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## The Flaws In America's Reproductive Education

As a young woman currently enrolled in college there are many things I feel like I need to protect myself against such as sexual harassment, rape and an unwanted pregnancy. "Each year nearly half or 45% of the 6.1 million pregnancies in the U. S. are unintended; the rate of unintended pregnancy among poor women is five times the rate of women above the federal poverty line (Guttmacher 1). To avoid this there should be more readily available such as birth control becoming an over the counter drug at local drug stores. Allowing poor women the availability to skip the middle man who prescribes birth control to ensure that women can be protected against unwanted pregnancy. "If you're having sex, use a condom," This is what students are told in Health classes across the U. S.

However, this statement fails to consider the actual effectiveness of a condom is around 82% according to Planned Parenthood. To put it bluntly, this is America's reproductive education at its best, preventing diseases and averting teen pregnancies, through plastic thin as paper. So, its no surprise that young women in America are fearful of the denial of funding for contraceptive use due to Washington politics. Vice President Mike Pence and Republicans have long tried to cut off federal funds for clinics that have ties to abortion. What the republicans of Washington fail to realize is that those clinics such as Planned Parenthood provide women the resources to all reproductive health issues including birth control.

For instance, one study found that when Texas cut funding for Planned Parenthood and similar clinics, Medicaid births rose by 27 percent. (Zernike) The trump administration defense against such claims are that "Imposing a coverage Mandate on objecting entities whose plans cover many enrollee families who may share objections to contraception could, among some populations, affect risky sexual behavior in a negative way," Issued by the department of Health and Human Services. Who is the president to dictate how we live our lives? If anything, birth control prevents the more unwanted abortion. Every medical intervention has harms and benefits. But in this case, the Trump administration exaggerates the harms and undermines the benefits. While oral contraceptives bring with them some tiny risks, especially if used improperly, they pose fewer dangers than many other medicines bought freely at the pharmacy. NHS Choices, a medical information service from the UK government, pointed out, "you are far more likely to develop a blood clot in pregnancy than by using a combined contraceptive. " For example, the NHS says, there are about five to 12 cases of blood clotting per 10,000 women who use oral contraceptives for a year — a small boost compared with women who are not on the Pill and who generally have two blood clot cases per 10,000". The negative stigma surrounding contraceptive use is blurred by the lack of basic knowledge that birth control such as the pill provides women more benefits than just sexual purposes. Birth control is a regulator

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for women who have irregular menstrual cycles, severe acne and cramps that get in the way of a women's everyday life.

The goal is to make birth-control pills more readily available. "The biggest barrier to adherence is the logistics of a prescription, you run out on a Saturday night, you lose your pills, you go on vacation, you can't get a doctor's appointment," said Daniel Grossman, a gynecologist who is a vice president at Ibis Reproductive Health, a nonprofit research organization. If the availability of contraceptive is already difficult for women above the poverty level to receive how much harder must it be for poor women who don't have the access to clinics? In response, there should also be some consideration for young girls who are afraid to bring up the "forbidden" topic to their parents about being sexually active. Many parents don't even want to know if their kids are having sex. Not only do the politicians block the availability for women to receive access to contraceptives but many parents are controlling and depending on religion do not believe in the use of contraceptives. To confirm, I have recently encounter the struggle of getting a prescription for the birth control pill. I have no prior education on the process of getting birth control prescribed and not to mention the many hurdles of getting an appointment covered by insurance.

When I was finally able to sit down with a doctor and get a briefing on the many type of contraceptives I was flat out denied the prescription. My enrollment in a religious university didn't allow for the write up of a prescription for contraceptive use and that I would need a referral to a different clinic that would not cover my appointment with my insurance. It's hard to imagine the struggle for women without insurance and the access to clinics nearby when I myself had to go to three to still end up empty handed. That's why it should be available for women to take control over their reproductive health right and not allow middle age white men to dictate their sex lives. Politics aside, there are many hurdles to clear before packs of birth-control pills can be sold without prescription in our local drugstores.

First, a drug maker would most likely have to apply to the F. D. A. to make the switch and that would involve serious investment in studies to show that patients could understand labels and use the pills as directed. Additionally, the use of prescription allows a briefing to that those who need birth control and how it can be covered. Over-the-counter sales could drug bankrupt company profits. As a result, some oral prescription contraceptives sell for close to \$100 a month but, with insurers paying the bulk of the costs.

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