough right now". The silence and *hush hush* stigmatization of abortion has only been fueled recently, and people not talking about it enough, especially with the data privacy connection, will only aid in additional misinformation being spread.

Lastly, the lack of education regarding abortion and sex in the United States starts the spread of misinformation and incorrect assumptions about pregnancy and abortion. For example, "...sex ed sucks in America, especially in Southern states and Midwest. People are not talking about it properly, so then young girls and women are going to feel uncomfortable talking about their bodies at any point. Even like, talking about periods is weird and uncomfortable for a lot of people...people's feelings aren't going to necessarily be validated by lack of medical access and the political climate" (Interview 430). With the lack of education and support present in society

today regarding pregnancy, sex, and abortion, people are more likely to be silenced or ashamed to bring these topics up, which then reinforces the stigmatization people are aiming to eradicate. Overall, the lack of support and correct information through education was addressed frequently throughout the interviews, demonstrating the correlation between education and support at a young age and how many of these topics are viewed and portrayed.

Narrative:

Building off of the topics of misinformation and power dynamics, multiple narratives have arisen from these incorrect and misconstrued expectations. With abortion heavily stigmatized, it is easy to view the topic and act as completely immoral or wrong. Interviewee 8391 delves into this discussion, claiming that "...I've noticed I don't think people like thinking about abortion, and therefore they're against it because it's uncomfortable. It's uncomfortable to think like, oh, you have this potential human life and you don't want it. That's hard to think about. So I think people think, oh, this is a bad feeling, and therefore this thing is inherently bad..." The feeling of discomfort talking about a sensitive topic leads individuals to assume it's a bad thing. This also brings up a previous discussion of abortion as a privacy versus abortion now as a public and governmental matter based on the decision. The social expectation of abortion as sensitive and the decision's ruling of abortion as not private is contradictory. Additionally, the stigma is higher for individuals not attempting to procreate. It seems like "...there's more of a stigma of talking about having sex for pleasure rather than having sex for procreation" (Interview 430). People who are seeking abortions may be looked down with additional disgust because sex for pleasure is immoral in some cultures, or some see the individual seeking an abortion ignorant for not using protection or a different form of birth control.

Another narrative present in the abortion discussion is an apparent solution to the ban. Many people urge individuals not to get abortions but instead to put the child up for adoption. Interviewee 8391 immediately strikes down this so-called solution, noting that “I do think that the right wing...I have noticed a lot of people weaponizing adoption in abortion discussions...And I've noticed a lot of the narrative is just adopt. Like, don't have an abortion, just put the baby up for adoption...I think it's very important to me that we start dismantling the narrative that adoption is the solution to the abortion ban”. With people preaching the adoption solution, many continue to spread a false narrative that it would provide less negative consequences than abortion. Trauma, fear, and complications still arise from adoption, but many see it as a band-aid solution for abortions. In reality, this only promotes more trauma and complications than one would assume. Lastly, this narrative illustrates how powerful communication can be and the story it can create.

Social Circles:

When addressing friends, family or other social environments, many indicated they felt safe because their social circles had similar viewpoints, or they lived in a city that promoted abortion protection and women’s rights. One individual did mention that they had to be careful depending on what friend group they were talking to, because in “...other social circles I would be hesitant because I feel like there may be nefarious motivations if I shared in those circles” (Interview 8851). The “nefarious motivations” of said individuals have more power, especially with the bounty hunters (described in the literature review) that can buy data and find women seeking abortions, ultimately helping law enforcement prosecute them for their actions. Additionally, another participant mentioned that the issue is not necessarily with friend groups, but with location. They mentioned “it's not my state. I feel like the majority of people in my state

do not agree with me, but being in groups from college with [the] same levels of education and similar opinions on social issues, it's a much safer environment. But neighborhood-wise, that wouldn't be the same either. It's more so friends from school and work, people that share the same values, not so much proximity” (Interview 9740). Here, the values of individuals and education level were more likely to be indicative of similarity in comparison to state or “proximity”. Once again, education, upbringing, and support (or lack of) are all contributing factors on how individuals view this issue.

One last theme within social groups and social beliefs is religion. Many participants noted that religion plays a role in misinformation and stigmatization of abortions. One individual mentioned “...I think the main reason is obviously religion...there's supposed to be a separation between church and state, and now there's so much church coming in and...whatever your views are, it doesn't really matter what you believe because it's someone else's body” (Interview 9486). With abortion seen as sinful or immoral, individuals are more likely to create environments of secrecy, shame, silence of women’s experience, and ultimately fear.

Men’s role:

While the majority of interview time was spent addressing women and the impacts of the decision on them, many individuals brought up men’s role in pregnancy and abortion in general. One interviewee compared the decision’s restrictions on women’s movements and health decisions to what it would look like if it were implemented onto men’s daily habits too. They describe it as “imagin[ing] if we were to try to tell men, we're going to track every time you pee. We're going to track every time you ejaculate. There's no way that would even be proposed...They'd be like, that's overreach. You're delving way too far into men's medical issues” (Interview 8851). The inherent privilege present here highlights that this discussion is

mainly encompassed in discrimination against women. Women can be tracked and prosecuted, but if the same standard was applied to men, that would be overreach and would never pass in a legal setting. Another example of this privilege is regarding how much responsibility (or lack thereof) men have, as "...the potential father or the man who would be biologically related to this fetus is probably not being targeted, even though they're probably...in favor of abortion, they're also probably googling these things, or their location would be tracked at the abortion clinic. But I highly doubt that people would use data privacy to prosecute the man because it's not their procedure, even though they bear half the responsibility" (Interview 430). The majority of this issue is pushed on women or the individual carrying the child, although the man does carry "half of the responsibility" and also engaged in the sex that led to pregnancy. Women are looked down upon and stigmatized because of these choices, yet for men they are free to have sex without being tracked, harassed or prosecuted. These quotes highlight how radically this discussion disproportionately impacts women, even though both individuals are involved.

When considering the restrictions now placed on abortion, many individuals who can carry a child now will lose access to abortion clinics and even reproductive health care in some cases. Interviewee 8391 said "...if men could get pregnant, there would be, like, flavored abortion pills". Although men cannot get pregnant at this point, this comparison highlights the privilege present. It also exposes a severe power dynamic in regards to gender. The "flavored abortion pills" conversation demonstrates that society would make men's abortions extremely accessible and a positive experience in some aspects, as the pills are flavored. The power dynamic here with gender discrimination was mentioned by a plethora of the participants throughout.

Empowerment:

One positive perspective of this discussion is that there will continue to be support and help for women, even if it's not always obvious or public. One participant added that they "...feel like there will be underground movements to help women seek the care they need and avoid prosecution for it" (Interview 8851). Having this additional support for women's rights and autonomy only urges individuals to continue fighting for abortion rights and access to health care. The empowerment continues to shine through at this time, and women's rights are far from unrecognized by individuals in society.

Although not specifically related to data privacy habits, these social issues mentioned above emphasize the ripple effects the *Dobbs* decision is creating, furthering, or expanding. When addressing the decision and data privacy habitual changes in response, these issues also play a role in how security, comfort levels, and ultimately opinions are shaped. Lastly, these results affirm the sentiments of concern and uncertainty regarding data privacy discussed in the literature review, but ultimately individuals did not feel these emotions would lead them to make large habitual changes in their data habits.

Within the results section, interviewees brought up a plethora of themes and topics, including but not limited to information, access, health care, government control, data privacy, stigmatization, communication, emotions, power dynamics, gender inequality/discrimination, privilege, empowerment, long-term effects, distrust, disconnect, technology, narrative, habits, social issues, religions, social groups, and lack of education/support. These themes, addressed concurrently and in relation to one another, highlight multiple crucial phenomena and power dynamics within U.S. society today. This is relevant because these phenomena will ultimately

determine how society moves forward with the *Dobbs* decision and what implications are present.

This study dissected a crucial intersection that must be explored in future research. With the *Roe* overturn, these effects are being revealed and are multiplying. Additional research should be conducted regarding additional data privacy concerns, narratives surrounding abortion rights, the distinction between pro-choice individuals and pro-life individuals, the political climate of this situation, and much more. These topics, addressed together, are underrepresented in academic settings and research settings at this point in time. Some ethical considerations arise here as well in this study. First, the sensitivity of the subject at hand may have led interviewees to modify their answers. This may in turn have modified the results of this study. Additionally, the formal aspect of an interview may have led to interviewees answering more formally than they would regularly. The conversational aspect of the interviews to make participants feel more comfortable was intended to help the participants answer more honestly and informally. Many of these individuals shared their personal stories or stories of people they knew, and this may have led to emotional repercussions for sharing said sensitive stories. Lastly, individuals may have felt anxious and/or upset during or after the interview due to the nature of the topic and its effects on individuals. Additional research should be conducted regarding the narrative of abortion and its personal impacts to decipher how this plays a role in society today.

In conclusion, data privacy habits are intertwined with the *Dobbs* decision in a plethora of ways, and emotional responses such as fear, uncertainty, and anxiety fueled this conversation. Ultimately, many individuals felt they would not make large changes to their data privacy habits because data security is not a new issue. The new issue at hand is *what kind* of data they are looking for and surveilling.

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