



# Unmaking Russia's Abortion Culture: Aspirations for a Liberal Biopolitics



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*Protest in support of legal and accessible abortion, 2015. The sign reads, "Save the embryo, give birth to a soldier. Abortion is murder, war is holy"*

Amidst the political and economic upheavals of the last three decades, Russia has undergone a revolution in reproductive practices. Women's routine use of abortion for fertility control is now a marker of the Soviet past, increasingly replaced by habits of contraceptive use and the deliberate planning of families. Simultaneously, a vibrant political opposition to abortion has taken root in the name of Russia's moral and demographic revival. This talk traces the efforts of health professionals who promoted contraceptives and family planning, from the re-legalization of abortion in 1955 to the eve of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022. It demonstrates how cultural critiques of reproductive health have been a central arena for imagining liberalizing change, and it contributes to our understanding of biopolitics in the Soviet and post-Soviet periods.

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