



Reproductive Justice and Me

February 6, 2020

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Is Reproductive Justice an issue that I care about or connect with?...

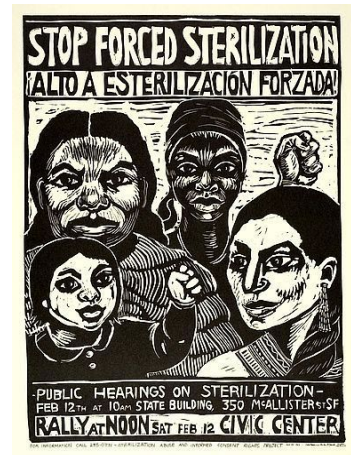
Reproductive Justice isn't just purely about a single "kind" of woman or man, it is a framework that connects with every race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, and gender. Learning about what this framework really is meant to do and be, shows me the incredibility that is still portrayed in the scary world that we live in.

Before I started taking this amazing Women's and Gender's Studies class, I knew very little about RJ and how important it is to *ALL* women around the world. My previous thoughts on RJ were very simple and blunt. The only things I really knew about RJ were that it was an important movement for women with reproductive problems and their top priorities were their drive for justice for their reproductive systems. However, even though this was true of RJ, there is SO MUCH MORE. Before, I had never looked deeply into the meaning and purpose of RJ. I have also never been presented with credible resources before this class (technically my Professor, because I have taken her class before). I also never realized the effects of RJ on the population and the amount of people trying to make it a widely known ideal (like the LGBTQ community has done for Pride). Many LGBTQ, racially diverse, and economically derived communities seem to be a lot more vulnerable

to Reproductive injustices, rather than the opposing communities. First of all, achieving RJ as a “normal, straight, white, and upper/middle class woman” is almost impossible, let alone if you are deemed to be “out of the societal norms”, RJ accessibility is **much** worse.

Throughout the beginning of this course, I have learned the *true* meaning of RJ. Reproductive Justice isn't just only about the “experience of reproduction”, it also provides a fundamental base for reproductive rights and social justice. I think that these supported ideals make my connections with RJ even stronger than they were before I really knew the meaning of it. I can personally connect with the reproductive rights element due to many health problems. This is why RJ has become very special to me as a physical and emotional framework. ([“A Reproductive Justice History”](#))

By learning about the evolution of RJ throughout the beginning of the WGST course, I have connected a little deeper through each of the readings and the passionate discussions we have during class time. One reading assignment that has specifically helped me with understanding the evolution of RJ is “A Reproductive Justice History” ([“A Reproductive Justice History”](#)) This article speaks about the past, the present, and some of the future advances for RJ. The Reproductive Justice framework is thoroughly explained to be divided into three important parts, “the right to not have a child, the right to have a child, and the right to parent children in safe and healthy environments”. This specific quote from this article helped me gain an overarching idea of what RJ entails and the people who are affected by it. Furthermore, each explanation and story throughout this article showed me the deeper and important meanings of this framework, thus making a deeper connection with myself.



I can relate RJ to many aspects of my life, but I would have never known I could until I took this class. I wake up more and more excited about this class everyday. I am especially excited to learn more about women's rights in healthcare as we move further in this class.

So now I want to ask you....

How does Reproductive Justice connect with you (maybe physically and emotionally)?



February 27, 2020

What specific issues have sparked my interests?...

Throughout my last reflection I mainly touched on what RJ meant to me and how it has positively impacted my college experience as a whole. Before college, I had never really looked at Reproductive Justice and thought to myself, "Oh yes, this is something that I want to learn more about and raise awareness for because it is such a huge issue"... Nope. Never. Would. Have. Thought. BUT, I can definitely say that this RJ class is the best class that I have taken at Longwood thus far.

Since my last reflection, I have learned a few more things to add to my understanding of RJ as a framework. Some of the things that I learned that helped my understanding are Abortion pre, during, and post Roe v. Wade, the history of birth control and LARCs, as well as the inaccessible resources throughout the LGBTQ community. All of these ideals I learned about in class have personal stories and examples that we talk about and elaborate on in class.

And let me tell you... I have been so intrigued in every single discussion about each of these different topics.

By understanding the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision, I was able to understand the evolution of RJ and how it affected different women at different times throughout the U.S. This historical event majorly affected “a women’s right not to have a child” in RJ. This law changed abortion from being illegal to legal in the United States, thus giving women “somewhat” of a choice for what they want to do with their pregnancies. The reason I say “somewhat” of a choice is because the access to getting an abortion was nearly impossible for women, even after the law.

This leads into limited access to abortion and LARCs throughout all communities, especially the LGBTQ community. The introduction of long acting reversible contraceptives caused some women to have more options for RJ. However, these contraceptives were very very limited and expensive. Thus, another “somewhat” good thing that was



invented for women and their RJ. The LARCs are somewhat of a good thing because of the significant barriers they have. The women who were/are actually in need of them can’t afford to get them placed or removed when they needed to be. This unfortunate concept helps build upon the RJ framework of women having inaccessibility to contraceptives as well as abortion.

One specific RJ issue that has sparked my interest lately is the inaccessibility that queer people have with RJ and any type of healthcare. I have never really taken into consideration the issues that queer people have with getting the proper healthcare that they need. The assignment, [Accidental Gay Parents](#), sparked my interest for many different reasons. This podcast series is about two queer men, Biff and Trystan, who “accidentally” become parents. It all starts off with Biff’s sister’s children needing someone to help them escape from a terrifying home life. Trystan and Biff were able to do this, however, there were many many complications because they were gay. And not only were the gay, but Trystan is a trans-gender man. This obviously sparked many more issues for them to be able

to get full custody of the two children in the first place. Further on in the series, Trystan tries to have a baby (because he has female body parts). HOWEVER, they struggled with finding the best healthcare providers for this situation because it was "not normal for a man to have a baby". This sparked a specific interest for me because ANYONE should have the right to proper healthcare, especially when they are pregnant, no matter what they identify as.

I find it very interesting that queer people are faced with these reproductive barriers more and more everyday. I think that there should be **much more** awareness being raised about these certain types of situations.

Since the spark from those podcasts, I have been listening to podcasts that focus on queer lives and how healthcare is related to them. I absolutely love hearing people's amazing stories about their struggles with their Reproductive decisions and how they somehow make things work everytime (despite shitty healthcare)!!!

So now my question is...

What truly sparks your interest for learning more about reproductive Justice?

April 1, 2020

What is the topic of my podcast....

Since the last time I posted on here, many things have changed for *everyone*. Lately I have struggled to find a specific topic for my final podcast, but I think I have finally (maybe) found one. I will be doing my podcast on...



Women's Rights/Accessibility to Contraception in Eastern Virginia.

I have chosen this topic because I live on the East Coast of Virginia, and I have had loved ones struggle with their accessibility to birth control. This can be due to their social status, economic standing, racial class, or age. I would like to speak upon this topic of access to contraception because I believe it needs to be addressed appropriately. Since this is *my* community, I would love to make a difference (even if it is small), to be able to help the others surrounding me. However, if I am unable to help the problem in any way, I can at least raise awareness to it.

There are many things that I need to be aware of to effectively address this issue in my podcast. The first and most important thing to have knowledge about is the use of contraception, and which methods are "accessible" to women. I will also need to know the limitations that the government puts on contraceptives so that women have very limited access to them. I will also need to be aware of the history of birth control methods in the area (Eastern Virginia) as well as which women were most affected. This can involve researching articles already written on the subject, watching interviews, videos, or podcasts, as well as possibly interviewing someone in the area about their past experiences (if they feel comfortable to do so).

As I mentioned above, I will need to mainly focus on which groups of women were and are affected today by these limitations. This will probably be one of the biggest ideas that I talk about throughout my podcast. This can vary from race, sexuality, social class, and their financial standings. Unfortunately, these characteristics of women are what have limited them to so many things throughout their lives. And that is exactly why the majority of my podcast will be addressing these "stereotypical" relations between women and contraceptives.

To complete this podcast project effectively, I will need certain technological and social skills for gathering information, writing, and recording the podcast. First, I will need to gather all of my resources for writing the podcast's script. This can include: online research, personal interviews, or watching other peoples interviews on the subject (if available). I will then need to put all of the information into a document and pick out certain examples and evidence for completing my podcast script. Finally, I will need to know what app or website that I will need to record my podcast. I am not 100% sure on what I should use for the best results, but I would love any input that you all have on that (if you have done one before).

I know that practically everyone is going through hard changes right now, but I believe that all of us can get through it together. I am hoping that this podcast

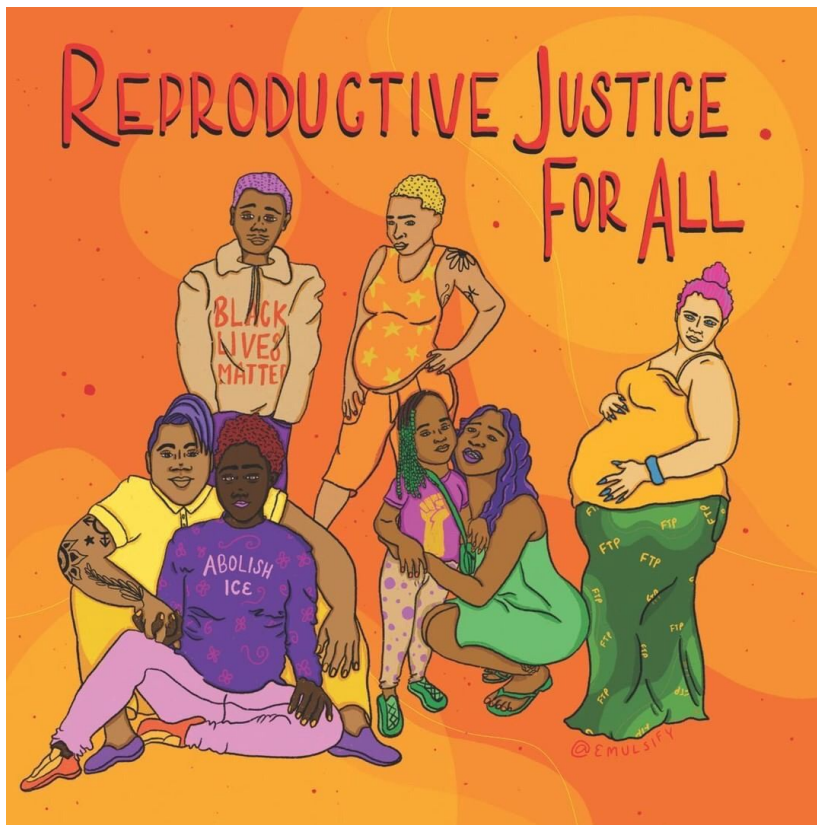
process will open our eyes to our communities and help us de-stress (even if it is only a little bit). At least after this is all over, we will know that we did something to either help our community, or raise awareness for a specific problem within it.

April 26, 2020

The interesting and somewhat chaotic process of writing my podcast....

Hello everyone! This podcast process is many different things at once: interesting, entertaining, a little chaotic, but mostly incredible! This podcast project has had a huge impact on my understanding of Reproductive Justice. The research that I have done for it has been extensive as well as very interesting.

Even though the research part has been focused on access to reproductive healthcare in rural areas, I have still enlightened myself with so much more information about RJ than I had known before. The research increased my intelligence on just how many people are truly affected by reproductive injustices. I definitely knew that millions of women all across the world were affected by these injustices, but I don't think the extent of them was very clear to me... until now.



Doing the podcast specifically on problems relating to my community made very relatable problems become so real. I have grown up as a woman in a rural community for almost 19 years now. Researching more and more about girls and women like me was so interesting, and unfortunately saddening at some points. Throughout my life, I have traveled miles and miles for doctors appointments, Emergency Room trips,

surgeries, medicine, etc. Luckily, I had the means to transportation and finances to get this care, but many women DO NOT. Women in rural communities experience reproductive injustices and healthcare neglect every single day... And many people have no idea that they experience these unfortunate deficits. The research that I did for this project enlightened me on the community I live in, as well as how many of my fellow neighbors may be experiencing this neglect. I know that rural communities do not have the worst part of reproductive injustices, but I wish that there would be much more awareness raised about them... thus, a hope for change for many communities, including mine!

This podcast is the final step for my “map of learning” in this class. This map started off with the knowledge I had from my CTZN 110 class. This information was very limited when it came to understanding RJ. However, throughout this class, my learning and understanding of RJ went as follows.

- The only things I really knew about RJ were that it was an important movement for women with reproductive problems and their top priorities were their drive for justice for their reproductive systems.
- Reproductive Justice is: 1) The right to have a child. 2) The right to raise a child in a safe and healthy environment. And 3) The right to not have a child.
- Reproductive Justice isn't just only about the “experience of reproduction”, it also provides a fundamental base for reproductive rights and social justice.
- All of these reasons PLUS learning more about availability to contraceptives between different kinds of communities (LGBTQ, African Americans, low-income, or minorities of any kind, etc).
- All of the information that I stated before, plus a new connection of RJ and me. Throughout the end of the class I began to realize the amount of reproductive injustices, and WHO they had the biggest impact on. In doing research for my final podcast, I gained a better understanding of how limited RJ is in my community and **many** other communities. I would have never thought that RJ would be such an issue in a small rural town like mine, but it is... and I (and so many others) have been living through it my entire life.
- I think my final understanding of RJ is the icing on the cake. Reproductive Justice/Injustice is present almost anywhere in the world, and it is SO undermined and unappreciated. So many people have no idea what they are facing on a day to day basis, how to deal with their RJ issues, and how to raise awareness to it, regardless of class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, etc. RJ is a necessary subject that needs to be spoken out upon and learned about... that's what this amazing class taught me, and I hope I could somewhat teach it to you too.

In ending my “map of learning”, I believe that the **landmarks** on my map are: 1. The complete understanding of the RJ framework. 2. The communities that it truly affects the most. 3. The lack of contraceptives, abortions, and any healthcare services that are required for basic human health as a woman (or trans). 4. And finally, understanding how RJ is in **my own** community, and how it affects the closest people to me.