

California prisons' illegal sterilization of female inmates a new eugenics?

I was sterilized in 1976 when I was 23 years old. My paternalistic doctor visited me the day after la operación and assumed I would be relieved to not have the “burden” of using birth control or worrying about periods.

He was so wrong. I sued him, and the manufacturers of the Dalkon Shield that caused my sterilization. After winning a settlement that opened the door for thousands of women to initiate malpractice lawsuits against this defective intrauterine device (IUD), I naively thought we had seen the end of sterilization atrocities. After all, the first federal guidelines prohibiting sterilization abuse were also implemented in 1976. Not only should these guidelines have ended sterilization abuses, they should have ended the racist, sexist, and classist eugenical thinking my doctor shared that underlay such policies.

Unfortunately, that is not so, at least in California.

According to the prisoners' rights advocacy group Justice Now, people in California women's prisons have been illegally sterilized, nearly four decades after sterilization abuse guidelines were implemented at the state and the federal level.

Read the full, original story: [Eugenicists Never Retreat, They Just Regroup: Sterilization and Reproductive Oppression in Prisons](#)