



Reproductive Freedom Festival Viewing Party Information Packet

What is in this packet?

1. The basics (the who, what, where, when, why)
2. Defining our frameworks
3. Here's a poster!
4. How do I sign up?
5. The Program
6. Varieties of viewing parties! Ideas!
7. Icebreakers/Discussion questions/Games
8. Get activist points! (AKA So what can I do now??)
9. Resource list

The basics

Who?

YOU and all of your activist friends

What?

The **Reproductive Freedom Festival**, a theatrical **recognition and celebration of the fundamental human right to bodily autonomy**, is being developed by [Words of Choice](#) to support **reproductive freedom, rights, health and justice** and to generate new conversations on these subjects. We are pro-women's rights, pro-human rights, pro-reproductive rights, pro-reproductive justice and pro-choice.

Selected pieces (five minutes or less) will recognize the past, present, future and timeless nature of reproductive freedom.

You've already expressed interest in hosting a viewing party. Now what? Invite some of your activist friends over to your dorm, house, or women's center for a global online conversation about reproductive rights! You can also use this event to benefit a prochoice cause and fundraise to advance reproductive justice.

Where?

Your computer screen and hundreds around the world!

When?

Sunday March 20th 2016, 6:00pm-9pm EST

Why?

At a time where our reproductive freedoms are rapidly being stripped away in statehouses across America and the landmark *Whole Women's Health v Hellerstadt* case is being heard by the United States Supreme Court, we can't afford to be silent about these issues. The performing arts are a vitally important vehicle of culture change, educating and motivating an audience to reject the culture of silence and shame surrounding reproductive freedoms, some of the most omnipresent and complex of human experiences. We're honoring Women's History Month AND affirming human rights and reproductive rights, health, freedom and justice.

Any questions?

Contact reproductivfreedomfestival@gmail.com

One more thing!

Attend our Facebook event at <https://www.facebook.com/events/549923461849834/> and invite all of your friends and attendees! Join the conversation with **#ReproRights**.

Defining Our Frameworks

Reproductive freedom is an expression of the universal values of bodily autonomy and self-determination. It represents the individual's right to be free from government intrusion, as well as from outside force, danger or judgment on matters of reproductive decision making. Reproductive freedom touches upon topics related to reproductive healthcare, sex, sexuality, birthing, parenting, gender roles, abortion, contraception, and more, as well as the drive toward recognition of equality for all.

Adapted from *Finally, A Feminism 101 Blog* <https://finallyfeminism101.wordpress.com/2007/03/17/faq-what-do-feminists-mean-by-reproductive-freedom/>

Reproductive Health

Reproductive Health addresses the reproductive health needs of all persons. It “focuses on healthcare, services, information, as well as research and health data... and to improve and expand services, research and access, particularly in prevention, and [to] provide culturally competent care...”

Reproductive Rights

Reproductive Rights refers to legal and advocacy efforts to define, protect and secure an individual's legal right to reproductive health care services, and the societal structures to support it. The goal is to secure constitutional rights that assure that universal legal protection is available to meet the needs of all individuals. Reproductive rights, pursued in international human rights bodies, courts, legislative bodies, hospitals and elsewhere, address the legal protections that make reproductive healthcare available and accessible to all who need it.

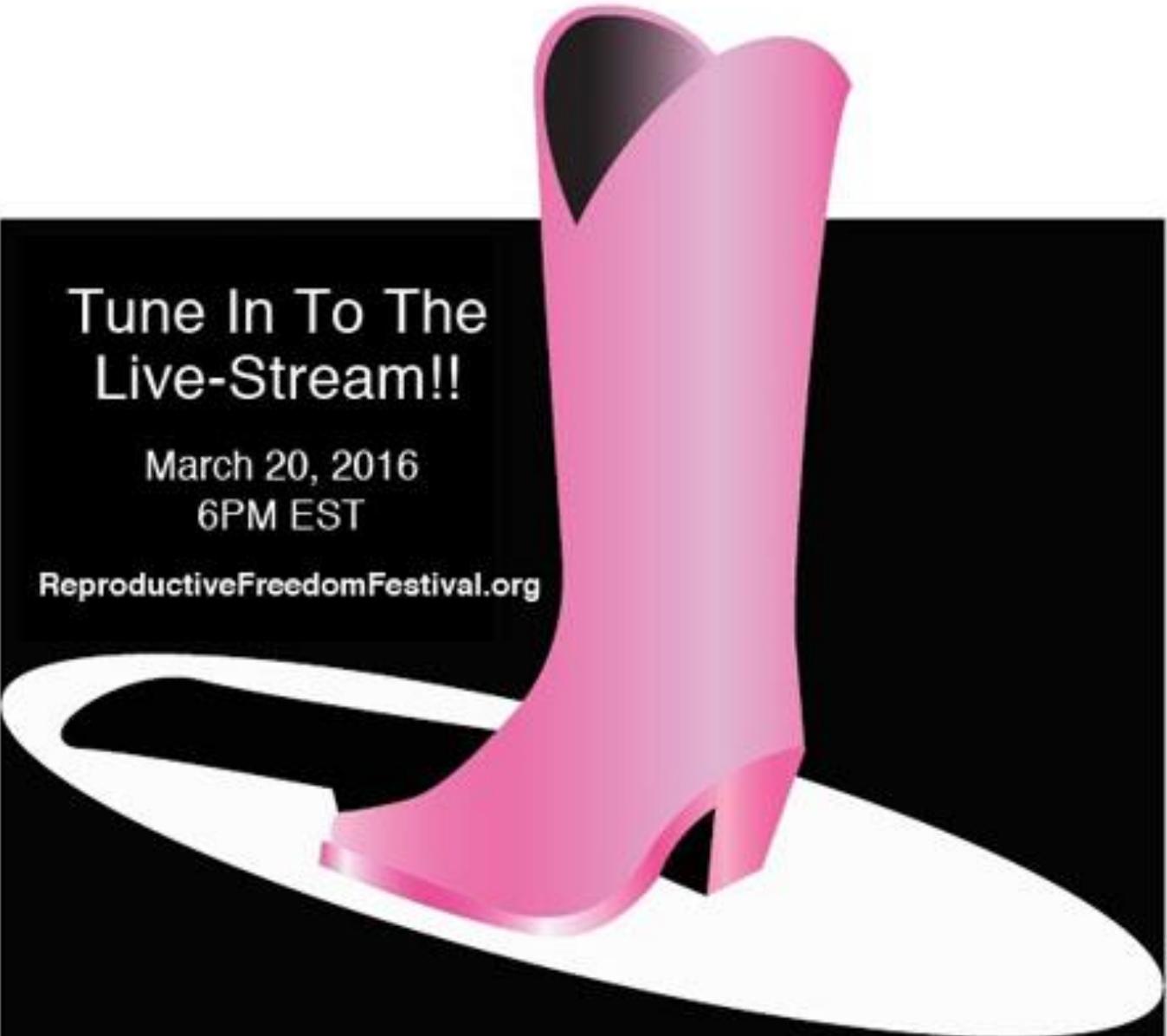
Reproductive Justice Framework

Reproductive Justice, first articulated by women of color in the SisterSong Women of Color Network, is described as “a movement-building framework that identifies how reproductive oppression is the result of the intersections of multiple oppressions and is inherently connected to the struggle for social justice and human rights.” Reproductive justice acknowledges that a person's “environment, economics and culture affect her reproductive life.” Controlling individuals through oppressions of race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, age and immigration status become a strategic pathway to regulating entire communities and reproductive justice challenges people to question and change structural power inequalities. At its core, Reproductive Justice supports the right of people to have or not to have children, to parent their children in a safe, healthy and economically secure environment, while also acknowledging the intersections of multiple oppressions and identities.

Adapted from *A New Vision for Advancing Our Movement for Reproductive Health, Reproductive Rights, and Reproductive Justice* (Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice, 2005)

<http://strongfamiliesmovement.org/assets/docs/ACRJ-A-New-Vision.pdf> and *Understanding Reproductive Justice* (Loretta Ross, SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective, 2006, updated 2011)

<http://www.trustblackwomen.org/our-work/what-is-reproductive-justice/9-what-is-reproductive-justice>



Tune In To The
Live-Stream!!

March 20, 2016
6PM EST

ReproductiveFreedomFestival.org

**REPRODUCTIVE
FREEDOM
FESTIVAL**

[#ReproRights](https://twitter.com/ReproRights)

How do I view the Live Stream?

The Reproductive Freedom Festival goes LIVE on **March 20, 2016** beginning at 6 pm and continuing until 9 pm (EST).

The Live Reading will be shared simultaneously across the country via the premiere high-quality Live Streaming of [VirtualArts TV](#). This is not your back-of-the-house wobbly camera, but a professional multi-camera set-up, filming and sending out of the selected works. Theatrical sets of selections will be performed in half-hour segments, each with 4-5 new and unique works.

In between sets, we will host short artist and activist interviews, and shout-outs to activist groups across the country. Online participants may join in by chat and by Twitter. In other words, this is TV of dynamic new writings coming through to you by computer, with international online participation.

To View:

1. Go here on March 20, 2016 at 6 pm (to 9 pm) EST:
<http://reproductivefreedomfestival.org/>
2. You can join in the conversation by chat or tweet right on the same screen (@ChoiceTheater #ReproRights)
3. Do you want a reminder? Sign up here:
<http://reproductivefreedomfestival.org/watch/>

If you are in New York, you can join us Live in the studio on **March 20, 2016** at **The TACT Studio** from 6 pm to 9 pm. Audiences may rotate in and out on the half-hour, and you are invited to tweet and chat with the online audience! To purchase tickets (\$8) to be in our theatrical audience:

<http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2506065>

The Program

Performances

You can watch for all three hours (definitely suggested!) or for a shorter period. The program will be divided into half-hour sections or sets, each with a selection of four to five pieces, different directors and a different group of actors! There's lots to see and discuss.

The full program with descriptions and bios will be available on our website --

<http://reproductivefreedomfestival.org>

Conversations

In between performance sets, we'll be talking about some of the great activist and community building work going on across the country. We're looking at groups described and nominated by writers and supporters across the country. You can suggest yours, too, by writing to us in advance at

reproductivefreedomfestival@gmail.com

Varieties of Viewing Parties

There isn't just ONE TYPE of viewing party! You can adjust this model to fit many different formats! Some ideas include:

1. You can use the Reproductive Freedom Festival as an opportunity to raise \$\$ for the reproductive justice (or women's health or women's rights) organization of your choice! Our show can get people in the door and serve as the (free!) entertainment for your fundraising event.
2. The Reproductive Freedom Festival could be a great way to raise consciousness for women's issues in your community or on campus. It's an entertaining, engaging presentation of some pretty serious issues and appeals to LOTS of different people of all genders and life experiences.
3. Looking for a night at the theater with feminist friends but NOT looking to pay the big bucks? The Reproductive Freedom Festival is a dynamic new theater piece that can travel all the way from New York City to your living room for free!

Icebreakers/Discussion questions/Games

Before

1. For introductions, ask the group their names and why they're interested in the event tonight. OR why reproductive justice is important to them. OR a recent news story that interested them.
2. Brainstorm on what words and phrases are used by those in support of reproductive freedoms vs those words or phrases used by those who oppose them. Write these on a big chart as they are called out. Compare the two sets of words and phrases. How are they different? Do some appeal more than others? Why or why not? Framing an argument, using certain language that may appeal to the personal values of an audience, is key to gaining support for a viewpoint. How does each side use language to motivate its potential supporters?
3. This easy exercise will create a spoken word piece with input from everyone in the room. "Spoken word" is a performance style in which lyrics, poetry or stories are spoken creatively rather than sung. Hand out index cards. Each person writes on one, in ten words or less, what "reproductive freedom" means to them. Collect the cards and arrange them on a table. Ask one person to read out loud each of the cards in a flowing sequence. Now rearrange the cards and ask another volunteer to read them to the group. What do they tell you about reproductive freedom?
4. Divide the room into small groups. Each group should imagine a character and the reproductive issues that matter to them. One member of each group should write down information about this character.

Ask each group to spend a few minutes imagining details about their character, such as their age, where they live, their income-level, occupation, religion, race, ethnicity, physical and/or cognitive ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, family status.

What issues might this person be facing? Possibilities include (and are not limited to) lack of comprehensive sex education, lack of access to birth control, unintended/unwanted pregnancy, an abusive relationship, sexual assault, lack of/inadequate health insurance, difficulty finding appropriate health services, infertility, pregnancy loss, homophobia, transphobia, racism, financial hardship.

How do life circumstances impact the decisions your character makes? Are the final decisions the ones they preferred or are the "lesser of two evils"? What challenges do they face? To whom can they turn to for help and support? Report your scenarios back to the larger group.

1. Ask the groups to discuss where they got their ideas about sex or their sexual education. Whose voices were the loudest? Who controlled the ideas that you were receiving? Was it the media? Home? School? How did those ideas conflict between the different spaces? How did you reconcile those differences? Were the messages positive or problematic? What myths or "old wives' tales" did you hear growing up about women's health, bodies, sexuality, and relationship norms? What myths and stories are young women and men hearing today?

During

While you watch the show, you'll have the opportunity to share your stories, react to individual pieces, and raise awareness for reproductive issues, past and present by tweeting [@ChoiceTheater](#) #ReproRights. Comment along in the Live Stream's chat window.

We'd also love if you sent pictures of your group throughout the performance. We don't need to be in the same living room to raise consciousness collectively, as a unified activist community.

After

2. You can encourage the group to think about their own experiences and how they relate to the pieces in the Reproductive Freedom Festival. Hand out pieces of paper for the group to jot down notes or write a piece of their own.
3. What is one new thing that you learned from the Reproductive Freedom Festival? What concerns already familiar to you were brought to mind? One week from now, what do you think you will remember from the Reproductive Freedom Festival and why?
4. Discuss what new questions you have after seeing this production. Are there subjects you wish had been covered? What do you want to learn more about?
5. Place yourself in the shoes of a character from any piece you heard today. What would you do if you found yourself in their situation?

Get activist points! (Aka so what can I do now??)

1. Get Informed – keep abreast of current events surrounding reproductive issues, on the local, state, federal, and international level. There is a lot going on right now that you should stay aware of. Don't focus solely on federal issues, state and local legislation will more greatly impact your day to day life.
2. Research and visit your local clinics and health centers. Speak with clinic volunteer coordinators to find out more about what they do. What is their perspective on pregnancy, contraception and abortion? How aware are they to the needs of the different backgrounds of people in your community? Contact representatives in your state legislature. Where do they stand on the issues you care about and what action have they taken? Inform others about what you have learned.
3. Support an abortion fund that helps low-income women in your community. The **National Network of Abortion Funds** (<https://fundabortionnow.org/>) provides a directory of members, as well as information on starting your own fund. Host a screening of the Reproductive Freedom Festival as a fundraiser for your local abortion fund.
4. Support the work of other organizations. The National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health has a great resource list <http://latinainstitute.org/en/campaigns> but expand your search, particularly to include smaller, local organizations.

5. A group from Virginia organized a bus to the state capitol to oppose anti-abortion legislation after being inspired by a previous Words of Choices show. What issues are being debated in your state legislature? Organize a bus to your state capitol. Ask your state representative to meet informally on the issues you care about.
6. Use your creativity! Words of Choice developed out of Cindy Cooper's background as a playwright and journalist. How can you combine your creative side (art, music, writing or anything that helps you express yourself) with your interest in protecting and supporting reproductive freedom? For poetry and spoken word inspiration, check out <http://laurenzuniga.com>
7. Write an article or op-ed about why you support reproductive freedom friendly legislation and submit it to the editors of your local and school newspapers, your professional or community organization's newsletters, and your favorite blogs and on-line news sites.
8. Throw a letter-writing party at your organization, house, at a café, or in the park to write personal letters to your elected officials and Supreme Court justices telling them why you and your friends support reproductive justice. For Supreme Court justices, use the salutation "Dear Justice [Last Name]:" Mail your letter to:

Chief Justice (Justice's Full Name)
 The Supreme Court of the United States
 One First Street NE
 Washington, DC 20543

Resource list

The following is by no means exhaustive but contains useful jumping off points as you search for materials on issues of reproductive justice, rights, and health.

1. Read blogs!

- www.Feministing.com
- www.RHRealitycheck.org
- www.Feministe.us/blog
- <http://reproaction.org/>
- <http://everydayfeminism.com/>
- <http://www.theroot.com/>
- <http://wordsofchoice.blogspot.com/>
- www.Latinainstitute.wordpress.com
- <http://www.blogforchoice.com/>

2. Talk about pregnancy and abortion with your friends and family. Find tips at

<http://www.abortionconversationproject.org/>

3. Stock up on basics on reproductive health issues at

- <http://www.gutmacher.org/>
- <http://www.rhttp.org/>
- <http://www.reproductiveaccess.org/>
- <http://pregnancyoptions.info/index.htm>

4. Tell your story online! Check out options at <http://bit.ly/1oBbcnH>

5. Check out some documentaries!

- *Trapped*
- *No Mas Bebés*
- *After Tiller*
- *How to Lose Your Virginity*
- *The Abortion Diaries*
- *Let's Talk About Sex*
- *I Had an Abortion*
- *The Pill* (Directed by Erna Buffie and Elise Swerhone)
- *Beyond the Politics of Life and Choice*
- *12th and Delaware*
- *The Coat Hanger Project*
- *From Danger to Dignity*
- *The Education of Shelby Knox*

7. Or some fictional films!

- *Obvious Child*
- *La Loi* (French biopic)
- *If These Walls Could Talk*
- *Dirty Dancing*

- *4 months, 3 weeks, 2 days*
- *Vera Drake*
- *Citizen Ruth*
- *The Cider House Rules*
- *Just Another Girl on the IRT*
- *Fetus Envy* (short film, on YouTube)

8. Or some great books!

- *Devices and Desires: A History of Contraception in America* by Andrea Tone
- *The Story of Jane: Legendary Feminist Underground Abortion Service* by Laura Kaplan
- *Crow After Roe: How 'Separate but Equal' Has Become the New Standard in Women's Health and How We Can Change That* by Robin Marty & Jessica Mason Pieklo
- *This Common Secret: My Journey as an Abortion Doctor* by Susan Wicklund
- *Living in the Crosshairs: The Untold Stories of Anti-Abortion Terrorism* by David S. Cohen and Krysten Connon
- *Condom Nation: The U.S. Government's Sex Education Campaign from World War I to the Internet* by Alexandra Lord
- *Doctors of Conscience* by Carole Joffe
- *Killing the Black Body: Reproduction, Liberty, and the Meaning of Liberty* by Dorothy Roberts
- *Roe v. Wade* by Marian Faux
- *The Choices We Made* by Angela Bonavoglia
- *Generation Roe* by Sarah Erdreich
- *Undivided Rights: Women of Color Organizing for Reproductive Justice* by Jael Silliman, Marlene Gerber Fried, Loretta Ross, and Elena Gutierrez
- *What if Your Mother* by Judith Arcana
- *Front Lines: Political Plays by American Women* ed Shirley Lauro and Alexis Greene (includes *Words of Choice*)
- *PRO* by Katha Pollitt

Reproductive Freedom Festival Live Streaming Viewing Packet

Prepared by Rachel Goddard, adapted from previous packet prepared by Emma Shkarshy