WE ARE PISSED

Contributed by Anonymous

Last year sucked balls for those of us who care about reproductive rights. First there was the disgusting secret video scam that created a media frenzy over "baby parts". And then, the worst case situation happened with the Colorado Springs shooting at a Planned Parenthood clinic that took 3 lives. This tired fight to protect our rights took a major turn. It felt personal to many of us on a whole new level. What is a riot grrrl to do with all her anger and outrage? How do we cope with our heartache at watching our beloved Planned Parenthood under such vicious attack?

We fucking process it with art, crafts, music... and a zine, of course. We talk, text, vent on social media... and take refuge in our community, spending time together connecting and talking about our feelings, describing our experiences. We listen, we honor and validate each other's stories. We empower each other and find the strength to fight on. That is the beauty of riot grrrl.

I feel some guilt submitting this essay for our zine because it is not about my own personal decision to have an abortion. It is not an account of me personally having an abortion. In fact, I have never been placed in the position of needing to make this choice. So who am I to write about this issue? Who am I to talk about the emotional impact it had and continues to have on me?

I share this account in response to all those assholes who accuse women of using abortion as birth control. As you will read, there is literally no funnier accusation in the history of ever. Even women with access to private abortion clinics where, unlike the women I describe below, they are able to relax in pampered hospital-style care, describe the physical pain, the recovery time, the bleeding for weeks. Say nothing of the monetary cost and all that GUILT and confusion our fucked up culture throws onto women. I challenge ANY PERSON who makes that statement...
to watch what I watched at my local Planned Parenthood clinic, to witness the intense pain, to see the tears and hear the screams.

NO WOMAN EVER USES ABORTION AS BIRTH CONTROL. EVER. To believe otherwise is to believe in an enormous fallacy. "But I'm an asshole shithead who wants to use this issue for political gain - I love how well this lie works for our cynical needs!" Yeah, well, fuck you Mr. Shit-for-Brains. You are WRONG and you have the suffering of countless women on your hands. The political is personal, you ass wipe.

I write this account in response to the "all (wo)men are created equal" bullshit that is our experiment in democracy in the USA. Because, it's bullshit on a million levels - access to decent education, clean environment, etc. - but is especially relevant when a woman's access to reproductive care is so radically affected by which state she lives in. Poor and living in the south? All your gonna get is a horror show of an assembly-line termination. Poor and living on the West coast? Lucky you - you get Novocain and pain controll! A saline drip and pain meds! And, if you can't come up with the cash in time, there are scholarship type programs to help you cover the cost, you lucky resident of the USA.

I write this account to back up research that has long showed the majority of abortions are for women over the age of 35 and are to those who already have children. I write this account, because all of this happened in pretty recent history, after the year 2000. My account reads like it's from a different time and place, not a wealthy, mid-sized American city in the 2000's.

I write this account to pay homage to the men and women moving mountains to provide this service, this basic human medical need. I do not want anyone reading this account to look negatively on Nashville's Planned Parenthood clinic! Every single person I met was working against the stream in a really difficult, bare bones situation. They were doing this emotionally intense work because they value the cause. This was not "just a job" to any of the staff members. Keep in mind that they are showing up to work by being buzzed in through a heavy security door. They interact with clients from behind thick bulletproof glass. They park their car and walk into work every morning with a minimum of three anti-choice protesters screaming hate at them. They do all of this in daily fear for their safety and the safety and privacy of their families.

I write this account, because if I had been one of the clients that I met, I would probably still be too traumatized by the experience to ever want to talk about it... ever. I want to honor them by giving my account, because for all the "secondary-trauma" I went through, it was NOTHING compared to what they went through on that day and over the days of painful recovery that followed.

ALL I COULD DO WAS HOLD THEIR HANDS

I have held this story inside my heart for over a decade. At the time, it slied me emotionally, so this account comes from fuzzy memories and a desperate need to repress the pain I felt in the moment. For that reason, dates & details may not be perfect... but I promise, this story is 100% true.

Early in 2001 or 2002, I was briefly a volunteer at the Nashville Planned Parenthood clinic. I like to say I didn't remain a volunteer because of work and school time constraints, but who knows, it was such an intense experience for me that maybe I wouldn't have had the strength to continue with it regardless. In total, I only spent four or five days spaced out over a couple of weeks assisting the over-worked, under-paid staff.

My first day was spent with the staff member in charge of pre-termination counseling. Due to anti-choice laws in this buckle of the bible belt, all women seeking termination had to undergo an hour or so of counseling the day before their procedure. This involved having an ultrasound to verify the age of the embryo and a series of questions to make sure that the woman was asking for the procedure on her own free will. Pre-termination counseling is a subject worthy of its own story, but it's not the memory that haunts me, it's not what I want to talk about today.

That memory happened the next day, a Friday, which is when all terminations were scheduled for at this clinic. I showed up early that morning to help the nurses set up the recovery room. This was a room next to the surgical suite and it contained 5 or 6 lazyboy-style recliners, large and soft and comfy. Each recliner had a heating pad on it. There was a fridge with containers of various juices and sugary snacks.
luxury of time enough to treat each patient as a human deserving of dignity and care?

Look, this guy was getting up at 3am and driving over 3 hours one Friday every month to provide this service FOR FREE. In my extremely biased perspective, he was surely a great person, a man of honor, a compassionate warrior doctor... right? This bias allowed me to ignore his curt, often annoyed and frustrated bedside manner. The clock was ticking. This was going to be one of the worst days in these women's lives regardless of how nice and comforting he was towards then so why not dispense with all warm fuzzies – let's just focus on getting this over with as quickly as possible so that each woman could get back home and on with her life.

The nurse was busy helping him through the procedure. It was up to me to give a damn about the woman in the stirrups. And at this time, they rarely if ever, had recovery room volunteers.

I held hands while women screamed and cried. I held hands while women's faces turned ashen from the pain, all the color dripping out of their faces. Not all of them screamed out in pain. Every single one of them was trying to be as strong and brave as possible. I remember thinking about how dramatic I had been about the pain I experienced with a colposcopy at my OBGYN's office. If I had only known... These women's services were quickly opened, large utensils that looked 50 years old were shoved up there... all while I stood there feeling helpless, trying my best to provide a tiny bit of comfort by holding their hands and breathing with them.

"Breathe, just breathe", I would say... "Squeeze my hand, come on, you're doing great. Deep breath in... you're doing great, deep breath in, now out... you got it, almost done now, almost done". Their eyes locked on mine until they squeezed shut in agony, tears streaming down cheeks.

The only interaction I had with the doctor was him letting me know that I was not allowed to watch the procedure from his perspective nor see any of the removed tissue. Not for any medical reason, but because he wanted to honor the privacy of these women. He didn't know me and I think he was concerned that I may be the kind of person who was there that day for the gore factor. Nothing could be further from the truth and I am grateful that I never saw any of the aborted fetuses. I'm glad Dr. Grump was vigilant about their privacy. As soon as he was finished, he would run them over to a sink area to make sure that he had removed 100% of all the tissue. This was the most important and medically critical step in the process: making sure everything was removed as needed in order to prevent the kind of complications that are common with back alley abortions and DIY efforts.

And then it was over and time for the next client. I helped the women get down from the table, the nurse would hand her her underwear and clothing and instruct her to put on the largest menstrual pad I had ever seen in my life. As I assisted the client out to the recovery room, the nurse cleaned up the linens and such. Blood. There was a lot of blood on those linens. It had never occurred to naïve 'ill ole me that this procedure would be so bloody.

I would help each woman sit down in one of the cozy recliners, put her feet up and position the heating pad over her belly. Nurses monitored pulse & blood pressure by hand with a watch. All women were encouraged to drink the juice of their choice and nibble on some cookies if possible to bring their blood sugar up. We went through a lot of juice but hardly any of the snacks.

As soon as the client settled in the recliner, a literal timer was set for her – she had 30 minutes in which to collect herself before getting hustled out of the room and sent home. After about 25 minutes, a nurse would take the client into a little closet area and check her enormous menstrual pad to see how much blood was on it. As long as it was an appropriate amount of blood, they were discharged with paperwork and follow-up instructions.

All of the women I met were bleeding appropriately thirty minutes post procedure. It was unspoken that anyone showing problematic hemorrhaging would be taken to a hospital. This was never an issue. Asking these women to get up and leave after only 30 minutes was incredibly difficult. None of them wanted to leave so quickly but the clinic needed that recliner for the next women coming through. I could tell how unhappy the nurses were to have to force these women to get up and leave after such a short time. My heart felt broken.

I write this account because I believe people need to understand what we are fighting for. Planned Parenthood is the most important non-profit
to me on this entire planet; I am their number one super fan of all times. Again, I must stress that the fact that these clinic Fridays were such fast-paced, heartless assembly lines is in no way the fault of Nashville's Planned Parenthood as it existed about 15 years ago. I believe this with all my heart. I saw and continue to see every single one of the staff there as valiantly doing the absolute best that they could with so few resources in the face of such an enormous need. They were and remain my heroes.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD IN THE DEEP SOUTH

In the following years, my life took me to both the West coast and to New York state. Through the activist work I was doing plus my own gyno needs, I saw firsthand the RADICAL difference between Nashville’s Planned Parenthood and the clinics found in "blue states". UN-FUCKING-BELIEVABLE, you guys. Like night and day. Not only were there five times as many Planned Parenthood clinics (not all offering termination services, mind you) in each of these cities where I lived, but the clinics were larger and nicer and offered much higher levels of reproductive health services. INCLUDING well-baby medical care for up to 24 months for low income women. That’s right, folks – Planned Parenthood is often the only medical provider a child born into poverty has for the first two years of their lives.

Which brings me to the experience from my very short career as a volunteer that haunts me the most, fifteen years later. Don’t get me wrong, I am haunted by the pain I witnessed, by the humiliating and inhumane manner in which these women had to be rushed through such a scary and painful procedure! When I traveled to Washington DC in 2004 for the March for Women’s Lives, every step I took as we marched around the White House was for those women and the pain and humiliation they endured. And for the staff, the amazing staff doing all they could to provide this service.

But, as I write all this, I only start to cry when I remember the Thursday evening before the first clinic Friday that I volunteered at. The clinic closed around 5pm. Less than an hour before closing, an African-American woman in her thirties showed up. She had already been processed as needed, meaning, she had been determined to be fine to have a termination based on the age of the fetus. By the time I walked into the hallway, she was crying, enormous tears pouring down her cheeks. The staff member talking to her had obviously dealt with her previously in the day.

“I only have $390, please, please, can’t I get you the $60 next week? I’ve asked everyone I know, I’ve borrowed from everyone I know, please, you have to help me! I already have 3 children, I cannot afford another one, please, please!”

Turns out the woman was a couple days away from the gestational limit set on allowed terminations in the state of Tennessee at that time. Either she would have a termination that next day or she would have to travel to Ohio to a clinic that offered terminations at later gestational periods.

“I don’t have a car and if I miss work, we’ll lose our apartment! I don’t have anyone to watch my kids and I don’t have money for a bus trip up north, please, please, you HAVE to help me, PLEASE!”

The staff member apologized again, “I’m sorry, we absolutely have to have $450 in cash by close of business today in order for you to get the procedure tomorrow. And it’s closing time. I am very sorry. We simply cannot help you. I’m sorry but you have to leave.”

I stood there and felt all the blood rush out of my head. The woman locked eye contact with me, tears pouring down her face, her eyes begging me to help her. I wanted to run out to my car, withdraw $60 from my bank account and rush back to give it to her. SIXTY DOLLARS. Just sixty dollars. Just sixty mother-fucking dollars.

“Please, I had to take off work early and walk here, please, please just let me pay you next week!"

I knew it would not be appropriate for me to give this woman cash, and there wasn’t enough time anyway. It was five o’clock; the building was empty and the remaining staff were trying to close up for the day. Even if this woman had found $60 by the next morning, the time line simply would not work, because our state had a mandatory waiting period between paying the cost for termination and going through the pre-procedure and the day of the actual termination.

My mind was screaming, furious that the state of Tennessee would gladly spend tens of thousands of dollars on TennCare and TANF (aka welfare
assistance) to support the birth and life of this unwanted fetus, but would not allow any tax money to provide a termination. Again, I soon discovered that this issue was radically different in the blue states.

Had this woman lived in a different part of the country, her wish to control the size of her family, to do right by the children she was already struggling to feed... that wish, that need would have been met. Assistance would have been found. Legal time constraints would have been less of an issue.

She would have gotten through a major crisis in her life without missing work and pay... without going from person to person begging for money to obtain such a personal, private service. She would have avoided the humiliation that I witnessed her go through as she cried and begged perfect strangers for help out of her nightmare.

I wonder what she did, I wonder what happened. As I drove home that evening, I passed her walking, eyes swollen from crying.

I did not have the moral courage to stop and offer her a ride.

I need to end this account with some good news and a reason for all of us in this city to feel pride. Not long after my experience, Nashville's Planned Parenthood went through a huge organizational change and became Planned Parenthood of Middle & Eastern TN. A new director was hired and fundraising efforts were increased. I moved away so I don't know the details and specifics about this effort. I hope a member of their staff can submit a follow-up response to my account some day in a future zine because I feel strongly that it is a story our community needs to hear and celebrate. I understand that there is now a separate office building that the administration works out of. That they have more staff dedicated to fundraising and outreach. And that the clinic itself has recently gone through a significant renovation. I've even hear that there are some scholarship/grant opportunities provided by private donors to help women meet the cost of their reproductive needs.

I can imagine how much work it took to achieve all this in the face of growing efforts to reduce women's access. The political climate has only gotten uglier. I am moved and inspired by what the staff at PPMET have achieved. I know it was not easy. And given my short experience, I will never, ever take any of that progress for granted.
PLAY WITH MY DOGS, NOT MY PUSSY

DANIELLE GRAVES
KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Contributed by Veronica Burgos

Have you or someone you know been harassed, obstructed, threatened, or physically harmed by protesters at a reproductive health care facility?

If so, you may wish to contact the U.S. Department of Justice to discuss ways in which the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act (FACE), a federal law that imposes criminal and civil penalties for such criminal conduct, may be used to protect you.

If you or someone you know has been harassed for providing safe, legal abortions, you can ask the United Nations to get involved. The UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders can ask the government to intervene to protect human rights defenders like abortion providers when she receives individual complaints.

Allegations must include at least the following information:

- Full name of the victim
- Explanation of the victim’s human rights work
- Description of the human rights violation suffered by the victim
- Information about the perpetrators of the human rights violation
- Description of whether the violation was reported to authorities and of any action taken
- Explanation of the connection between the violation and the victim’s human rights work
- Name, professional role, and contact information of the person submitting the complaint

For more information, including links for filing complaints with both the US DOJ and the UN please visit www.reproductiverights.org
RIOT GRRRL RESOLUTIONS

TO CELEBRATE THE PEOPLE IN MY LIFE MORE, MY FRIENDS, MY FAMILY, PERFECT STRANGERS, AND MYSELF. TO STOP MY BODY SHAME!!!! TO STOP APOLOGIZING! TO BE UNAPOLOGETICALLY FAT AND AWESOME.

TO RAISE A BUNCH OF MONEY FOR CHARITIES SUPPORTING SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC/SEXUAL ABUSE AND TO RAISE AWARENESS, TO SPEAK UP MORE ABOUT ABELISM IN MY COMMUNITIES! TO VOLUNTEER WITH OLDER WOMYN-- AND TRY TO LISTEN DEEPLY.

TO QUIT SAYING THINGS LIKE "I NEED TO GET A 'REAL MAN' TO DO THIS TASK FOR ME " OR "I'M GIRLY SO I DON'T DO [FILL IN THE BLANK]" ... IT'S SILLY/HURTFUL TO EVERYONE (AS IF CHANGING OIL OR LIFTING HEAVY THINGS HAS TO DO WITH GENDER).

TO EXPLORE CREATIVE OUTLETS, TAKE CARE OF MYSELF MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY. TO CHANGE MY DAILY ROUTINE IN A WAY THAT ALLOWS ME TO FOCUS ON ACHIEVING MY GOALS AND DREAMS RATHER THAN JUST SURVIVING, TO LIVE IN MY BODY AFTER YEARS OF LIVING APART.

TO FOCUS ON TAKING BETTER CARE OF MY BODY BECAUSE I WANT TO BE HEALTHY, AND NOT LET WEIGHT LOSS BE MY PRIORITY. TO

NOT MAKE NEGATIVE COMMENTS ABOUT MY BODY. TO BE A POSITIVE, NON-JUDGMENTAL FRIEND TO OTHER WOMEN, WHICH MEANS I'LL HAVE TO BE POSITIVE AND NON-JUDGMENTAL TOWARD MYSELF.

TO GET ON THE FUCKING BALL AND MAKE SOME HORROR MOVIES!!!

TO NEVER BE AFRAID TO SPEAK MY MIND, EVEN IF I AM "THAT" PERSON OR "THAT" FEMINIST, BECAUSE USING MY VOICE WILL ONLY PUSH ME FURTHER IN MY RECOVERY. TO ROCK HARD AND LOUD W/ MY LADY-BROS IN LITTLE PAWS. TO BUY MY OWN HOME SO NO ONE CAN EVER TELL ME I DON'T BELONG WHERE I LIVE.

TO ALLOW MYSELF TO FEEL THINGS DEEPLY AND WITHOUT SHAME: CRY WHEN I NEED TO, LAUGH WHEN I NEED TO, YELL WHEN I NEED TO. ALSO, NOT TO BE ASHAMED OF MY STRENGTH. TO STOP BEING SO HARSH ON MYSELF FOR NOT BEING THIS IDEA OF WHO I SHOULD BE.

TO TAKE CARE OF MYSELF IN EVERY WAY. THAT MEANS TAKING CARE OF MY BODY (EATING GOOD THINGS, TAKING MEDICINES AND VITAMINS DAILY, SEEING MY DOCTOR REGULARLY, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY) AND MY MIND (READING, JOURNALING, SPENDING TIME WITH PEOPLE THAT MAKE MY EYES LIGHT UP, ALLOWING MYSELF ALONE TIME) AND MAKING ME THE PRIORITY IN MY LIFE.

TO SHED THE "SOCIAL NORM" AND DO WHATEVER THE HELL FEELS RIGHT TO ME.
ANOTHER DEAD THUG

Contributed by Anonymous

Darian Longoria... A name most don't know, but his face and name have burned into my mind. A 16-year-old Texan who disappeared in December 2015, and his body discovered a month later. He’d been selling some drugs, so many conservatives were quick to say good riddance to another thug. But all I could think looking at his face – brown skin, curly black hair, big brown eyes – was that he could have been and probably would have been my child.

Ten years ago I was a troubled 21-year-old with a ton of major emotional problems. I had no friends, a highly dysfunctional abusive family, and was barely able to hold down a minimum wage job. All I knew was drinking, cutting, and unhealthy dealings with young men. My heart dropped when I found out that I was pregnant. When I told my partner the news he said what many young men in the hood say, “it ain’t mine.”

I knew from the moment the pregnancy test came out positive that I was going to have an abortion. It was not just a choice. For me, it was the only chance at survival. Though 21 is by no means too young to have a child, especially where I am from, I knew that having that baby would have been a death sentence for both of us.

Anti-choice conservatives always want to push adoption as the alternative to abortion. However, I knew that children of color, which mine would have been, are often times not adopted. I would most likely have to sign the child away into the foster care system. As we all know, the majority of child who grow up 18 years in the foster care system end up on drugs and in prison. I didn’t even think that after carrying a baby for nine months in my body, I would have even had the emotional strength to sign them away. I was so fragile, and having been a child who was loved by nobody, I would have wanted to try and give the baby some of what I never had.

The reality though was that I had nobody to help me. My family was so terrible and would not have helped me at all. My partner definitely had no desire to be a father to our child due to the scandalous nature of our relationship; his family would not want anything to do with the child. I had no car, no career training, I knew that I would be forced into public housing or end up homeless in one of America’s most dangerous cities. The child would be another at risk youth growing up in dangerous surroundings. And, with no family support, would have very likely ended up in a gang. “Nobody loves me,” I told my tummy shortly before the abortion, “And nobody would’ve loved you either.”

I think it’s so ironic that the same conservatives who condemn abortion are the same ones who practically cheer seeing young men of color wind up dead as a result of criminal activities. Many of these mens’ mothers were like I was – young, poor, and vulnerable. Sadly, many do not have access to abortion due to distance or cost. Others are shamed for wanting an abortion by their families or religious figures.

It turns into a vicious cycle; frustrated young mothers who cannot get ahead in life, working multiple jobs just to provide for their children that they do not have time to raise. The children are therefore raised by their violent surroundings and grow up to antagonize, who else, but single women and young people such as themselves.

My heart goes out to Darian Longoria’s mother. Though it is hard to tell my story, I am grateful that I was able to have a safe, legal abortion. I am child free and trying to pursue a career in health care. Not everybody has a supportive family or partner, and many children are adopted. I never once regretted my choice. Better a fetus that never became a person than another dead thug.
HEY NASHVILLE LADIES!

Contributed by Catherine Rust

When we think about what choice is, I think it goes beyond abortion being legal. Abortion can be very costly for women who are making minimum wage, living pay check to pay check. All women deserve the option of choice, and for women of a certain socio-economic background choosing an abortion is just not an option.

In Nashville, a medical abortion can cost close to $700, to a little over $1000 for less common abortions at 16 weeks.

If you’re a girl in Nashville needing an abortion, but feel like cost is preventing you from one, there are resources you can look into: www.fundabortionnow.org/funds/j-paschall-davis-fund

The Paschall Davis fund works through Planned Parenthood of Middle and East Tennessee helping to pay for the cost of abortion and birth control. They can be reached at 615.345.0952.
WHEN YOU TURN 30...

Contributed by Jocelyn Snyder

When you turn 30, 90% of your eggs are gone. Well, according to my mother, that is.

It feels like in the past five years, every time I’ve been home, I’ve heard my mother make this claim. I am not sure how to feel about it. I feel pressure and resentment and fear and a sense of duty to fulfill my role as a female and a daughter within society. To procreate. To contribute. Also, she really wants to be a grandmother and I feel compelled to give her what she wants since she gave me life on earth. I have two brothers who are pretty dysfunctional people as far as humans go, and she likes to remind me that I’m her “only hope at having grandchildren.”

Well, fuck.

I haven’t checked to see if her beloved ‘egg’ statistic is an accurate one and I don’t really care if it is. But I cannot help but feel scared every time I hear my mother tell me that I’m almost thirty and I’m running out of time to have a family. I don’t even know if I want children. I know that my body wants children. Every time I see a ‘friend’ who is pregnant or engaged on Facebook I get jealous. I cannot help but make faces and coos at babies who are within 3 feet of me.

Mental illness runs rampant in my family. Clinical depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia. I know she’s my mother, and she has always been a great one but I do feel obligated to give her a grandchild simply because it might make her happy and proud of me. Nevertheless, I really don’t want to have to deal with having all the responsibilities of parenthood accompanied by whatever fun sickness science decides to throw at me. I only want a child if it’s beautiful and perfect. I know that’s a ridiculous statement but it’s an honest one.

The kicker is—I love children. I believe that they are our only hope at living in a peaceful and loving world. But why is it acceptable to pressure me into doing something that has to do with my body and my future? Why is it acceptable to even discuss? I don’t have the answer. I’m sure it has something to do with how our mothers were treated when they were our age.

Don’t get a tattoo, you’ll ruin your body. Don’t eat that, you’ll ruin your body. Don’t wait too long to have babies, you might get breast cancer or disappoint your mother.

Although I use condoms religiously, I’ve been not-so-quietly obsessing over the status of my uterus for the past few weeks. I’ve been dizzy, nauseous, irritable, and tired.

Three weeks ago, I finally weaned myself off of my antidepressant. I felt like it was time. I am experiencing the symptoms for both antidepressant discontinuation syndrome and pregnancy.

Either way, I may be throwing myself down a flight of stairs.

...MY UNAPOLOGETIC, FAT, SOOFY, STRONG, POTENT, SEXUAL, CAPABLE, POETIC BODY...

SIMPLY, MY CHOICE.
TO THE GRAY HAIRRED MEN
STANDING OUTSIDE
Blocking the way
With nothing better to do at 10 am on a Wednesday.
I WILL NOT BEGIN TO REPLACE MY FEELINGS OF COMPLETE RELIEF
With regret, shame, and dismay.
SEE, THIS IS MY CHOICE
AND MY ROAD TO PAVE.

No one has to live my life, but me.
Thank you so much to the doctors
who treated me with respect and ease
and helping me avoid this ever again
by setting me up with an IUD.
Now I will go home and rest and heal

Knowing my destiny is mine
AND MY UNAPOLOGETIC FEELINGS ARE REAL.

Contributed by Catherine Rust
A DOULA CAN HELP

Contributed by Veronica Burgos

Birth doulas are all the rage right now, and rightfully so. A birth doula is a labor support professional, trained and experienced in childbirth and helps prepare the mother for birth while providing her with continuous emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical support during the birth process. There are many other types of doulas, including post partum (support after baby is born), loss doulas (helping families through a prenatal loss), and full spectrum doulas.

“Full Spectrum Doula” is a term still unfamiliar to many people. In its essence, it means support for women across the full spectrum of pregnancy experiences and outcomes, as well as throughout their reproductive lives. Their services include information about and support for fertility and contraception; birth, breastfeeding, and parenting; termination, miscarriage, and loss. Many doulas use this term to differentiate themselves from other doulas who do not recognize the need or object to doula support for women having abortions. An abortion doula if you will.

These doulas are the friend or family member a woman might not have during this time. They provide information before the appointment, answering questions the woman may have forgotten, or been too embarrassed or ashamed to ask. They build trust and safety that the woman can later rely on during and after the procedure. They accompany the woman to the procedure, hold her hand, help her to breathe, distract her, or simply sit by her side. The doula is there to help the woman recover and process her feelings immediately after the appointment and for a period of time after.

To learn more about full spectrum doulas please visit:
www.abortiongang.org
www.yesandyes.org/2015/02/true-story-im-abortion-doula.html
www.radicaldoula.com

When I was 18, the only thing I really knew about sex was that I probably shouldn't be having it. I grew up in a Southern Baptist church that taught me that sex was a sin and abstinence was the best way to go. I disagreed. I knew I needed to be on birth control but I didn't exactly know how to get it, so I turned to Planned Parenthood. I still remember the Dr. who performed my exam. Her name was Carol. So, thank you, Carol, for educating me and helping me stay free. Thank you, Planned Parenthood, for all you do for women.

-Meredith Grayson

[Image of a drawing of a woman named Carol]
FURTHER RESEARCH

Articles
colorlines.com/articles/everything-you-need-know-about-biggest-abortion-case-our-lifetime
m.motherjones.com/politics/2015/07/planned-parenthood-abortion-the-war-is-over
bustle.com/articles/136471-7-ways-to-help-abortion-providers-on-the-anniversary-of-roe-v-wade
riotgrrrlonline.wordpress.com/diy/how-to-defend-pro-choice-beliefs/

Books
The Choices We Made: Twenty-five Women and Men Speak Out About Abortion by Angela Bonavoglia
My Life on the Road by Gloria Steinem
Why I Am An Abortion Doctor by Suzanne T. Poppema, M.D. and Mike Henderson
Not Funny Ha-Ha by Leah Hayes
Policing the National Body: Race, Gender and Criminalization in the United States by Jael Silliman and Anannya Bhattacharjee

Films
refinery29.com/abortion-in-movies#slide
msmagazine.com/blog/2014/11/24/top-10-feminist-documentaries-streaming-on-netflix

Podcasts
ladypartsjustice.com
sexnerdsandra.com

Blogs
ourbodiesourselves.org/blog
blogforchoice.com
everysaturdaymorning.net
lter.net/reproductivejustice

I'M TRYING TO BE ALL RIGHT.
It was always MINE.
your Child BUT MY BODY.
YOU DON'T CONTROL me anymore.

<nashvilleriotgrrrls>
<nashvilleriotgrrrls>
nashvilleriotgrrrlsla.tumblr.com
nashvilleriotgrrrls@gmail.com
KEEP YOUR RELIGION OFF MY BODY

OPEN TO SELF SOVEREIGNTY

Sheila Nagig

20,000 BC

2,000 AD

Smashing the Patriarchy Together Since 2014