

## My Body, Their Choice

By Julie Morgenlender

Outraged, but not shocked: that's how I felt about the recent Supreme Court ruling about abortion rights. How could I be shocked that the U.S. government is controlling our bodies when that has already been happening to me and so many others for years? I understand the outrage of, "How dare they tell me what I can do with my own body." I feel that way, too. It's simply that I'm used to it.

As a disabled person, I've learned that people and institutions often feel they have a right to comment on and make decisions about my body. People on the street make comments about the braces on my knee, strangers move my wheelchair "out of the way," people often get mad when I don't high-five them as I "march" in the Pride Parade and some even touch another part of my body instead, without my consent.

The government is intrusive in its own ways. I have to "prove" that I'm disabled on a regular basis. I must account for every deposit in my bank account to prove that I am not, in fact, working "too much." My friends are shocked by the invasion of privacy I must endure. Sadly, I learned at the start that I can receive benefits or keep my privacy, but not both.

Government health insurance has so far been less directly intrusive, yet more harmful for me. I am lucky to have government health insurance. I'm sure that sounds odd to most international readers, but in the U.S it's considered a rare privilege. The thing about Medicare (federally provided health insurance) and Medicaid (state-provided health insurance), though, is that the government gets to decide what is covered. Medicare pays 80% of the costs for what it covers, so Medicaid is important to cover some of the gaps. Unfortunately, if Medicare doesn't cover something, then Medicaid won't cover it either. That leaves more holes than in a slice of Swiss cheese.

For example, remember those knee braces I mentioned before? They aren't designed to be worn every day for years. They wear out long before insurance will cover them at the 365-day mark. Until then, the pain gets worse and I simply do the best that I can. My gastroenterologist wanted me to see a dietician. But Medicare won't cover dieticians or nutritionists for anyone except those with diabetes, kidney disease, or a recent kidney transplant. Not only should dieticians be covered for everyone for the sake of preventative care, but I have two different conditions for which seeing a dietician would be helpful, but Medicare won't cover either.

*Julie continued on p. 24*

## Hell hath no fury like a woman!

By Xanthe P. Russel



*Artist statement:* In this piece, I was inspired by a set of very powerful but invasive photographs of Algerian women taken by Marc Garanger in the 1960s. They were forced to remove their veils, and the only way they could protest this was with their expressions. I wanted this piece to reflect the shared pain of women—across the generations and the world—fighting for their rights to control their own bodies.

*Xanthe P. Russel (shelthey) is a 24-year-old artist from the southwest of England, specializing in portraiture and character design.*

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Join our Google group:  
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## Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

The theme of this issue is "Bodily Autonomy, Privacy, & Feminism." Writers were asked, "With the repeal of *Roe v. Wade*, and the devastating loss of constitutional rights to bodily autonomy and privacy, we invite you to share your reflections both specifically and tangentially connected to this event. What has *Roe v. Wade* meant to you? What are your thoughts as an international observer? And what role does feminism play in your life as a bi+ person? Share your anger, sadness, hope for the future, or anything else coming up for you."

For reasons likely related to the urgency of this theme and also to the outreach efforts of the extraordinary Josephine Kelly, we received a record number of visual art and poetry submissions. In fact, we received so much quality content that we have decided to continue this theme in a second issue, so the Spring issue will be a continuation of this theme!

In this issue, we have representation from Australia, India, Ireland, Mexico, Poland, South Africa, and the United States. The increasing globalization of this publication is another manifestation of our forward progress.

This the first issue of our 41st year of publication! If you are interested in sending us a birthday gift to help us move forward in our fifth decade of existence, you can do so at [BiWomenQuarterly.com/donate](https://BiWomenQuarterly.com/donate). We wouldn't be here without you.

Enjoy the read!

-Robyn

**Jordyn, Grace, & Maggie  
read *BWQ*. Send a picture  
of yourself reading *BWQ* to  
[biwomeneditor@gmail.com](mailto:biwomeneditor@gmail.com).  
Be creative!**



**Upcoming in  
*Bi Women Quarterly*  
Call for submissions**

**Spring 2023: Bodily  
Autonomy, part 2**

**Summer 2023: Bi+ History**

What do you know about the history of the bi movement, as distinct from the LGBTQ+ movement? What are the significant historic achievements that we should remember? What about your own bi history? Share the first bi pride activity you participated in, the significant bi person in history whose life you've admired. Interview a bi elder. Review books or other media that reflect bi lives through the years. Plus, share your photos, artwork, or poetry that capture those important bi moments in your or our community history. Submit by **May 1, 2023**.

**Fall 2023: Bi+ Joy**

What experiences make you feel euphoric and affirmed in your bi+ identity? How has community belonging (or the struggle to find belonging) influenced your journey? How does your bi+ joy intersect with your other identities? Review books, shows, and other media that have wooed you. Share your poetry, essays, artwork, and other sparks of bi+ joy. Submit by **August 1, 2023**.

Submission guidelines are online at [biwomenquarterly.com](https://biwomenquarterly.com). Send your submissions and suggestions for future themes to [biwomeneditor@gmail.com](mailto:biwomeneditor@gmail.com).

Note: If you wish to use a pseudonym, just let us know.

We are an all-volunteer organization (though we do pay our interns!) Want to proofread, edit submissions, host one of our monthly brunches, help us with social media, fundraising, our Etsy shop ([BiProducts.Etsy.com](https://BiProducts.Etsy.com)), or our website? If you're a student, consider an internship. If you'd like to help out, please send an email to Robyn at [biwomeneditor@gmail.com](mailto:biwomeneditor@gmail.com).

*Bi Women Quarterly* has been in continuous publication since 1983. It began as a project of the Boston Bisexual Women's Network (BBWN), a feminist, not-for-profit collective organization whose purpose is to bring women and nonbinary folks together for support and validation. Through the production of *Bi Women Quarterly* and related activities, we seek full acceptance for bisexuals and those with other nonbinary sexualities. More broadly, we work through an intersectional lens and seek the liberation of people of all genders, sexual orientations, abilities, nationalities, and racial and ethnic identities.

# Around the World: Warsaw, Poland

## An Interview with Agata Maksimowska

By Robyn Ochs

**Robyn:** *Agata, please tell us about yourself.*

**Agata:** I am a 42-year-old woman living in Warsaw, Poland. I graduated with a degree in Psychology and Cultural Anthropology from the University of Warsaw. I grew up here, although as a student I have also lived in Lund, Sweden for half a year and in Birobidzhan, Russia for a similar period. I am the author of the book *Birobidzhan* (in Polish) which was published in 2019 and is based on my ethnographic fieldwork conducted in the Jewish Autonomous Region. For many years, I have been working as a project manager for several NGOs (non-governmental organizations) in Poland, focusing on human rights and on combating discrimination. My current work focuses on monitoring and evaluation of grant programs, grant management, and grant-making. Since 2018, I have been attending the bi+ group at Lambda Warszawa Association and from 2020-2022 I co-led this group.

**R:** *How did you come to your bi identity?*

**A:** I started to identify as bi when I was 35 years old. Before, I mostly identified as heterosexual. Yet, as I was also feeling some attraction for persons of the same gender, at age 22 I came out as a lesbian to my mother. After a short time, I rejected the label “lesbian” because I was sure that I still liked people of genders different from my own. However, continuing to identify as heterosexual became problematic to me, as it involved suppressing

feelings towards persons of my own and similar genders. Although I knew the term bisexual by that time, I did not use it to describe myself. I think I needed some time to sort out my identity. This came just naturally: one day I realized that a person can combine and accommodate different possible identifications and that my feelings and attractions are exactly what can be named “bisexual.” That day I felt happy and relieved. Immediately, I also felt the urge to meet other bi people.

**R:** *What can you tell us about the experience of being bisexual—or more generally LGBTI—in Poland, and specifically in Warsaw. I’ve heard that there is quite a lot of hostility toward LGBTI people in Poland. Is this your experience? How have things changed over time?*

**A:** Unfortunately, Poland is ranked the lowest in the European Union when it comes to observance of LGBTI rights, according to the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, Europe. Same-sex marriages are not legal and neither are civil unions. Transgender people struggle with lengthy court proceedings to change their names and gender markers due to a law dating back to the 1960s, as the Gender Reconciliation Act aimed at simplifying the procedure was vetoed by the President in October 2015. LGBT-related issues are used as a political tool—by MPs of the ruling, ultraconservative, nationalist party Law and Justice (PiS), along with Catholic church officials—to build a perfidious narrative around so-called “LGBT” ideology, a handy concept describing an alleged cultural model adopted “from the West” that threatens “traditional Polish values.” All this makes being an LGBT+ person in Poland rather difficult. Exposure to this kind of propaganda and lack of equity has pushed many of us to leave the country. Personally, I suffer from the fact that my marriage (I got married to my wife in Copenhagen in 2021) is not recognized in Poland, and I lack the same rights as those in different-sex couples.

However, it must be said that LGBT organizations and informal groups are doing their best to counter the official narrative, combat discrimination, and offer support to the community. The number of pride marches has been growing each year.

Bi+ activism is quite a new thing in Poland and only recently bi+ people have become more visible, even within the LGBT+ community. This activism is, first of all, aimed at fighting monosexism and stereotypes (eg., of bisexual people being “unfaithful,” “undecided,” or “privileged”) as well as increasing the visibility of the people identifying under the bi+ umbrella. Apart from that, bi+ activists in Poland have to challenge the outdated, yet still popular notion of bisexuality itself. There are a lot of people who refuse to identify as bisexual because they believe the term only refers to two genders and therefore excludes non-binary people. Another challenge to bi visibility is that some women with multigender attraction may identify as



lesbian due to the popularity of “lesbian” as a political identity. There is also a problem with bisexual identity being understood as a “lighter,” “softer,” or “incomplete” version of gay identity that results in a less serious approach towards bi+ people, leading even to rejecting our right to be fully recognized as members of the rainbow community.

**R: What words are used to describe lesbian, gay, bi or non-heterosexual people in Poland? Are these words equivalent to their English counterparts, or do they have a different meaning?**

**A:** In Poland we say “lesbijka” for a lesbian, “gej” for a gay man, and “osoba biseksualna” for a bisexual person. We also use “osoba transpłciowa” for a transgender person, “osoba aseksualna” for an asexual person, and “osoba interpłciowa” for an intersex person. The word “queer” has not been translated nor has there been found an equivalent word to cover its meaning. It’s being used in the same way as its original English version.

**R: I’ve also been reading about the war in Ukraine, and how people in Poland have really stepped up, helping displaced Ukrainians and taking people into their homes. How has this impacted you personally?**

**A:** Just after the Russian aggression on Ukraine had started, Lambda Warszawa Association launched a supporting program for Ukrainian LGBT refugees in collaboration with the LGBT organizations in Ukraine. One of the most urgent issues was to help the refugees to find places to stay, so the major task carried out in Lambda at that time was to match people who offered accommodation with those who needed it. All this had to be done very quickly, as thousands of people were coming to Poland each day. My wife and I did not host refugees at our place, but we did help two girls from Dnipro, whom we met at the railway station when volunteering for Lambda. After two months they decided to return to Ukraine, but we are still in touch.

**R: You are co-leading a bi+ group at the Lambda Association in Warsaw. How and when did the group get started? How did you come to be involved—and a leader? What kinds of activities does your group do? How often do you meet? How do you let others know about your group’s existence? How is your relationship with the Lambda Association?**

**A:** The bi+ group started several years ago under the auspices of the Lambda Warszawa Association. I co-led this group from October 2020 to the Summer of 2022 together with Miłosz Przepiórkowski from Lambda. During the first year of my co-leadership, we ran the meetings online due to COVID-19, and just last year we were happy to get back to meeting in person. The group usually meets at Lambda’s premises on the second and the last Friday of each month, with a vacation break between July and September. It is a meeting group with elements of psychological self-support activities. We discuss various topics related to bi+ experience as well as bi+ visibility. This year we had our first bi+ contingent in Warsaw’s Pride Parade.

Thanks to a grant awarded to Lambda Warszawa, we were also

able to implement a project enhancing bi+ visibility. As a part of the project’s activities, I co-ran a couple of bi+ visibility workshops called “Under the Umbrella” in several cities in Poland. We were supported by local LGBTQ+ communities in Wrocław, Toruń, Kraków, Gdańsk, and Katowice, which locally arranged the meetings with people who identify under the bi+ umbrella and those who would like to know more about the bi+ community. There was huge interest, and there is a chance that new bi+ groups will emerge as a result of these workshops. Also within the project, we collected 23 interviews with bi+ people living in Poland and published them in the form of a book. The volume, co-edited by myself and by Miłosz Przepiórkowski, was published in 2022. It presents various experiences and points of view, featuring the variety of bi+ identities in Poland and reflections on more universal issues such as biphobia, bierasure and, of course, bi pride. It is entitled *Kropka and bi* in Polish and its English e-version *Visi-bi-lity* will be out soon.

**R: Do you have contact with bi activists in other countries? Do you see a value in transnational activism?**

**A:** I have taken part in three bi+ world meetups so far, and I’ve very much loved the experience. I am also in contact with Hilde Vossen from the Netherlands, whom I was happy to meet in person during this year’s Pride in Warsaw. Hilde visited our group meetup and later helped us to carry a big Bi flag during the march. Not only that, she also took wonderful pictures of the event that were widely shared. Hilde is a great supporter and advisor, and we owe her a lot.

**R: Indeed, Hilde is wonderful—and a great resource to bi+ folks across Europe and beyond. What are your hopes for the future?**

**A:** I was thinking about starting some sort of bi+ activism online, but I have not decided yet on the specific area that I would like to cover. I am still attending the Bi+ group in Lambda Warszawa, and I hope the group will grow as a safe place where bi+ people can meet and talk. It would also be perfect if a separate bi+ group could operate in Poland, one focusing more on bi+ activism, but all this depends on the capacity.

My dream is to attend an international bi+ conference or bi+pride event in another country, as I believe that there is potential in cross-country collaboration and knowledge and experience sharing.

**R: Any last words? What else would you like us to know?**

**A:** I am very much interested in recent research on bisexuality carried out all over the world, and I hope that there will also be more studies on this topic in Poland soon.

Also, if you wish to contact our group, you can write to [bi@lambdawarszawa.org](mailto:bi@lambdawarszawa.org) and follow [@kropka\\_nad\\_bi](https://www.instagram.com/kropka_nad_bi) on Instagram and Facebook.

*Robyn Ochs is editor of Bi Women Quarterly.*

# Always a Sunday Morning

By Amy Cook

My friend, newly returned from abroad, is texting our group about being out of sync with time.

It is Sunday morning, and “mass shooting” is trending again. I am scouring Twitter; what is Club Q, and how do these hashtags ribbon themselves together? As the minutes wear on, I have to mute the texting. Five people are dead in Colorado. How many are injured—how many lives forever destroyed? As my friend complains about her jet lag, I rage, silently, about the cavalier cruelty of indifference. Turn on the fucking news, I want to beg. It is difficult not to despair.

The press conferences begin. Another Sunday morning that I’m spending in pajamas, watching people in charge explain the soundless, unfathomable grief of a community. Officials who haven’t slept, thrust in front of microphones, police chiefs and mayors and surgeons in dirty clothes. These are the helpers today. You’re not going to see the governor—he has COVID, again. But our loss is his, too. He is a part of this pain.

We all know it could have been us, at a club like that, the thrum of the music causing every late-night heart to beat as one. Until a gunman walks in and fissures our lives; before and after. We have seen it happen, and we continue to take the risk. Even as the danger increases, we go out. We perform and we dance. We get married. We make families. We bury our dead and we keep the celebration going. We dance on our graves.

The governor and his husband have two little kids.

My friend texts, now that she ordered a pizza last night, but it’s sitting in the lobby of her building. The jet lag and a glass of wine confused her to believe she’d already eaten. A neighbor saw the food downstairs and figured that something was wrong.

I turn my thoughts to the neighbors in Colorado, spying unread newspapers on the stoop, knocking on the door, to make sure everything is okay. Making sure the dog is walked and the children are fed, and that there isn’t a terrified babysitter, still sitting on a couch, waiting for victims to come home from a night of dancing.

My friend texts a picture. She has retrieved her food from the lobby. It’s a pasta dish, and *also* a pizza, with arugula, pepperoni, prosciutto, and crushed red pepper.

Everyone on the thread stops responding.

Why is it always Sunday? Saturday night is free.

*Amy Cook is an MFA candidate at the Rainier Writing Workshop. Her work has been featured in 13 literary journals, magazines, and anthologies. Affiliations: 2021 Kenyon Review Writers Workshop, BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theatre Workshop (Advanced), NYCGMC alum, Lambda Legal.*

# Abortion Poem

By Syd Shaw

I never felt much about it either way, but the doctors told me after that I should. they told me you might be haunted by this, you might cry, and they looked at me with the expectation that I would start crying, and I didn’t. you know, I talked to other women, and they didn’t cry either. it felt like a dream, or a really bad period. I remember the nurse telling me to look, and I did. I thought she wanted to punish me. but I was curious so I looked and all I saw was a peanut. hard to love a peanut. relief, that was what I mainly felt, and a sense of being lied to. they say it’s horrible, after all, but for me it was escape, it was freedom, it was a few cramps and then euphoria. walking out of the clinic, I started to giggle, even. I laughed a laugh that echoed through my empty belly, and I threw up some crackers that night, and the next day I walked to the park and fed the birds and belonged to myself again.

*Syd Shaw (she/they) writes about love, witchcraft, and body horror. Syd is Assistant Poetry Editor at Passengers Journal. Their publications include Cathexis Northwest, Ember Chasm, Coffin Bell Journal, Waxing & Waning, and Eclectica Magazine, among others. Their work can be found at <https://sydshaw.carrd.co>*



# The Right to Our Voices

By Daphne L. Kanellopoulos

When you hit enough roadblocks, you're too tired to do anything but take the path of least resistance. If men weren't afraid of our voices, why did white women not get the vote until 1920 and Black women (and men) even later, in 1965? If our voices are silly and not of much consequence, then why suppress them? Women's voices have had an impact on history. They couldn't make changes the most direct ways, but had to convince their husbands, fathers, brothers, and sons to vote in favor of their interests.

I come from a long line of loud Greek women on both sides of the family. Based on family conversations, it seemed that it was my paternal grandmother who convinced my paternal grandfather to come to the United States. My maternal ancestors were known as the "loud" family in an already loud village. My mother told me that villagers could have a brawl at breakfast and then go to lunch together. I didn't inherit that. I need at least until dinner time.

A hundred years ago, my great grandmother went to school so she could learn to write her name. She was beaten for this offense. The same thing happened when she wanted to tend sheep. My paternal grandmother had a choice when she was 10: go to school and continue to get the crap beaten out of her or stay home and work the farm. She chose to stay home and work the farm. I feel as if I would have made the same choice. Who wants to constantly get beaten up?

I was stunned to realize I could read Greek better than her, though, she was fluent in spoken Greek and grammar. I constantly misgendered adjectives in my conversational Greek, and she gently corrected me. English pronouns have nothing on Greek adjectives.

My mother as a child in Petrina had a teacher grab a notebook that belonged to another student that he thought was my mother's. It had all wrong answers. As he was asking my mother the answers to all the questions, she got them all right. He hit her between each correct answer. Eventually he asked, "If you have all the right answers, why are they all wrong here?" She said, "That's not my notebook." Then he sent her flying across the room. She waited him out to humiliate him. I would have said, "That's not my notebook! Ow! Please stop hitting me! Ow!"

Generations of loud women have created this delicate flower you see before you. As loud as we all are and as loud as we all have been, there have been times when we all had our voices suppressed in favor of the patriarchy, whether by strong suggestion or violence. Whether or not we try to resist it, it's exhausting to constantly fight a system that is designed to favor the patriarchy. Yes, we're furious because we feel a sense of injustice. And when we use our voices to express that, it's: "Be grateful you don't live

in another country where women are treated really badly"; "Why are you fighting so hard?"; "You can't fight every battle"; "You think *this* is abuse? You should be grateful it isn't worse." With all the ferocity of the voices of my ancestors, I'm sure there are stories which were never told. How much did we lose in those missing stories? We need to use our voices to ensure that pregnant people have the right to make a medical decision that can impact the rest of their life. How can you think about gender equality when you're concerned with survival?

I was in a car with my grandparents and a few other relatives when I was no more than four. Somebody cut off my grandfather and I let out a string of Greek swears that would have done a sailor proud. My grandmother laughed, "Where does she learn this language?" I said, "My mom." "Your mother doesn't curse." "Yes, she does." Then I started to provide examples. When my mother found out what happened, she told my grandmother, "Don't tell Daphne she doesn't hear what she hears. I curse!" Now, I'd like to sit here and tell you I never pretended to not hear what I heard, but there were times I did pretend. Yes, even loud, obnoxious me has suppressed my voice at times because it felt easier than addressing the situation. But I certainly have more options than my predecessors. We all do the best we can within the confines of our environment.

I ran into an old high school classmate, and she had a friend with her. This man started calling me sweetie. I said, "Don't call me sweetie. My name is Daphne." He said, "I'm just being nice." And my former classmate chimed in, "He really is trying to be nice." I repeated myself, "My name is Daphne. Don't call me sweetie." This nice man called me a bitch.

*Daphne L. Kanellopoulos has many years of writing experience and LGBT activism under her belt.*



# Heifer

By Angelica Neyra

*Artist's statement:* Influenced by my Hispanic upbringing, this work reveals the similarities between the treatment of non-human animals in factory farms and human individuals with uteruses. While neither is intended to describe the other, their experiences are mirrored through different aspects within societal and cultural norms that make up the capitalistic, male-dominated society of America.

Once reaching reproductive maturity around 12-15 months old, dairy cows are forcefully inseminated for the rest of their lives. After each pregnancy, dairy cows get mere minutes with their child before they are taken away from her – as her milk has already been claimed to fill the aisles of supermarkets then disposed of by the ton once reaching its expiration date.

If her calf is male, he's given the tragic but merciful end of being killed and labeled as veal. If her calf is female, the heifer must endure the same unfortunate fate as her mother and produce a supply of milk and offspring for the rest of her life to continue the production line. Once her milk supply decreases and she is no longer profitable, she is disposed of. As if exploiting her while she was alive wasn't enough, she is further exploited in death when her body follows her milk to the supermarket aisles.

Resembling the heifer, girls in Hispanic families are raised to be wives and mothers. They are taught from childhood to be the caregivers, docile, and subservient. To bear the children their husband wishes for and tend to them despite personal wants and needs, living in a confining environment that at times may be as violent as factory farms.

These forceful demands on their minds and bodies to continuously produce offspring despite the mothers' wishes have become terrifyingly familiar with the impending repeal of *Roe v. Wade*, which will disproportionately affect minority individuals in restrictive states who may have less financial freedom to travel and receive proper medical care. Childbearing is no longer a moment in one's life they hope and plan for, but a forceful decree by incompetent people in power who do not consider all the lives they are harming.



*Angelica Neyra, raised in Miami and currently living in Tallahassee, Florida, creates wearable sculptures influenced by their experiences growing up as a woman and the cruel parallels they, and others, share with nonhuman animals in factory farms.*

# Letter to girlfriend's mother(s)

By Anusree Raveendran

*This poem deals with the relationship of two girls and how they confront their orthodox family.*

Dear girlfriend's mother(s),  
It's an illegitimate adjective, I know  
So, what's legit and how'd you rate?  
Don't tell me it's to refuse to acknowledge reality your whole  
life  
Death makes more sense than this anonymity.  
Don't tell me it's threatening and ask me to obey  
To uphold family integrity by sacrificing identity.  
Don't tell me it's essential to remain incognito  
I won't change pronouns of my love poem.  
What's between us may not entertain you  
Or your trusted psychiatrist who found a 'cure' for us  
Who disguised truth over cultural ethics.  
It wasn't love at first sight and healed later  
Or a cute Valentine's Day proposal  
We didn't fall in love; we grew into it.  
Holding hands without skipping a heartbeat  
Is a luxury we've been longing for  
In a dream when we kissed, she refused to close her eyes  
She was afraid of 'people hunting people.'  
When you requested us to stop 'everything'  
I didn't know how to prove our authenticity  
I still don't know how to define love.  
What I know is, colors do succeed in this pale world  
Rainbows shine brightly like every star, moon, and sun  
And the more you detach this 'unnatural' chord  
The more abnormal genes of love sprout.  
By the way I love you too, I know you love me  
Sincerely, your daughter's girlfriend.

*Anusree Raveendran is a postgraduate student from Kerala, India.*



# Corpus

By Sarah O'Connor

what does  
this body want?  
this more-than-machine of  
earth and electricity  
I have known  
my whole life?  
looking down at her  
now, I feel  
we are long-lost relatives  
wary of each other  
neither the way the  
other remembers.  
what does she want?  
I have no earthly idea  
but I am asking her to  
teach me.

*Sarah O'Connor is a writer moonlighting as an executive assistant in Raleigh, NC. She can usually be found journaling while petting her two cats, going for long walks, or browsing one of the Triangle's many independent bookstores.*





# Coming Out West

By Bret Anne Serbin

Montana is a private state. Here we value our autonomy, cherish our right to live undisturbed, and spurn attempts to reign us in. I fit in because I'm a private person.

I never coddled up to the crush of people sharing the sidewalk when I lived back east, or the ever-present pressure to tell my digital followers about my preferences. I still cringe when I remember how my dad found my journal in elementary school, baring my tightest-held secrets to an unwanted audience.

It's an uncomfortable feeling that has begun to feel more familiar lately.

I thought I was safe out west, thousands of miles from people who used to know me. I foolishly believed I could be myself in the land where cowboys and ranch hands still peddle their traditional trades.

I didn't think I needed to explain my sexuality to the flannel-clad blonde who casually draped a hand over my thigh. She cooked me dinners, complimented my outfits, and coyly told me how she wanted to kiss me. I was smitten with her gentlemanly manner and eager to earn her affections.

But it all came to a halt when she zeroed in on a minute detail in one of my photos and pointed suspiciously to a man's wallet. I double-tapped the screen to bring the little brown blob into relief. Sure enough, there was a leather wallet. Mine.

I didn't bother explaining this to her. I knew I wouldn't win her trust.

Later, when I finally dipped my toe back into the dating pool, I found I couldn't articulate my excuses to my new partner as

we sat isolated, high above the trees in a fire tower lookout in western Idaho.

The excuses came surging out after a long, idyllic weekend with a woman whose wildflower tattoos matched my own. I had felt deliriously connected to her as she sang my favorite '60s songs and produced cans of my preferred local beer from her cooler. But the connection shriveled when she insisted on writing about our intimate exploits in the log book at the fire tower, and I balked.

I told her I didn't want random strangers to know about our most vulnerable moments, but she insisted I was simply embarrassed. Days later, she called me and said, "This can't continue."

Months passed before I returned to her street and parked my car down the block from her house. When I returned to the car, I at first thought the yellow streaks decorating my vehicle were some sort of celebration. But as I got closer, I saw an aggression in the haphazard lines covering my roof and doors.

The acrid smell dispelled my confusion. Mustard. It was strewn in nearly impossible-to-remove dollops all across my car and topped off with a small note tucked into the windshield.

"Go home," it instructed me, with a homophobic slur thrown in for emphasis.

I shook with the ripped-up paper in my hand, standing alone in the street next to my defiled vehicle. I looked around the empty road, trying to gather some idea of who might have seen me and my former girlfriend.

In the end, I never found the culprit, but I found that it didn't matter. I learned I had been too naïve to imagine my femininity or my sexuality could ever be just my own.

*Bret is a journalist in Montana, USA.*

---

# Blind Pursuit

By Christina Geoghegan

*Artist statement:* Nightscape. A portrait is revealed in the light from the street lamps through the windows. A glimpse in the dark. Confronting, one experiences the intimate moment although the shadows cast the expression and it's not directed at the viewer.

*Christina Geoghegan is an Irish artist based in Dublin. Her main influence is the transposing mood of time in Irish landscapes and portraits in introspective moments.*



# Scales Of a Dragon

By Amelia Díaz Ettinger

when I was four, I knew how to say no  
but not when to scream it

in an airconditioned room  
no became silent

and it obeyed quietly, as my no  
was his for the taking

when I was four, I learned words  
were freely taken, and a child's no

could carry no further than a sigh  
so, I pretended it didn't happen

and my no hid under beds—for decades  
no one knew any better

today no has grown  
and it no longer hides

its dragon breath  
is mine for the taking

I can't take its fire  
back to that chilled room

but I can carry  
its torch a little further

*Amelia Díaz Ettinger is a published BIPOC poet and writer whose works appear in many literary journals and magazines. She currently has two books of poetry available and a chapbook.*



# Sixth Sense

By Kirsten Deane

A week before my period my knees ache. My knees are made of a body of just bones. They complain until they reach the skin and then shiver. This is when I know something's coming my way. My knees could be my sixth sense. One day my daughter will sit on them and fall asleep faster than she planned to. My knees will ache and count the time as the sheep for my daughter. My knees hurt first the day after I take a clumsy, alcohol-induced fall. My knees moan but make me take responsibility for my actions first. I ignore them like I do my mother and like my daughter will ignore her mother.

# Here, in South Africa

By Kirsten Deane

Here, in South Africa

I have seen a few women who are capable of growing hair on their chins.

This only seems unusual when there is a man beside them.

Here, in South Africa

we are told that men will determine what it means to be a woman here—

we cannot have what they already do.

Here, in South Africa

let our chests be clear of hair and our chins

nothing but flesh

but unread this poem,

South African women,

do not say anything that the South African man hasn't.

*Kirsten is a Creative Writing graduate student at the University of The Western Cape in South Africa. Her writing has been featured in journals nationally and internationally, including the Best New African Poets 2019 and 2020 anthology. She believes in writing that always tells the truth, as blunt as that may be.*

# whose hand ?

By *téniòlá funmi*



*téniòlá funmi is a multidisciplinary artist based in Brooklyn, NY, USA. On a cultural mission to make art with material impact, they approach creativity from a lens of feeling and healing.*



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# Little Free Bodies

By Jen Bonardi

As a server in a small restaurant in my seaside town, I know to keep quiet about my politics if I want to keep my job. Unfortunately for people who don't agree with me, I don't need the job that much.

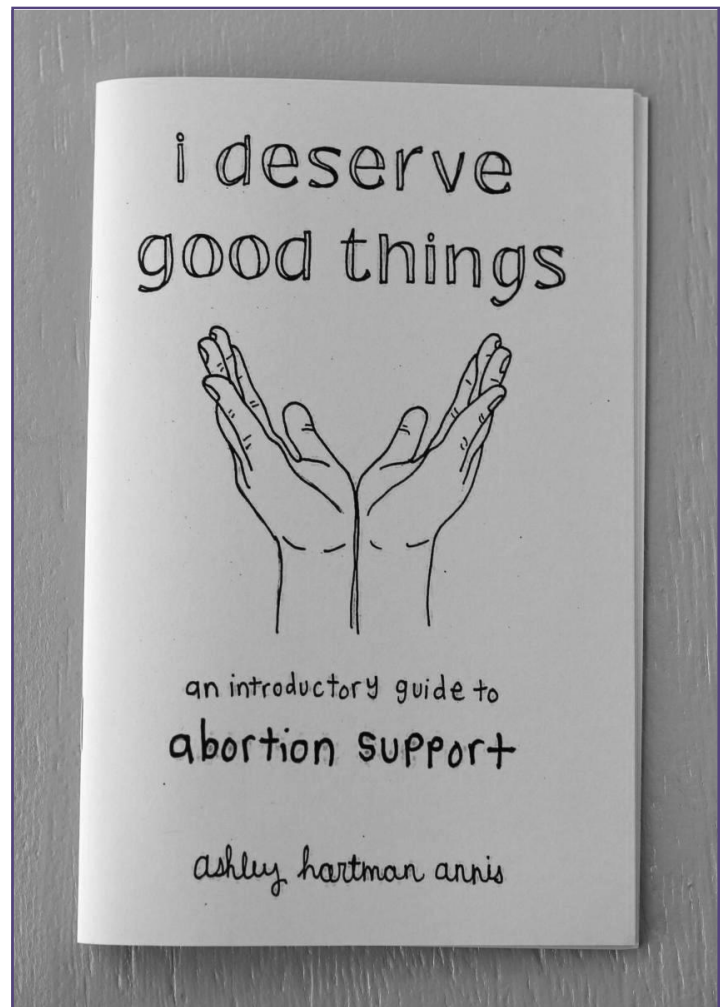
A man at the bar was talking about how he "doesn't think *Roe* should have been overturned BUT..." while his wife made gentle pro-choice interjections. "Groups are trying to raise money for people who want abortions," he said. "What do these women need money for?" I explained that most people can't afford a last-minute plane ticket and hotel booking in a state that allows abortion. This appeared to blow his well-heeled mind.

"Shouldn't we be concerned that there's no limit on how late in the pregnancy you can get an abortion?" he continued. Both his wife and I argued that those cases are extraordinarily rare and virtually always the result of dire, desperate circumstances. I added that focusing on that part of the issue is a distraction from real concerns around reproductive health. The man countered that it is a real concern that abortions are happening mere hours before childbirth, where the limbs of the fetus are being vacuumed out of the womb. Rest assured, readers, I made the same Oh My God WHAT face that you are making right now.

Here's the kicker: "As a doctor, I know that—" he started. "You're an *M.D.*?" I interrupted. And that's when I was officially done. Done leaving the fates of our lives to the powers that be, since they often be mean and stupid. And done thinking that anybody but the pregnant person themselves, even if they are a minor, should direct the outcome of the pregnancy.

The rallying cry "Resist!" refers to resisting illegitimate authority. This was the kind of resistance offered by the Janes, a secret group of young American women who performed illegal abortions in the years before *Roe v. Wade* was decided (1973). In the zine *Jane* by Judith Arcana, one of their ranks explains, "The view of the members of Jane were simple: respect begets respect. If doctors and the law didn't respect women, why should [women] respect unjust laws?" It's with this quote in mind that I set up the Little Free Bodies (LFB) Project. With small donations, I buy certain zines that explain how to engineer your own abortion. I ship these zines to volunteers in different states who make them accessible by putting them in Little Free Libraries. (See [littlefreelibrary.org](http://littlefreelibrary.org).)

The LFB Project is on the website for Tiggy Upland, my alter ego who educates the public on bisexuality. Tiggy's site seemed an apt place for this since bi+ folks have statistically awful health outcomes. This is largely due to a lack of societal support, which is also a major factor in being able to control one's reproductive choices. The volunteers tell me that they most enjoy spreading information directly to people who need it. Even before *Roe* fell,



many Americans did not have access to abortion; now, LFB puts the power to act right in their hands.

We need people supporting a variety of strategies in the fight for reproductive rights. I'm a big fan of democracy so when I try to effect change, it's usually by writing to my political representatives, signing petitions, and voting. Another potent approach is donating to established pro-choice organizations that connect pregnant people to faraway resources. If you're a small donor who wants to directly empower those most affected by an unwanted pregnancy, or a volunteer looking for a convenient one-time opportunity, the LFB Project might be the right action for you.

Well-meaning people ask, "Is this safe?" Some of the zines I use simply give resources and strategies, and the ones that give instruction are written by professionals. But if you are concerned that the methods of abortion discussed in these zines are riskier than a surgical abortion performed in a clinic with sterilized instruments by medically licensed staff, then you are correct. They are riskier than that. My close friend with a doctorate in pharmacology has these same concerns, but she has donated to LFB twice already. "I hate that we have to do this project," she admits. "But I hate even more that people who don't want to be pregnant are having their options taken away." You'll see on the website that I've done work in addressing the U.S. cash bail system in jails. One lesson I've learned doing that is: if you want

to give the power back to the person most affected, *then give it to them*. No hesitating, no strings attached, no paternalistic handwringing. Be it bailing someone out of jail or making medically accurate abortion literature widely available, what you're doing is perfectly legal. In fact, if the person you're helping had money, they would have already helped themselves.

Another lesson I've learned is that when the state has chosen an unfair remedy to some societal ill (say, putting people in jail before their trials), your activism should present a different choice that attains justice (like bailing out as many of them as possible). If people are worried about the safety of what you're doing ("What if you're bailing dangerous people?"), *do not budge*. Make it clear that you will continue availing your option, so their best bet is to support a choice that satisfies safety *and* fairness concerns (pushing for automatic Dangerousness Hearings, for example). In this way, the mere existence of projects like LFB encourages the support of other pro-choice strategies.

When several states recently (re-)outlawed abortive options, the message was: "Now you have no choice but to bring your pregnancy to term." I am comfortable responding to our government, "No. If a pregnant person believes that one of these do-it-yourself options is still better for themselves than bringing a pregnancy to term, then I want to arm them with the best information on those options." I'm proud to report that the Little Free Bodies Project has put zines on facilitating your own abortion in ten states so far.

The volunteers and donations that I initially rounded up among friends has dried up, so I've been trying to find the best organizational model to go forward. While I consider partnering with bi+ organizations to reach new supporters, I still check my inbox to see if anyone wants to help. If this project sounds like your jam, please visit [www.tiggyupland.com](http://www.tiggyupland.com) and click on Little Free Bodies. No degree, job, or elected office gives anyone the right to decide the outcome of other people's pregnancies. You don't have to sit there and take this, so don't.

*Jen Bonardi served on the Bisexual Resource Center (BRC) board for five years and created bisexual character extraordinaire, Tiggy Upland.*



## Pantone 258

By Dr. Midori Samson



My electroacoustic compositions use found soundscapes and electronic distortion to explore themes of identity, relationships, trauma, resilience, and reclamation. Professionally, I am a musician, educator, and social work scholar; personally, I am a mixed-race Asian woman and bisexual person. These intersecting identities are inseparable from my musicianship and influence everything I create, including this new work.

As an orchestral musician trained in the European classical tradition, I am usually expected to perform music written by other people, typically the white cis noblemen who have dominated the art form for centuries. During those performances, it is expected that I, as the performer, prioritize the creative voice of the composer over my own creative voice. On top of that, I must honor all the traditions of the concert hall: sit up straight and proper, wear all black to blend in, and make sure the music is elite and pretty. To subvert these harmful traditions, and in an attempt toward queering my instrument (the bassoon), I have composed *Pantone 258*. For the first time in my performance career, I can feel complete creative and bodily autonomy while I perform.

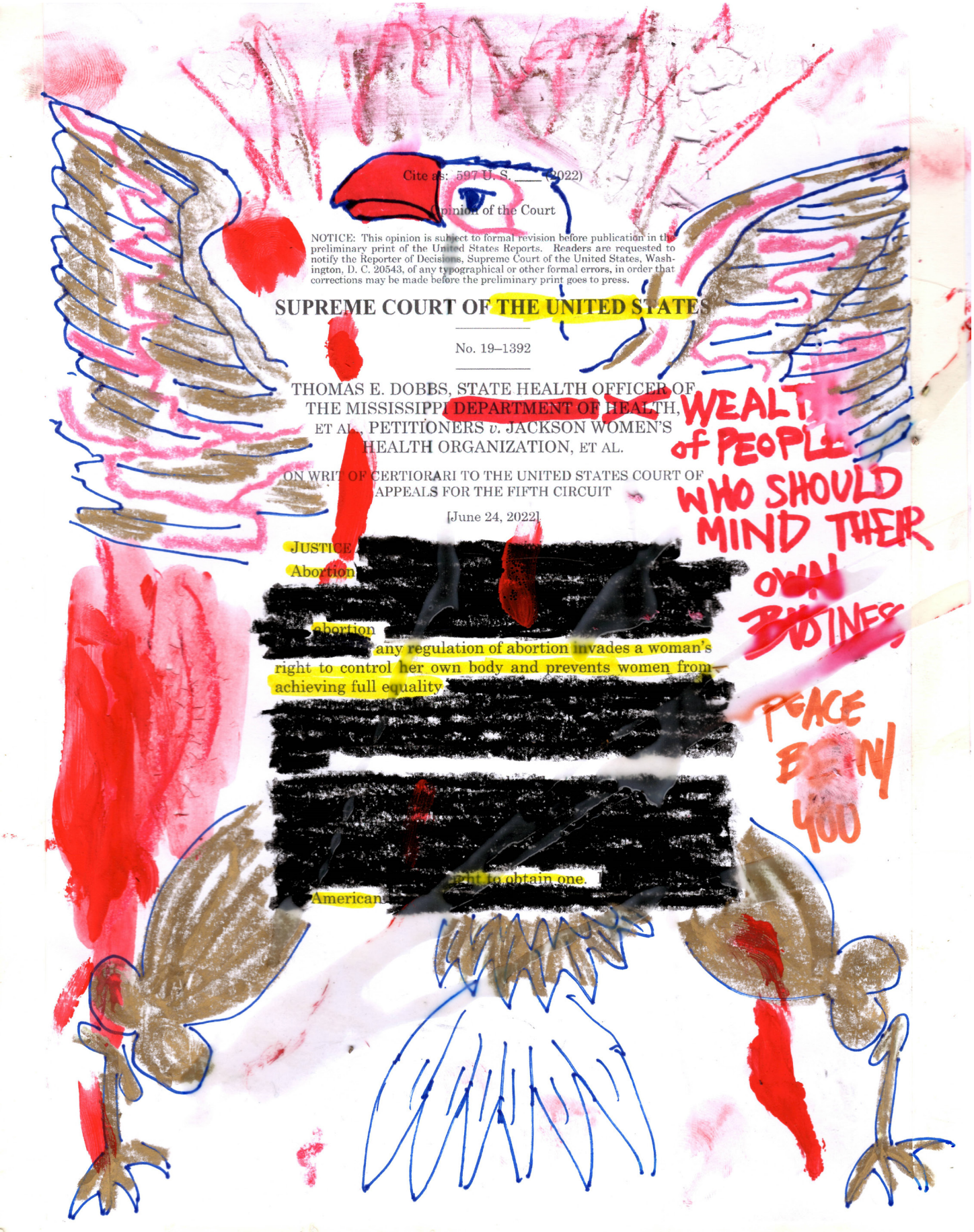
This chaotic six-minute piece for electronic soundscape track and improvised bassoon is in three distinct sections, each one inspired by the colors on the bisexual pride flag. The first: *Pantone 226* is punk and celebratory. The second: *Pantone 286* is aquatic and undulating. And the third: *Pantone 258* finally finds stillness and harmony. The piece premiered in October 2022, on the anniversary of my coming out. Audio materials in the track include nature field recordings, percussion, speech recitations of each Pantone code, and sine tones at hertz numbers matching the Pantone codes.

**A video of the premiere performance of *Pantone 258* can be viewed here:** [bit.ly/pantone258](http://bit.ly/pantone258)

*Dr. Midori Samson (she/her) is the Instructional Assistant Professor of Bassoon at Illinois State University and plays section bassoon in the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra. Recent collaborators include Yo-Yo Ma and Youth Music Culture Guangdong (China), Mashirika Theater Company (Rwanda), Artists Striving to End Poverty (India), and Flying Carpet Festival (Turkey).*

# Our Blood is on Your Hands

By Jodelle Marx



Cite as: 597 U. S. \_\_\_ (2022)

Opinion of the Court

NOTICE: This opinion is subject to formal revision before publication in the preliminary print of the United States Reports. Readers are requested to notify the Reporter of Decisions, Supreme Court of the United States, Washington, D. C. 20543, of any typographical or other formal errors, in order that corrections may be made before the preliminary print goes to press.

## SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

No. 19-1392

THOMAS E. DOBBS, STATE HEALTH OFFICER OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, ET AL., PETITIONERS v. JACKSON WOMEN'S HEALTH ORGANIZATION, ET AL.

ON WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE FIFTH CIRCUIT

[June 24, 2022]

JUSTICE

Abortion

abortion

any regulation of abortion invades a woman's right to control her own body and prevents women from achieving full equality

American

right to obtain one.

WEALTH  
OF PEOPLE  
WHO SHOULD  
MIND THEIR  
OWN  
BUSINESS

PEACE  
BEING  
YOU



Jodelle Marx (she/her) is a visual artist and spoken word poet from Oregon, USA. Jodelle is drawn to tactile art, often foregoing paint brushes to use her hands. When she's not making art, you will find Jodelle in nature and surrounded by animals.

# We Are Not Incubators: Forced Birth & Compounded Violence

By Frances-Ann Egan

The circumstances that surround abortion issues range from concerns about sexual violence, to dangerous pregnancies, to forced birth under no extraordinary circumstance other than the injustice of being denied a choice. I've seen social media posts that discourage building a pro-choice argument on events related to violence. However, I am arguing that depriving a person the right to choose whether their body endures such intense changes and the labor process is a form of violence in itself.

When women and others assigned-female-at-birth (AFAB) are forced to endure, disclose, and prove sexual violence to be exempted from forced birth, that could best be described as a form of compounded violence. When women live in poverty because of social and economic inequalities and are then forced to pay medical bills and take days off work for the pregnancy and birth process that is forced on them, that could be described as compounded violence. When trans men and nonbinary people are forced to endure an unwanted pregnancy and childbirth in the context of transphobia and possible gender dysphoria, that is compounded violence.

These are just three of the more obvious examples of how forced pregnancy and childbirth compound existing forms of what can be considered to be direct, structural, and cultural violence. (For more on this typology of violence see "Cultural Violence" [Johann Galtung, 1990]). There are two (and certainly many more) problems with failing to see abortion bans as both primary and secondary forms of violence, along with other related factors as compounded violence. One, is that bodily autonomy is outright denied, and those who can access it often hide their abortions to avoid the shame many try to attach to it. Two, is that for those who face compounded violence, they have to be seen as sympathetic victims in order to be exempt from abortion bans. This raises issues about sexual, domestic, and child violence. Under the scrutiny of a misogynistic culture, women, girls, and AFAB children and adults have to prove they are worthy victims of another form of violence in order to escape the secondary violence of forced pregnancy and childbirth. Not all AFAB people can prove they were raped, or coerced, or groomed, or in danger of a physically violent or otherwise abusive partner. Not all victims of rape, incest, coercion, domestic violence, and other forms of violence are willing to come forward and publicize their trauma or out their abuser. It is downright inhumane to force an individual to do this in a timeframe that is not appropriate and safe for them.

Like so many other women and AFAB people, I have a history with such violence. When I was 10 years old I was pressured into sexual acts by a 16-year-old boy. I wasn't sure what I was getting myself into but I was eager for the attention and curious about what sex was. I remember being in the alley behind my house

and him touching me. He was not an adult and I was giving him consent. This was as perfectly legal as it was immoral. Fast forward about three years. My parents may not have trusted me around boys but they did trust me around my cousins...including my horny 15-year-old cousin who was two years older. He asked me for sexual favors. I didn't understand how sex worked at the time and I was afraid of getting pregnant. He insisted that I can't get pregnant from kissing (which at that age I didn't know) nor from giving him head. I didn't feel comfortable participating but I felt even more uncomfortable telling him no. He felt no remorse pressuring me into something I didn't want to do.

In both of these scenarios I was old enough to get pregnant, and in both of these scenarios I was lucky that I didn't have vaginal sex and thus didn't end up pregnant. Even without a history of rape, many AFAB people end up pressured and coerced into all kinds of unhealthy scenarios. And as far as I can tell, these types of situations are more common than people are inclined to believe. I imagine pregnancy from similar types of scenarios to be equally common and even underreported.

But let's also talk about scenarios where it is clearly "the woman's fault." I once thought I was pregnant. I was being impulsive and participating in random hookups. It was about a year and a half ago as of this writing. I used condoms but was afraid they might have failed. It turned out I just had a late period. I struggle with moderately severe mental illness, and being forced to endure the pain and humiliation of forced pregnancy and childbirth would have definitely sent me spiraling into a suicidal state.

All forms of violence, and even the threat of violence, are potentially traumatic. Within our patriarchal culture are the inevitable cultural norms we collectively refer to as rape culture. Living with the stench of rape culture is a collective trauma that is shared by many (if not most) women and AFAB people. It is so ubiquitous that trauma might not be the right word, but it functions in some similar ways, as most women and AFAB people have either lived through gender-based violence or harassment or live with the all-too-real possibility that it could eventually happen to them. As a bi woman with significant mental health problems, coping with the loss of *Roe v. Wade* is challenging. Like other stressful events tend to do, it triggered suicidal feelings even though I'm in a state that allows abortion access for the time being. Still, the sense of injustice and feeling of loss of control runs so deep.

I'd like to pivot and talk for a moment about my dad. I feel so angry and betrayed by men like him. He never taught me about sex because he's a "good Christian" who believes teenagers have no business being sexually active. Instead of arming me with confidence and awareness, he disempowered me by feeding me lies about what a "woman with no respect for herself" is like, a woman like me. Of course, he doesn't believe in a woman's right to choose. He belongs to the so-called "pro-life" crowd. He's exactly the type of malicious, misinformed person who votes for



Donald Trump and makes up justifications for him ("Trump only grabs gold diggers by the pussy to get them to leave him alone").

I honestly feel many of us have been re-traumatized not by just a general culture, but by parents and educators and lawmakers and former President Trump and the current Supreme Court who have in many ways "shown us our place." Powerful men like Trump and Kavanaugh can abuse women in their personal lives and influence laws regulating women and others with uteruses in their professional lives. I have no doubt in my mind the argument against abortion is actually about power, the power to inflict the violence of forced pregnancy and childbirth. Men (and even women) who are supposed to love, support, and respect us get to vote on what should happen to our bodies, and they vote against us. There is the awkward, painful coexistence with those who do not care about our bodily autonomy or our best interests, even if they are family or are otherwise close to us. We

cannot give in to the men, or to anyone else, who push us into the corner of being used for breeding as if we were nothing but animals. As a bi woman, it is not lost on me that this struggle is partly one of being allowed to express our sexuality in ways that we choose, and in some cases to control what happens to our bodies after that control has been taken away or manipulated. Our right to terminate a pregnancy is both a straightforward matter of not being subjected to this particular form of violence and a symbolic one in which we see how many regard the compounding forms of violence that surround this topic.

*Frances-Ann Egan is an amateur writer living in the U.S. Midwest. She works as a peer support specialist (which is a mental health position). She is a proud feminist, LGBTQ advocate, and mental health advocate.*

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## Missing You

*By samos*



*Artist statement:* The original painting is an acrylic on canvas board. I've always enjoyed drawing and painting the female body. This study is more realistic than I am used to painting, but it still has an abstractness to it.

*samos is a Colorado native living off-grid in a small cabin with her husband and son. She home-schools their son while running a health and wellness business and has been creating art for as long as she can remember, painting, sculpting, and throwing pottery.*

# Frat Guys Love that I'm Bi Until I Hit on One of Their Brothers

By Emily Carriere

*Author's note: this article mentions sexual assault.*

I can't tell you how many times this happened to me during my undergraduate experience: I'd be at a party, hanging out with my friends, and a conversation would start between a fraternity member and me. I tend to be quite the open book, especially after a drink or two. So, eventually, it would "come out" that I'm bisexual. At this point, it was always one of two responses: "That's hot. That means we can have a threesome, right?" or "Oh, so like you just make out with other girls at parties?" This is not only *not* what it means to be a bisexual woman, it promotes harmful stereotypes that have real-life negative effects on the community. Comments like these simultaneously serve to take away a person's autonomy to express genuine interest in the people they are actually interested in, limit the ability to desire only one partner, and undermine bisexuality as a valid sexual orientation in general.

Now, me being me, I got into a habit of pushing back on these comments by teasing these alpha males a bit. I'd respond with something like, "well, actually, your friend's pretty cute, would you wanna have a threesome with him and me?" A look of disgust would immediately spread across their faces. Of course, they would never hook up with another man! Isn't the whole point of bisexual women so that a man can sleep with two or more women at once without it becoming like a whole thing?! No. In fact, nothing about being a bisexual woman is meant exclusively for the entertainment or pleasure of a heterosexual man. I know that may come as a shock to many men out there, so let's dig a little deeper into what the research tells us about the false assumptions about bisexual women, what this results in, and why these notions are harmful to society as a whole.

The general public often [describes bisexuality](#) as [an unstable sexual orientation](#). This means that the overall public opinion is that bisexuals are *really* either straight or gay and are just in a state of confusion at the time of coming out. Essentially, this is a blatant [denial](#) of all bisexual people's identities and struggles. This type of thinking makes it difficult for bisexual people to enter and stay in loving relationships as the individual and societal preconceived notions of bisexuality interfere with the intimacy and stability levels of the relationship. This occurs not only when there is only one bisexual person in the relationship, but also when there are multiple, illustrating that these deeply-rooted stereotypes affect us all. In fact, bisexuality overall is the least studied sexual orientation, as these individuals are often [clumped](#) together with gay men and lesbian women for research purposes. Part of the reason for this is that even though bisexual people make up over half of the LGBTQ+ community,

they receive [less than 1%](#) of donor funding, even from LGBTQ+ organizations themselves.

More specifically, being a bisexual woman means existing within intersectionality. [Intersectionality](#), a term coined by [Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw](#), describes the double discrimination that occurs when an individual inhabits overlapping categories (i.e., gender, race, socioeconomic status) that society deems as less than. Bisexual women inherently inhabit at least two categories as they are affected by both LGBTQ+ issues and women's issues. Thus, biphobia and sexism coexist to create a specific kind of discrimination that targets bisexual women and churns out stereotypes. Notably, because of this intersection, there is even less research done on bisexual women's issues, less publicity about the harms facing the community, and generally less societal respect given to individuals in this community. Stereotypes about bisexual women actually [thrive](#) in these underground conditions as they are not societally learned, but individually deduced based on the typical notions of sexuality such as attraction or sex drive. Thus, the lack of informed public knowledge on bisexual women's concerns only adds to their stereotype as promiscuous.

There are [five common microaggressions](#) used against bisexual women: dismissal, mistrust, sexualization, social exclusion, and the denial of individual complexity. Almost all of these can be seen in my initial fraternity example, proving that they often happen under the guise of social interaction or "jokes." Stigma tactics such as these cause bisexual women to experience poorer mental health than heterosexual women and lesbians. Further, bisexuality is the sexual orientation with the [highest rates](#) of intimate partner violence. Intimate partner violence is especially high when a male perpetrator has bi-negative attitudes and/or suspects that his bisexual female partner has been unfaithful.

Compared to heterosexual women and lesbians, bisexual women are [more likely](#) to be sexually assaulted, and then, as a result of the promiscuity stereotype, female bisexual victims are also more likely to receive negative feedback following their disclosure of sexual assault experiences. Particularly when bisexual women are sexually assaulted by a male perpetrator, they are perceived as less the victim, and more the responsible party in the situation due to the incorrect notion that bisexual women want more sex and, therefore, "lead men on" more. Following this logic, if bisexual women enjoy all sex so much, they must not suffer as intensely as others from sexual assault, so this victim-blaming strategy is societally justified and reproduced in other contexts. When bisexual women are asked about their sexual assault experiences, they typically [attribute](#) their targeting and the after-effects to bi-negativity through hypersexualization, perpetrator insecurity,

or even “corrective rape.” These types of experiences stay with survivors as they engage in future sexual acts, causing them to be hypersensitive around male partners. With all of this taken together, though the bisexual orientation is very much real, bisexual women may be coerced into second-guessing their own sexuality as a means to cope with society’s criticism.

It’s no surprise, then, that the bisexual woman promiscuity stereotype [led to](#) the exploitation of same-sex desire for the pleasure of men. Whether this exploitation is in the public (e.g., fraternity parties, bars) or private spheres (e.g., group sexual encounters), bisexual women commonly feel fetishized for their sexual orientation. In fact, a [survey](#) of heterosexual undergraduate men revealed more positive ratings associated with bisexual women than bisexual men, but mediation analysis clarified that this difference was partly due to the eroticization of girl-on-girl relationships. Moreover, some participants regarded bisexual women as extra “sexy,” but “actually heterosexual.” These reactions highlight the paradox between fantasy and denial of identity. By choosing to believe that one’s sexual orientation is purely for men’s pleasure, one can be both hypersexualized and stripped of their autonomy.

The fantasy goes even further, though, to include imaginings of cheating and resulting relationship jealousy. Another study showed that while women [expressed](#) moderately high levels of insecurity for relationships with bisexual men, men expressed only low to moderate levels of insecurity for relationships with bisexual women. Thus, bisexuality in women is not considered as threatening as it is in men. I’d venture to think that this is, again, due to bisexual women being seen as a bonus avenue to woman-man-woman threesomes for fun, though the “real” relationship would remain strictly heterosexual.

In a study on perceived infidelity in bisexual individuals, bisexual men dating women were most [distressed](#) by the idea of their partner cheating. In contrast, all other combinations (bisexual men dating men, bisexual women dating women, and bisexual women dating men) were less distressed by the idea of their partner potentially being disloyal. Bisexual men and heterosexual

men were on the same [level of distress](#)—both groups reported the largest amount of uncomfortable feelings when imagining their partner cheating. Interestingly, bisexual women also reported the most amount of distress about their female partners cheating with a man. Thus, the male gaze has a strong hold on the notion that bisexual women may be more sexually active and unstable in relationships. Further, because bisexual women were still affected by these trends, this type of patriarchal thinking is proven to affect everyone. However, bisexual women with lower levels of internalized biphobia are [known](#) to cheat less than those with higher levels. So, ultimately, everyone would benefit from dismantling these systems of oppression.

You’ve probably heard the phrase “the personal is political.” This phrase [follows](#) the feminist ideology that one’s identity is inherently linked to societal power structures and attitudes. Partially because of this, bisexual women and lesbians are more likely to be feminists, associate with feminist beliefs, or engage in feminist actions. If the personal is political, everyone’s relationships are bound to societal thinking about said relationships, which creates the negative health and love outcomes that we currently see. Without challenging these ideas, we cannot achieve equity and justice-based objectives. Not only that, but if I get asked for a threesome one more time, I’m going to lose it. Ultimately, everyone has something to gain from breaking down barriers around love and sex. Let’s do the work so we can enjoy the play.

*Emily Carriere is a graduate student pursuing her Master’s in Public Policy at the University of California, Riverside, USA. She hopes to use her lived experience and gained educational background to advance bisexual+ women’s positionality, health outcomes, and political representation.*



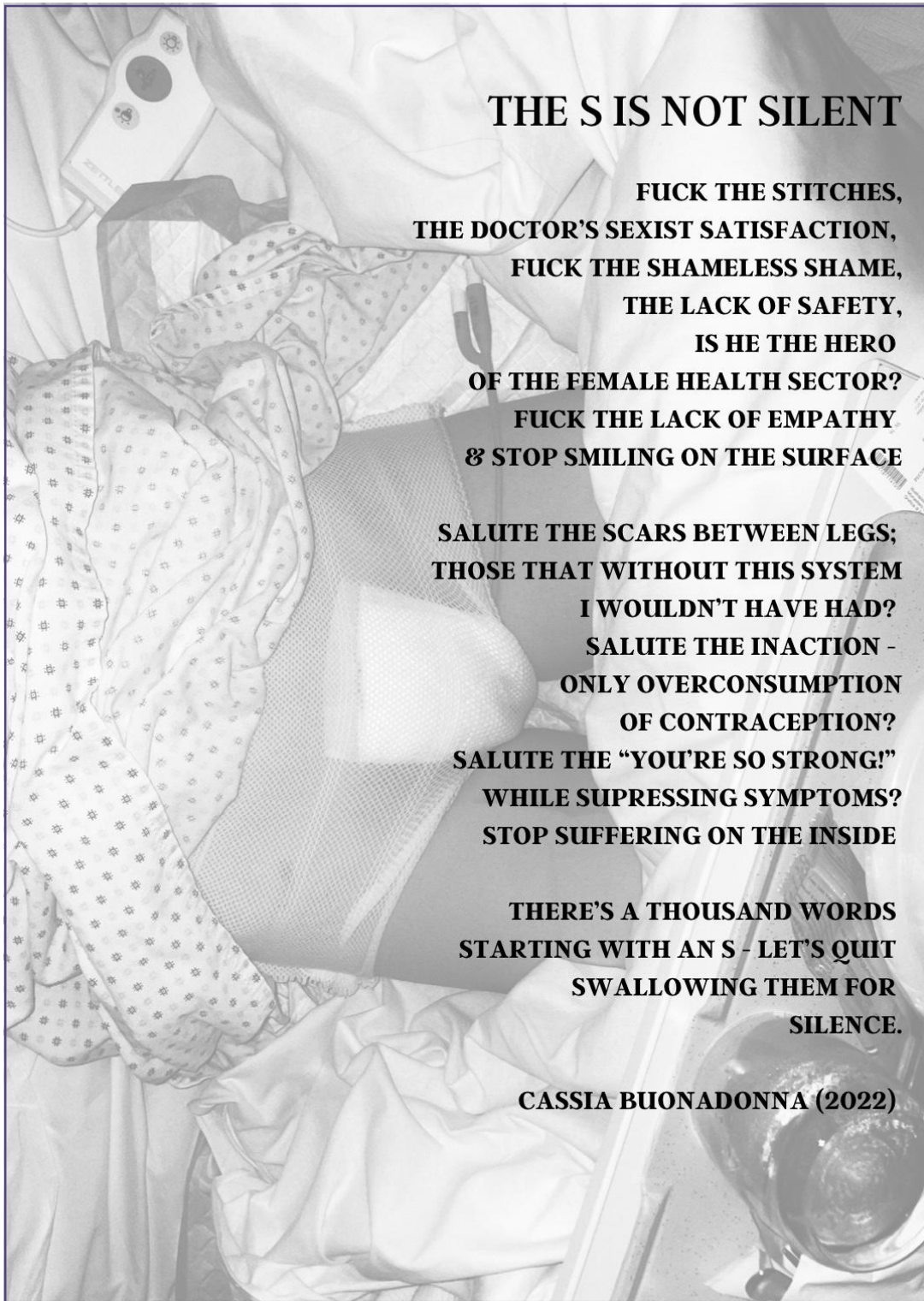
*Note: A version of this essay with citations is online at [BiWomenQuarterly.com](#).*



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## **THE S IS NOT SILENT**

**FUCK THE STITCHES,  
THE DOCTOR'S SEXIST SATISFACTION,  
FUCK THE SHAMELESS SHAME,  
THE LACK OF SAFETY,  
IS HE THE HERO  
OF THE FEMALE HEALTH SECTOR?  
FUCK THE LACK OF EMPATHY  
& STOP SMILING ON THE SURFACE**

**SALUTE THE SCARS BETWEEN LEGS;  
THOSE THAT WITHOUT THIS SYSTEM  
I WOULDN'T HAVE HAD?  
SALUTE THE INACTION -  
ONLY OVERCONSUMPTION  
OF CONTRACEPTION?  
SALUTE THE "YOU'RE SO STRONG!"  
WHILE SUPRESSING SYMPTOMS?  
STOP SUFFERING ON THE INSIDE**

**THERE'S A THOUSAND WORDS  
STARTING WITH AN S - LET'S QUIT  
SWALLOWING THEM FOR  
SILENCE.**

**CASSIA BUONADONNA (2022)**

*Artist statement:* I want to stress that my piece and personal experience are NOT related to abortion. However, I have faced similar impediments caused by patriarchal views on the female body and intimate health care. Unfortunately, I was misdiagnosed for an infection that threatened my ovaries and urinary tract severely. These months have had a profound effect on how I experience bodily autonomy and womanhood.

*Cassia Buonadonna is a 20-year-old student and activist passionate about the cross-over between politics and art. This year her experience with the sexism present in female health care facilities has particularly influenced her writing.*



# Ham-Handed

By Oakley Ayden

We called the nurse Ham Hands after she'd left the room. Moments before, one of those hands was pinning my pregnant body to the hospital bed with hammer-like heft while the other rammed through labia folds attempting to reach my cervix, which was apparently stationed way on up there, according to Ham Hands. Although pairing nurses and patients based on similar heights may have been completely unnecessary in most parts of Providence Tarzana Medical Center, in the Labor and Delivery wing it should perhaps have been the standard.

Beyond the hospital's walls, Ham Hands and I would have made a whimsical duo. She stood no taller than five-feet-flat. I hover around five-foot-nine, easily capable of clearing the six-foot mark with even a modestly-heeled shoe. Both of us were unapologetically blunt. Turned loose on the world together, we would have been good for some crass-yet-comical banter, no question. But in terms of her short-fingered hands and my internally lengthy vaginal pipeline, the pairing was far from idyllic.

At the height of the ordeal, Ham Hands was fisting me. I laid there, legs spread, watching her fingertips press together to form what looked like the silhouette of a closed-mouth hand puppet when viewed from the side. She proceeded to plunge her puppeted hand up into my body with no warning, and continued the upward, entering movement mercilessly, not responding to the sight of me visibly writhing in a bodily pain that stretched far beyond the expected discomfort that comes from having a cervix checked.

She forced. With her full body weight bearing onto my pregnant body, she forced. When I asked her to stop, she changed nothing. Her focus sat fixed on forcing.

It was only after her upper forearm had passed my vaginal opening that she withdrew from inside me, surrendering the

pursuit. Laying there in the moments after, I was stunned silent. My then-partner (my unborn baby's father) had been sitting in a cheap-fabric armchair directly in front of me during the exam. He sat speechless, hand across his bearded face, eyes wide with disbelief. Neither of us knew what to say, do. I felt violated, but between my pregnancy-related exhaustion, autistically-slow processing time, and general desire to "not make a big deal out of things," I had neither the energy nor the mental capacity to fully comprehend what had happened. Certainly no bandwidth with which to actionably address it then and there.

I didn't see Ham Hands for the remainder of my hospital stay, though the memory of our moment together lingered for a decade after, refusing to fully settle, never quite feeling okay. In that moment, my body had become a mere body to her, rather than the exterior shell of a holistic human being. And never is a breathing body merely a body. When humans enter a space—medical or otherwise—they bring with them the full scope of their experience: triggers, traumas, invisible histories that dwell within the cells, within the memory. No lone piece can be separated out for convenience, left downstairs to wait in the lobby while the body lays partitioned, able to deadenedly sustain all modes of ham-handed touching, taking.

A tall blonde nurse was sent in a few minutes after Ham Hands' departure. I heard you need my fingers, she said, smiling. My cervix was checked quickly, consensually, with ease, without defilement. After the nurse left the room, I sat quiet. One hand rested atop my swollen belly as I asked my mind to still its unease, if only for a few moments. To bury it somewhere deep beneath the numbing, repetitious count of unborn baby kicks.

*Oakley Ayden (she/her) is an autistic, bisexual writer from North Carolina whose words appear in South Dakota Review, Bending Genres, Maw: Poetry Journal, and elsewhere. She lives in Greensboro with her two children.*

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## LETTERS

"You and this publication and all the related work found me when I was lost, and it is still helping lost folks find their way home—no matter what "bi" ways they travel. A donation to support this crucial work is enclosed."  
—Sheri, dedicated reader for over a quarter century  
& Virtual Brunch Zoom Goddess

SUPPORT OUR WORK.

Spread the word.

Make a donation.

[www.biwomenquarterly.com/donate/](http://www.biwomenquarterly.com/donate/)

# Hairy Mammal

By Meow Kapow

*Artist Statement:* I designed this cross stitch pattern to express my frustration with U.S. beauty standards. Homo sapiens are mammals. Mammals have hair, and not just on their heads. Even though body hair is naturally occurring in our species, many Americans have been socialized to believe that body hair, especially on women, is unsightly, unhygienic, and shameful. My hope is that one day people of all genders may embody the aesthetic of their choice without ridicule, including the choice to remain a hairy mammal.

*Meow Kapow is a bisexual woman from Florida, USA. She designs cross stitch patterns featuring themes of feminism, pride, cats, and medieval marginalia.*



# Viva, la sangre

By Karla Wirth

*Artist statement:* Drawing inspiration from my upbringing in Mexico City, Mexico, I use bold colors and humor to reflect on issues of sexual identity, diversity, philandry and its toxicity, and the beauty and pain of intimacy.

As a sexologist, my work invites you to celebrate and acknowledge the power of your uniqueness and to celebrate diversity as a value and a human right. Here, I create a conceptual reinterpretation of a cactus, translating it into a powerful symbol of self-protection, resilience, and unique beauty.

*Karla Wirth is a self-taught artist and sexologist currently based in Berlin, Germany.*



# Distracted and Confused NO MORE: Bisexual Liberation

By Anna Kochetkova

With the repeal of *Roe v. Wade* across the seas, here in Australia as a white migrant bisexual woman, my body is grounded in many of my identities, stronger than ever. Just as Black Lives Matter urgently thrust me into the beginning of my “bisexual becoming” back in 2019, the overturn of *Roe v. Wade* has reminded me that my body and mind aren’t mine. And that I wholeheartedly refuse to comply.

There was a time when I accepted this. As a good student of my cultural indoctrination, I embodied the teachings of my community in Russia, where I was born and spent the first 22 years of my life.

In Russia, our patronymic (*otchestvo*) name is a great example of our bodies belonging to others, as *otchestvo* is derived from one’s father’s first name. Accordingly, everyone in Russia belongs to their fathers.

Patriarchy is a well-known form of oppression and control. But there was a time when I didn’t know this word and hated feminists. Activists and social justice slogans seemed irrational and silly to me. My survival stood above my enlightenment, and I spent most of my years in the darkness and servitude of oppression and patriarchy.

Today, the overturn of *Roe* makes me furious and disappointed. However, I suspect that if I were watching this historical moment from Russia, I would have not felt the same way. I’ll never know for sure. But my fury and disappointment give me hope: if my understanding and beliefs have changed, others’ can, too.

Looking back at my life, I recognize distractions that kept me “in line” and obedient. It wasn’t my father’s name but the learnt mistrust of all women, the overwhelming desire to be thin, young, and loved (by cis het white men). My tiredness from over-working, under-eating and eternally competing made it impossible for me to think or feel. If all else failed, alcohol was an acceptable sedative.

In Russia, confusion reigns. It’s a common strategy for keeping people silent and obedient. Many people in Russia say that no one can tell what’s true and what’s not. I remember feeling that way—it’s soaked in hopelessness, sprinkled with mistrust, and is served cold.

However, as I suspect many in Russia do, I felt a small, almost unnoticeable sense that my confusion was unnatural, manufactured somehow. Today, after over a decade of living apart from Russian indoctrination, I can clearly see the successfully manufactured distraction—the sense of perpetual confusion, hopelessness, and danger from abroad.

Over the last few years, I started to realize the distraction of work and of my poverty mindset, both of which ensured that I didn’t

stop producing, worked late, and worried about money above all else, ignoring my environment, nature, even wars. I didn’t notice any of Russia’s invasions until one day it stared into my face via the social media of my friends in Ukraine.

And as I was grieving the atrocities of Russia at the beginning of the war, something inside me kept pulling me back to my work desk: “Enough of this crying! You have a client meeting in an hour.” We are often paralyzed by the need to make money, raise children, and climb career ladders, unable to properly care for our mental health or rest enough. The way patriarchy weaves capitalism and individualism into our lives often keeps us exhausted, afraid, alone. In Australia, people exhibit pride in “having a lot on,” while feeling inadequate about “lazy weekends,” “guilty pleasures,” and “doing nothing”—rare moments of freedom which are often followed by the watchful eye of shame and guilt. There are many more distractions that impact our capacity to think, create, fight back.

As I feel enraged by *Roe*, I remember all the women who came before me and fought for our rights to vote, wear pants, own property and one’s self.

I cannot help but feel deep sadness and grand gratitude for the work done and lives lost in the name of my freedom today.

As women’s rights start to slip away, the fight of my generation begins.

Dangerous and proud, queer women all around the globe are remembering who they are. I know patriarchy is trembling with fear. As more of us become aware of distractions and begin our healing, more white cis het bigoted men may try to lasso us, bottle us, and threaten us. But it’s too late! We reject the lies and stories of patriarchy and unite to love and support one another and reclaim ourselves. I saw it happen within me. I know it’s happening all around me.

*Anna Kochetkova is a Russian-born Australian author and poet, bi+ activist living on the Land of the Gadigal Peoples of the Eora Nation (a.k.a. Sydney, Australia). Anna is the author of [Bi & Prejudice](#) and the curator of the @biandprejudice Instagram community.*





The government has decided that I don't qualify—celiac disease and my doctor's professional advice be damned.

Medicare also won't cover any compounded medications. I know this, but still I spoke to anyone I could think of for help. I was denied, so I appealed and was denied multiple times. These medications are necessary for my survival, but insurance won't cover them. Again, they

prefer to override my doctors.

I have had medical devices, practitioners, medications, and more denied by government-provided insurance. This is horrible for me, and it makes no sense for them, either—they get short-term savings at the cost of higher expenses in the long run as I get sicker than I would if they simply provided the care to keep my body as healthy as possible. And of course, regardless of cost, I'd like my health to improve! This is my body, but I don't get to choose the care that I receive. Even with doctors' orders, I don't get that care.

Of course, the government's control over our bodies goes beyond health insurance. A Section 8 housing voucher can make the difference between housing and homelessness, but even if someone gets a voucher (for which waitlists can be over a decade long, and some areas have waitlists that are closed altogether), the strict limits on "allowed" housing are so unrealistic that many people are unable to use their vouchers within the four-month timeframe. It's no surprise that so many disabled people are homeless. They're hungry, too. SNAP benefits often aren't enough to cover grocery bills, and they certainly aren't enough for folks on many medical diets.

We'd better not forget about marriage. "Equal marriage" is a term used a lot in LGBTQ+ communities, but it doesn't apply in disabled communities. This is because a disabled person on federal benefits risks losing some or all of those benefits if they get married. Two people each on SSI (a form of Social Security benefits) can receive more in benefits separately than if they are married. We must wonder how anyone is expected to survive on the average payment of \$841 per month (in 2022), never mind the much lower amount of \$1261 for a married couple. This is why so many disabled people remain unmarried, and some even choose to get a divorce while continuing to live together, despite preferring to be married to their loved one. Getting married can put health insurance and other benefits at risk, too. (Search "fight for disabled equal marriage" for more information on this issue.) "Equal marriage" isn't so equal after all.

It took me under five minutes to think of these examples, and I can easily give you dozens, probably hundreds more. I am all too used to a life where the government tells me which doctors I can see, which medications I can take, which medical devices I can use, whether or not I can live in semi-affordable housing, how much food I can buy (and to some degree, what type), how much money I can earn, and more, regardless of what I want or what my doctors order. It says that getting married would be harmful to my health. It tells me, in myriad ways, that I am "less than" others. It is wrong on all counts, and this needs to change.

I wrote a paper on *Roe v. Wade* in high school, and at the time I couldn't understand why anyone would be against it. My position hasn't changed, but my understanding of the situation has grown more nuanced. Now I understand why individuals feel so strongly against it, but I also understand how this is being used by politicians as a political tool to divide us and retain power for themselves, and that must end. Our bodies belong to each of us, and to no one else. The government should not get a say as to how we live within them or care for them.

So yes, I am frustrated, infuriated, and outraged by this situation. But sadly, I am not shocked. After all, when the government decides that a portion of the population does not deserve necessary healthcare, safe housing, enough food, or the ability to choose whether to marry someone, is it any surprise that it would also decide whether we are able to get abortions?

*Julie Morgenlender is the author of The Things We Don't Say: An Anthology of Chronic Illness Truths. She serves on the board of the Bisexual Resource Center and volunteers for her local chronic pain support group.*





# RESEARCH CORNER: Violence Against (Bi+) Women

By Josephine Raye Kelly

What does bodily autonomy mean in a country where three women a day are killed by an intimate partner and over half of women have experienced sexual violence? These numbers get significantly higher when we look at the bisexual population. Bisexual women report anywhere from a 50-80% lifetime rate of intimate partner violence and sexual violence, are less likely to report their sexual assaults to providers, and are less likely to access services than straight and lesbian victims.

Unsurprisingly, bisexual women are also more likely to have an unplanned pregnancy than lesbian and heterosexual women and three times as likely as heterosexuals to have had an abortion. Additionally, pregnancies of bisexual women are four to nine times more likely to be connected to sexual or physical violence by the male partner involved in the pregnancy. This suggests that the overturn of *Roe v. Wade* will disproportionately impact bi+ women and contribute to more violence against them, both systemically and interpersonally. And it's likely they will continue to remain largely unacknowledged in discourse and policy about reproductive justice.

While bisexual women experience the highest rates of violence, one in three men have also experienced sexual violence and one in four men have been victims of intimate partner violence. Nonbinary people also experience high rates of victimization. Approximately 55% of nonbinary people had been physically attacked or sexually assaulted as adults, over 80% were victims of emotional abuse as children and 40% were victims of physical or sexual child abuse. These alarming numbers show that this is an epidemic that impacts people of all backgrounds and identities. Full bodily autonomy will not exist in the United States, or in

the rest of the world, until all people can live freely without the constant threat of intimate abuse and systemic violence.

## Sources:

Bisexual Stigma, Sexual Violence, and Sexual Health Among Bisexual and Other Plurisexual Women: A Cross-Sectional Survey Study. *The Journal of Sex Research* doi: 10.1080/00224499.2018.1563042

[Power and Inequality: Intimate Partner Violence Against Bisexual and Nonmonosexual Women in the United States](#) (Sage Journals)

[Sexual Orientation Differences in Pregnancy and Abortion Across the Lifecourse](#) (Science Direct)

[Fast Facts: Preventing Sexual Violence](#) (CDC)

[Sexual Orientation and Exposure to Violence Among U.S. Patients Undergoing Abortion](#) (Obstetrics & Gynecology; Green Journal)

[Violence Against Women the United States: Statistics](#) (NOW)

[Sexual Orientation Differences in Pregnancy and Abortion Across Lifecourse](#) (Women's Health Issues)

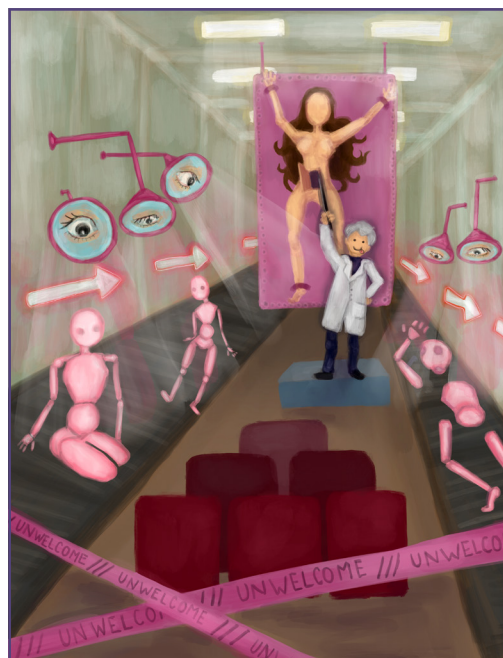
*Josephine Raye Kelly is a writer, social worker, and somatics teacher. In the summer of 2022, they co-founded Ouch! Collective, a queer art collective based in the San Francisco Bay Area. Visit them in the virtual world at josephinerayekelly.com and @jrk.dreamscape on Instagram.*

## Privacy Violation

By Daniela Guerrero

*Artist statement:* The moment when the news about *Roe v. Wade* arrived—even here in Mexico, my country—the media started to ask how it was going to affect us. In numerous news reports, it was as if they were ready to follow the “new trend.” Beyond this, other aspects of individual autonomy are being challenged. Third parties decide about the female body as if it were an object in a factory, which only a few have the right to observe. That is what “Privacy Violation” represents.

*Daniela Guerrero is an illustrator and visual artist based in Mexico City, Mexico.*



# Our Bodies Ourselves is Back as a Website!

By Laurie Rosenblum

Do you remember the health and sexuality book for women and girls, *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, first published in 1970, and the last appearing in 2011? It was a groundbreaking resource, helping to dispel ignorance about the female body and women's health. Now, this reliable and inclusive resource has been updated and is available on the recently launched website: [OurBodiesOurselves.org](http://OurBodiesOurselves.org).

*Our Bodies Ourselves Today* provides an up-to-date platform with feminist and inclusive resources. It is intended to meet the needs of users from a wide range of backgrounds, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and abilities.

The resources will be updated monthly by experts in each of the nine topic areas now covered:

- Abortion and Contraception
- Gender-based Violence
- Growing Older
- Heart Health
- Menstruation through Menopause
- Mental Health
- Pregnancy and Childbirth
- Sexual Anatomy
- Sexuality

*Our Bodies Ourselves Today* empowers every person to be the expert on their own body and make informed decisions about their physical and mental health care. There is so much information and disinformation available, it can be hard to wade through. So, the website is curated by a diverse group of experts to help bring accurate, intersectional information to everyone, and especially women, girls, and gender-expansive people.

NEW WEBSITE!  
**OUR BODIES  
OURSELVES  
TODAY**  
RESOURCE FOR HEALTH AND  
SEXUALITY  
Our Bodies Ourselves Today is  
committed to providing a modern  
platform with inclusive and reliable  
resources for people of all ages and  
identities  
**OBOStoday.org** 

The website includes a wide range of perspectives and types of resources grounded in both diverse lived experiences and current political and cultural contexts. All resources support the rights of everyone—without discrimination—to health, medical care, bodily autonomy, sexual pleasure, a safe environment, and relationships of their choosing.

Please spread the word about the new platform and help *Our Bodies Ourselves Today* change the lives of women, girls, and gender-expansive people today and for years to come!

*Laurie Rosenblum develops educational resources in the public health field and specializes in mental health issues. This summer, she joined the mental health expert panel for the Our Bodies Ourselves Today website.*

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## The Out 100 Recognizes Bicon Fiona Dawson!



**Fiona Dawson**, an Emmy-nominated and award-winning filmmaker as well as a proud bisexual, cisgender, immigrant woman and bi+, trans, and LGBTQ+ advocate who uses media to advocate for equality, has earned a well-deserved spot on Out.com's 2022 Out100 list. The Out100 is *Out Magazine's* proudest tradition: a roundup of the year's most impactful LGBTQ+ changemakers in entertainment, fashion, politics, business, and beyond. 2022 saw a barrage of challenges facing the LGBTQ+ community, and these Artists, Disruptors, Educators, and Groundbreakers fought back using their art, abilities, and platforms. The list is available online here: [out.com/print/2022/10/26/out100-2022-24-lgbtq-titans-media-and-entertainment#media-gallery-media-25](http://out.com/print/2022/10/26/out100-2022-24-lgbtq-titans-media-and-entertainment#media-gallery-media-25).

# Bi+ Activists Meet with White House During Bi+ Visibility Week

By Ellyn Ruthstrom

For the first time since the Obama Administration, bi+ activists from across the country sat down with Biden Administration officials on September 20—as part of Bi Awareness Week—to reboot a discussion that was last touched upon in 2016. The group shared population and disparities data as well as personal testimonials about the three main topics of the meeting: bisexual access to the MPX (monkeypox) vaccine, intimate partner violence, and the lack of funding for bi-specific organizations, programs, and research. Administration officials from Health and Human Services, SAMSHA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration), and other agencies attended the presentation and are already engaging in follow-up conversations with the group.

Organizing for the meeting began in July when we discovered that Robyn Ochs was the only bi+ advocate invited to the LGBTQ+ Pride Reception at the White House in June. There were no Pride receptions during the Trump years, so this occasion was a special opportunity for the community to celebrate together in the White House, and the action of not inviting representatives of bi+ organizations or other bi+ advocates felt like a snub. We felt that the bi+ meetings with the White House in 2013, 2015, and 2016 had not had a lasting effect on LGBTQ+ outreach priorities of the Administration.

Several activists conferred and initiated a conversation with the White House liaison to the LGBTQ+ community to rectify that omission for future events and to reopen communication with the Administration on policy issues impacting the bi+ community. Though limited in size due to COVID restrictions, the group of 14 activists that ultimately convened in Washington were from Los Angeles, Chicago, Minneapolis, Boston, Atlanta, New York, and several other communities across the country.

The evening before the meeting with the Administration, the group met in D.C. with local bi+ community members to brief



*Bi (also trans, asexual, and pan) visibility outside the White House*

them on the meeting and to envision ways to work together to build the national bi+ movement.

The process of planning the meeting resulted in a new networking and organizing tool for the community, [BiPlusOrganizingUS.org](https://biplusorganizingus.org). The group has launched a website to connect organizations and individuals interested in national bi+ activism. The website states: “We recognize that there are many Bi+ advocacy organizations across our country, and by no means do we desire to recreate those wheels. However, we wish to create this space to communicate effectively at a national level with all Bi+ Leaders who are interested in collaboration for the greater good of the Bi+ community in the United States.”

If you are interested in having your organization link up with the work of BiPlusOrganizingUS or if you are an individual activist who wants to get involved and do more, you can do so at [www.biplusorganizingus.org/getinvolved](https://www.biplusorganizingus.org/getinvolved). And follow the group on Instagram and Twitter ([biplusorgus](https://twitter.com/biplusorgus)), and on Facebook ([BiplusorganizingUS](https://facebook.com/biplusorganizingus)).

*Ellyn Ruthstrom has been a long-time member of the Boston Bisexual Women’s Network and sits on the board of Bi Women Quarterly.*



*Post-meeting group shot, including HHS and White House officials*

# CALENDAR



## FREE Bi+ Global Event

Join us at the 9th World Bi+ Meetup! To accommodate people in various time zones, we will have TWO meetups each time: Meetup #9 will be February 3, 4 p.m. EDT/10 p.m. CEST & February 4, 4 a.m. EDT/10 a.m. CEST. Bi+ people everywhere are invited to join either or both meetups on Zoom. We'll be using breakout rooms to give folks an opportunity to meet each other in a friendly and free setting. The meeting is in English & is organized by Barbara Oud (Netherlands) and Robyn Ochs (U.S.). Pre-registration is required. Register at <https://biplus.nl/biplus-world-meetup>.

### Metro-Boston women & non-binary folks:

Keep up with local events by subscribing to our Google group: <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/biwomen-boston>

We offer **FREE digital subscriptions to BWQ** to people of all genders and all orientations everywhere. Subscribe at [BiWomenQuarterly.com](http://BiWomenQuarterly.com).

## A special invitation to our readers EVERYWHERE:

Please join the Boston Bisexual Women's Network at one (or all) of our digital brunches. We are proud of our community of women (trans and cis) and nonbinary folks, and we would love to make connections across the country (and globe). Grab your coffee or tea and some food while we chat about bi+ issues and other fun topics.

**Digital brunches are scheduled on the following dates starting at 1pm EST:**

Sun Dec 11

Sat Jan 7

Sun Feb 5

Sat Mar 4

Sun April 2

Sat May 6

Info/RSVP:  
[BWQEvents@gmail.com](mailto:BWQEvents@gmail.com).

(Note: Dates are subject to change. Visit [BiWomenBoston.org](http://BiWomenBoston.org) to confirm date.)

*Consider this: If you rarely (or never) see people like yourself represented in print, your voice is especially important. When you lift your voice, someone, somewhere will FINALLY see their own experiences reflected, perhaps for the first time. (See our call for writing on page 2.)*

