

# **Public Perception of Reproductive Rights: Post Dobbs v. Jackson Decision**

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## **Abstract**

In the United States, obtaining full and free reproductive rights has come with a variety of obstacles and hardships. From a historic battle for birth control access to very recent abortion bans, reproductive healthcare access has proven to be an ongoing challenge for people across the nation. Broadcast news media coverage has the ability to persuade, influence, and sway public perception of issues. From current research, we are still unsure of what educational, informational, and societal gaps this news media coverage has created. My goal in the current study was to determine how conservative versus liberal media outlets cover reproductive healthcare issues in the three months following the Dobbs vs. Jackson decision. Accordingly, I downloaded archived news segments from two major news outlets: MSNBC and FOX News. The chosen news segments were content analyzed for five variables: language and word choice, guest appearances and credentials, framing, appeal, and news story length. Analyses revealed that the word “anti-choice” was used significantly more often by MSNBC than FOX News, and journalists appeared as guests more often than guests with other credentials. Overall, results indicated that both networks tended to frame reproductive rights as a political issue as opposed to a healthcare one.