

# DYING WHILE BLACK

## RACE, MATERNITY, AND THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

A Lecture by  
**Michele Bratcher Goodwin**

Wednesday, April 13, 2022  
Mayer Auditorium, Health Sciences Campus  
University of Southern California

### KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- Michele Bratcher Goodwin is a global thought leader and advisor on issues of law, society, and health.
- Goodwin is Chancellor's Professor and the founding director of the Center for Biotechnology and Global Health Policy at UC Irvine, and the author of *Policing the Womb: Invisible Women and the Criminalization of Motherhood*, among other books.

"Abortion bans represent more than isolated state lawmaking or states' rights—they represent an attack on the fundamental principles of liberty, freedom and autonomy."—Michele Bratcher Goodwin in the *New York Times*, November 2021

"When we think about reproductive rights, so much of that has been gleaned through a lens of thinking only about abortion and abortion access. If you were to compare that with the narrative of civil rights, there are some glaring distinctions. Within the case of civil rights, we understand it to be broader than just simply access to education. . . . employment, access to accommodations, housing, and other areas were also implicated by civil rights. If we're to think about reproductive rights, my argument is that we need to be as broad and expansive there too. These are not just matters of abortion. These are matters of being able to be dignified in one's own body, whether it is to choose to terminate a pregnancy, to carry a pregnancy to term, to have access to birth control, to have access to education such as sex education, the right to be free from state surveillance and criminalization..."—Michele Bratcher Goodwin in a March 2021 lecture at the Centre for Criminology and Sociological Studies at the University of Toronto

## MICHELE BRATCHER GOODWIN

Michele Bratcher Goodwin is Chancellor's Professor and the founding director of the Center for Biotechnology and Global Health Policy at UC Irvine's School of Law, where she teaches bioethics, constitutional law, family law, health law, reproductive rights, and torts. She is the recipient of the 2020-21 Distinguished Senior Faculty Award for Research, the highest honor bestowed by the University of California.

Goodwin is the author of *Policing the Womb: Invisible Women and the Criminalization of Motherhood*, *Baby Markets: Money and the New Politics of Creating Families*, and *Black Markets: The Supply and Demand of Body Parts*. She is also an active public intellectual. She hosts the podcast *On the Issues with Michele Goodwin* and writes about law, society, and global health in outlets including the *New York Times*, *L.A. Times*, *Forbes*, and *Ms.*



Dr. Michele Bratcher Goodwin

**“[L]et’s acknowledge racism as a broad social problem, not simply what happens to people of color. As such, racism and xenophobia are collective, social problems that erode our democracy and diminish our social fabric, and trample constitutional values, implicating all of our lives.”—Michele Bratcher Goodwin in “Addressing Racism’s Toll: My Minneapolis Experience,” *Ms.*, June 2020**

## VOCABULARY CORNER

**bioethics** – the multidisciplinary study of, and response to, moral and ethical questions relating to the health-related sciences, including biology, medicine, and technologies

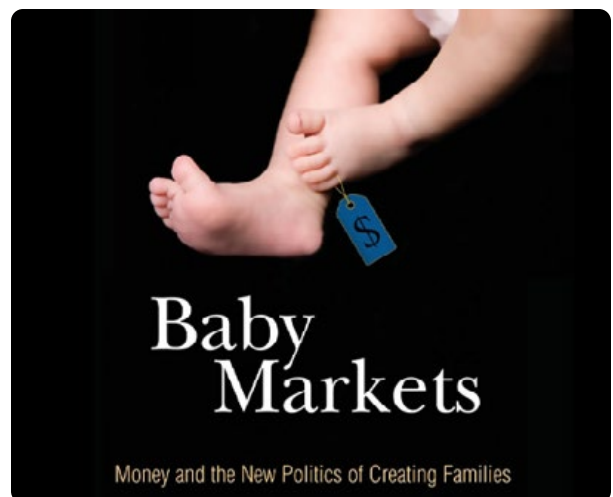
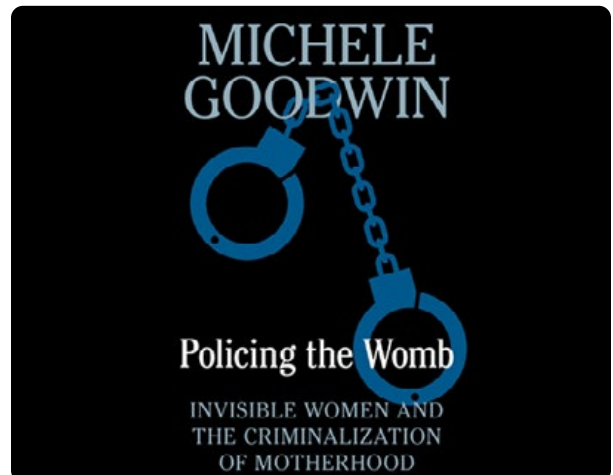
**health disparities** – preventable differences in the burden of disease, injury, violence, or opportunities to achieve optimal health that are experienced by different social groups

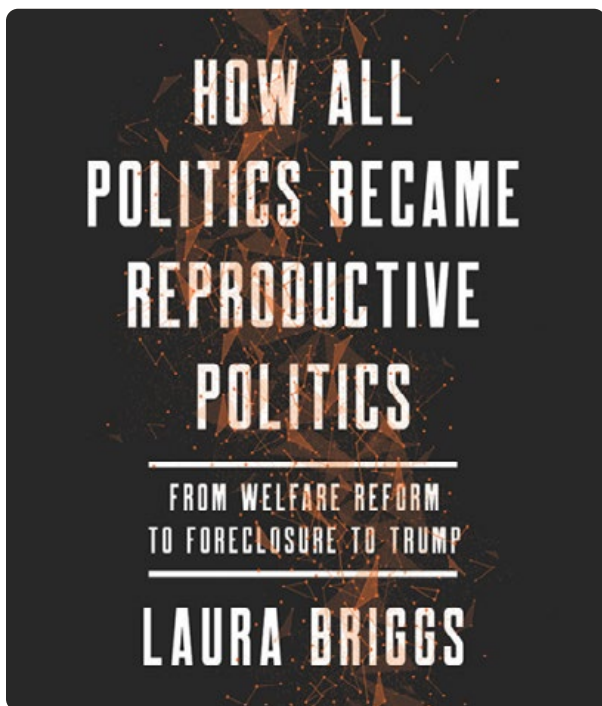
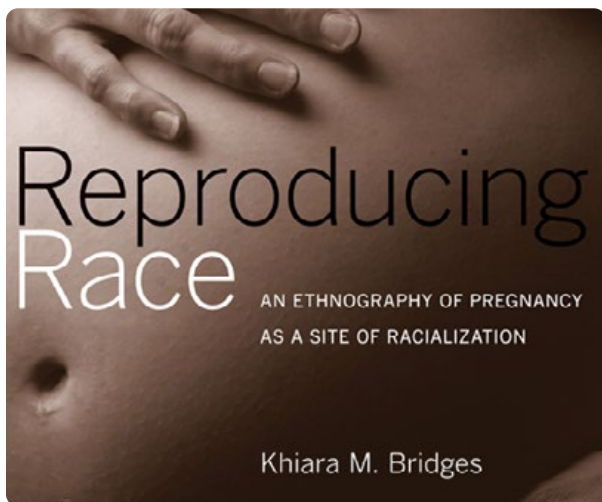
**health care disparities** – differences between social groups in health insurance coverage, access to and use of health care, and quality of care

**health equity** – when every individual has the opportunity to attain their highest level of health through the elimination of disparities

**reproductive health** – a state of well-being in matters of the reproductive system and its functions and processes; as defined by the WHO, “[r]eproductive health implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so”

**reproductive justice** – “the human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have children, not have children,





and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities,” in the words of SisterSong: Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective

Sources: CDC, Kaiser Family Foundation, Berman Institute of Bioethics at Johns Hopkins, APHA, Merriam-Webster, SisterSong, WHO

### FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- What are some examples of racial inequities in the reproductive health care system?
- What are some of the elements of reproductive rights and reproductive justice beyond abortion?
- How will recently passed legislation relating to abortion affect reproductive rights for everyone? Who will be most impacted by these laws?

### IF YOU LIKED THIS EVENT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT:

- **Michele Bratcher Goodwin’s podcast**  
*On the Issues with Michele Goodwin*, available via [Apple Podcasts](#)
- **Michelle Bratcher Goodwin on social**  
[@michelebgoodwin](#)
- **SisterSong: Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective**  
[sistersong.net](#)
- **Los Angeles Coalition for Reproductive Justice**  
[lacrj.org](#)

### DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

**KELSEY VUKIC** of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about this event. Electronic resources are accessible through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at [libraries.usc.edu](#) but may require the user to log in using their USC credentials.

#### BOOKS

- Khiara M. Bridges, [Reproducing Race: An Ethnography of Pregnancy as a Site of Racialization](#) (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2011).
- Laura Briggs, [How All Politics Became Reproductive Politics: From Welfare Reform to Foreclosure to Trump](#) (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2017).
- Jennie Jacobs Kronenfeld, [Impact of Demographics on Health and Healthcare: Race, Ethnicity and Other Social Factors](#) (Bingley: Emerald Publishing Limited, 2010).
- Loretta Ross and Rickie Solinger, [Reproductive Justice: An Introduction](#) (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2017).
- Tina K. Sacks, [Invisible Visits: Black Middle-Class Women in the American Healthcare System](#) (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2019).



## DATABASES

- ⦿ [Consumer Health Database](#)
- ⦿ [GenderWatch](#)
- ⦿ [ProQuest Family Health Database](#)
- ⦿ [Wiley Online Library](#)
- ⦿ [MedlinePlus: Population Groups Topics](#)

## JOURNALS

- ⦿ [Reproductive Rights Newsletter](#)
- ⦿ [Research in the Sociology of Health Care](#)
- ⦿ [Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters](#)
- ⦿ [Women's Reproductive Health](#)

## STREAMING MEDIA

- ⦿ [Birthright: A War Story](#) (Women Make Movies, 2017).
- ⦿ [Break the Silence](#) (New Day Films, 2019).
- ⦿ [Women and Social Action, episode 113: "Abortion and Reproductive Issues"](#) (University Park, IL: Governors State University, 1993).

