



EMERGING STRATEGIES FOR LIBERATION

A CONFERENCE REPORT
ON COLLECTIVE POWER 2023



COLLECTIVE
POWER
for
Reproductive
Justice



EVERYONE WHO LOVES THEMSELVES WHO ABORTION

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We are Collective Power for Reproductive Justice, a national organization that inspires, educates, and supports new activists and leadership to create a world in which reproductive health, rights, and justice are embedded in our collective liberation. We do this through a variety of programs and initiatives, including our annual Collective Power Conference. For over three decades, our conference has gathered diverse ideas, perspectives, and leaders. The annual event serves as an activist launch pad as well as a movement-building, networking, and strategy forum for the reproductive justice movement.

On April 14-15, 2023, we hosted Collective Power 2023 at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts. Participants collectively examined rising fascism and white supremacy, including anti-trans and anti-abortion attacks from the far right. These interconnected attacks harm those most vulnerable to systemic oppression. Our conference was focused on bringing people together from different movements to develop collective responses that prioritize community health and healing.

This report starts with a look at the intersection of attacks on abortion and trans communities, drawing from conference speakers' and participants' presentations and thinking. It maps out some of the overlaps between the anti-trans and anti-abortion tactics and points to stronger solidarities and pathways to resist them.

This report synthesizes the emerging strategies for liberation that participants shared at Collective Power 2023. Strategy recommendations include the need for uprooting crisis mindsets, cultivating community in the face of pressing oppressions, and visioning long-term resistance for our collective sustainability and longevity.

Suggested citation: Anne Hendrixson and Brooke Huguley (listed alphabetically). (2023). Emerging Strategies for Liberation: A Conference Report on Collective Power 2023. Amherst, MA: Collective Power for Reproductive Justice.

With thanks to readers Marlene Fried, Heron Greenesmith, Yemi Combahee, and the staff at Collective Power.

**COME AS
YOU ARE,
BUT TRANS-
FORMATION
IS A MUST.**

— PLENARY SPEAKER YEMI COMBAHEE

INTRODUCTION

On April 14-15, 2023, we hosted Collective Power 2023 at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts. We were joined by 228 participants from 29 states across the country: 108 were Black, Indigenous, people of color (BIPOC); 138 identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual (LGBTQIA+); 90 were students; and 35 were activists/advocates giving workshops. Together, we looked at the rising fascism and white supremacy we are experiencing, including the anti-trans, anti-abortion attacks from the far right. These are interconnected and harm those most vulnerable to systemic oppression: immigrants, BIPOC, trans, and queer communities; people with disabilities; people of low income; abortion providers; and pregnant people. Collective Power 2023 focused on developing collective responses that prioritize community health and healing.

In the opening plenary, *Synopsis of Oppression and Strategies for Change*, speaker **Yemi Combahee, a Black queer femme liberation strategist, abortion advocate, and reproductive justice (RJ) organizer, welcomed conference participants in the reproductive justice movement with a guiding meridian from the organization, Black Feminist Future: “Come as you are, but transformation is a must.”** We love this invocation. It emphasizes the movements of those who are pushed to the margins and highlights the expectation that deep personal and community change are parts of the process of achieving RJ together and visioning for the future.

In this spirit of openness and transformation, this report synthesizes the emerging strategies for liberation that participants shared at the conference. We heard from some of those most impacted by white supremacy, rising fascism, and the far right today.

We collectively reflected on our needs right now as BIPOC; LGBTQIA+; and white advocates, activists, and community organizers. **The strategy recommendations that emerged included the need for uprooting crisis mindsets, cultivating community and allyship in the face of pressing oppressions, and visioning long-term resistance for our collective sustainability and longevity.** The heart of this report are these strategies, which start on page 12.

This report starts with a look at the intersection of attacks on abortion and trans communities, drawing from conference speakers' and participants' thinking and experiences. It maps out some of the overlaps between the anti-trans and anti-abortion tactics and points to stronger solidarities and pathways to resist them.

This report is our offering toward collective transformation. We hope it will stimulate further conversation, community care, resistance, and solidarities at this moment.

INTERSECTION OF ATTACKS ON ABORTION AND TRANS COMMUNITIES

The right wing is pursuing a range of overlapping tactics to restrict both abortion access and trans communities. The “right” includes a broad and loosely affiliated collection of foundations, Republican politicians, media, advocacy groups, nonprofits, judges, paramilitaries, and militias who — along with community activists and conservative religious leaders — promote 1) dehumanizing propaganda and disinformation, 2) the erosion of legally protected rights, and 3) physical attacks alongside threats of further violence.

Together, these efforts fuel panic about supposedly dangerous and unruly bodies, including trans and gender nonconforming (TGNC) people; pregnant people of low income, especially those who receive government assistance; and BIPOC. The right systematically creates barriers to essential health care and heightens vigilante threats to clinics and community spaces. Efforts to enforce narrow gender

roles and heteronormativity and deny access to sexual and reproductive health care target young people in particular.

These attacks are at the forefront of right-wing agendas to narrow civil liberties in the U.S., as are similar strikes against drag queen story hours, “dangerous” books in schools, critical race theory, movements for Black lives, voting rights, and activist protest. Indigenous communities face long-term attempts to overturn the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and further separate their children from their families, communities, and tribes with adoption, particularly by white families. Although the Supreme Court most recently [upheld ICWA](#), we know the right will keep trying to overturn it.

At Collective Power 2023, speakers discussed the importance of recognizing and unpacking these tactics to understand their intersections and the larger political situation. These conversations help us build long-term solidarities and strategies for collective resistance. We recognize that this rich conversation was partial. We want to welcome more immigrant rights, environmental and climate justice, and international perspectives, for instance. Doing so deepens our politics on overlapping oppressions.

Speakers repeatedly referred to the far right’s playbook of anti-abortion and anti-trans tactics. Political Research Associates offers a nuanced [definition of the far right](#), which includes this helpful distinction: “... far-right is descriptive of movements, organizations, actions, and ideas that are characterized by particularly virulent forms of racism, ethnic exclusion, religious exclusivity, or a desire for authoritarian rule, and see the status quo as not racist, sexist, and authoritarian enough.” The following section outlines three common anti-abortion and anti-trans tactics.



DEHUMANIZING PROPAGANDA AND DISINFORMATION

The right wing actively demonizes TGNC people and providers of gender-affirming care. Similarly, it smears abortion seekers, providers, and advocates. Why? Dehumanizing propaganda and disinformation can rally and unite diverse right-wing groups against fabricated, common enemies. These groups invite and excuse extreme actions against those they degrade, including outright violence.

In the last several years, trans advocates have warned of the coordinated spread of right-wing, anti-trans propaganda and disinformation. [Translash](#) Media founder Imara Jones and Margaret Huang, president of the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#), [argue](#), "With deep roots in the white Christian nationalist movement, anti-trans rhetoric and disinformation are centered around the myth that transgender identities are not real." Tactics include spreading the rapid onset gender dysphoria hypothesis, which argues that social pressures coercively influence vulnerable youth to become trans, who will regret it later in life. One [key study](#), which the far right media frequently quotes, used [biased methods](#) like relying on survey responses from parents who visit anti-trans websites. This kind of [politicized science](#) is similar to the cluster of studies anti-abortion groups cite, which wrongly associate surgical abortion with serious health risks, like increased risk of breast cancer. Politicized science contributes to increased stigma and skewed health advice. Crisis pregnancy centers, for instance, [repeat](#) false information about the debunked "post-abortion syndrome" along with shaming and stigmatized messaging about LGBTQIA+ youth and sexuality.

Anti-trans groups promote the rapid onset gender dysphoria hypothesis using stories of rare detransitioners as blanket evidence that TGNC identity

is not real. They treat those stories as the exception that proves the rule. This sidelines the diversity of trans experiences. It is a tactic similar to using the concept of abortion regret in [crisis pregnancy centers](#) to steer pregnant people away from abortion.

Right-wing rhetoric often slanders gender-affirming care as a criminal practice in a move that denigrates providers. As researcher Heron Greenesmith and journalist Amy Littlefield recognize, this right-wing vilification of trans health care providers mirrors that of abortion providers. For instance, they [report](#) how former Fox News host Tucker Carlson broadcasted headshots of the board members of a medical center that offers gender-affirming care. Naming each in turn, he compared them to murderers and called on them to stop "these crimes." Carlson is drawing from the same right-wing [playbook](#) that inspired Senator Ted Cruz in 2015 to call Planned Parenthood "an ongoing criminal enterprise."

Demonizing providers is one of [several overlaps](#) between anti-trans and anti-abortion rhetoric. Another right-wing position rejects the idea that abortion and gender-affirming care are health care in the first place. Some [claim](#) that pregnancy or puberty are not illnesses and therefore do not require a "cure" in the form of termination or puberty blockers, for instance.

Anti-trans and anti-abortion stances also champion parental rights in the name of protecting young people from abortion, gender-affirming care, and sexuality education. For instance, a right-wing smear campaign against gender-affirming care positions it as coerced sterilization of young people, with devastating consequences for their reproductive autonomy. Presidential hopeful Ron DeSantis went so far as to [refer](#) to gender-affirming care as simply a "euphemism" for sterilization. Former Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton went further. He [claimed](#) that because gender-affirming care is sterilization, it constitutes child abuse.

Besides falsely charging gender affirming care, this approach flattens out the [range of services](#) that the term encompasses. Further, it spreads disinformation about hormone replacement therapy (HRT) as permanent sterilization. The [Transgender Law Center](#) (TLC) notes that some transgender people conceive in as little as six months after stopping HRT. Further, TLC cites a [study](#) that shows that teens starting HRT in adolescence experience increased well-being and better mental health.

Thus, these so-called “parental rights” arguments actively undermine young people’s and parents’ rights. They aim to control young people’s reproduction and fertility, enshrining pregnancy as the goal of most people’s reproductive lives. The parental controls on gender-affirming care and sexuality education mirrors the “parental consent” laws for abortion that create barriers for young people accessing health care.

The claim of “defending the defenseless” through objections to forced sterilization is also a contradiction. For instance, Paxton acknowledges that sterilization has been “weaponized” against Black people; people with disabilities; and young people, specifically young women, infringing on their “right to procreate.” He twists [important critiques](#) of forced and coerced sterilization and the need for full and informed consent with reproductive procedures to assert his agenda.

Using a different but equally wrong-headed approach is the conservative Christian legal group the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF). ADF lawyers [won the overturning of Roe v. Wade](#), the case to limit mifepristone, and the case that allows schools and employers to deny birth control coverage on religious grounds. The group is also [active against trans and LGBTQIA+ rights](#). The Southern Poverty Law Center lists ADF as an [anti-LGBT hate group](#). In 2017, ADF supported recently overturned European laws that would have [required sterilization](#) of those seeking to

change their name or gender on government-issued identification. In a skewed argument that claimed to uphold human rights, the group argued that national authorities should be free to determine what medical procedures its citizens must undergo to obtain revised government documents with their name and gender identity. The arguments *ignore* human rights [norms](#), which firmly reject forced and coerced sterilization. This misuse of the human rights frame to endorse state-enforced sterilization, like Paxton’s contradictory reference to “weaponized” sterilization, rings hollow. Neither upholds the rights of trans people or principles of bodily autonomy.

Right-wing media has amplified [anti-trans disinformation](#), which paints trans people as predatory, using false or unconfirmed claims about inappropriate behavior in bathrooms. Such disinformation is bolstered by supposedly pro-woman, anti-trans advocacy. Trans-exclusive, radical feminists (TERFs), conservative women’s groups, and some GOP lawmakers seek to reify biological differences between the sexes, and broadcast anti-trans perspectives in the name of women’s rights. For instance, in 2022, a group of GOP lawmakers introduced the [Women’s Bill of Rights](#). The platform included support from right-wing women’s groups with ties to Charles Koch, a right-wing donor with deep pockets. Far from upholding women’s rights, the bill attempts to take rights away from trans people and exclude them from “women’s spaces.”

Anti-trans, pro-woman rhetoric spans a spectrum of political views. TERFs are of particular concern to RJ advocates because they often uphold abortion rights while denigrating trans people. As Yemi Combahee commented at Collective Power 2023, “TERFs may be pro-choice and take up space in the movement for abortion access, but they are exclusionary and antagonistic toward trans folks in their language and practice.” For instance, the more liberal-leaning [“Black Women’s Statement Against Gender Ideology,”](#)

claimed to defend women's spaces from trans people as an issue of human rights. This protective stance echoes long-standing anti-abortion stances that claim to be pro-woman, like Feminists for Life. The group positions itself as an advocate for women and for structures that enable healthy pregnancy and motherhood while also fighting poverty. It claims that such interventions save vulnerable women from getting abortions, but the group ignores the full range of reasons why abortion is an important health care intervention.

EROSION OF LEGALLY PROTECTED RIGHTS

Anti-trans and anti-abortion bills are mounting at a rapid pace. A 2022 Vice News [analysis](#) anticipated that states that seek to ban abortion are also likely to enact anti-trans legislation. In what one American Civil Liberties Union attorney calls an unconstitutional move, a recent Nebraska [law](#) even combines anti-trans and anti-abortion restrictions. It includes a 12-week abortion ban (with exceptions for rape and incest) with limits on gender-affirming care for young people under 19 years old.

The LGBTQ+ advocacy group, Equality Federation, [tracks](#) state legislation impacting LGBTQ+ people. The group [reports](#) that in 2023, state lawmakers have already introduced 460 anti-LGBTQ+ and anti-trans bills. Of those bills, 356 specifically target trans people. This includes [anti-trans bills](#) related to restrictions on student athletics, medical care bans, curriculum, sex education, and LGBTQ+ books and that criminalize sex work, drag performances and HIV transmission. Researcher Greenesmith [breaks down the who and why of anti-LGBTQ advocacy](#).

These anti-LGBTQIA+ attacks affect those most impacted by systemic oppression: BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, immigrants, people of low income, people with disabilities, and young people. This is [especially true](#) for Black trans women and femmes who experience horrific levels of violence, police brutality, food insecurity, unemployment, and homelessness because they are "existing at multiple intersections of oppression."

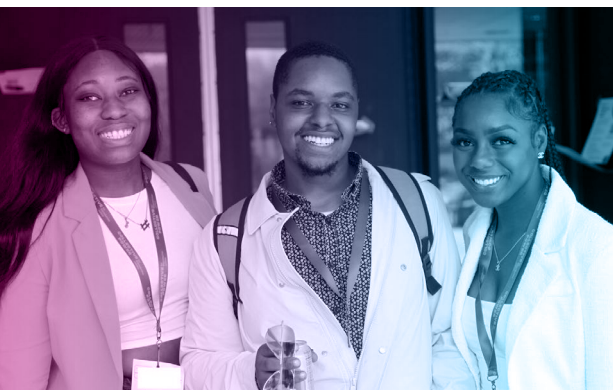
Meanwhile, more than 22 million people live in states with [abortion restrictions](#) including full bans and gestational limits. A 2023 [report](#), "Human Rights Crisis: Abortion in the United States After *Dobbs*" argues that anti-abortion legislation in the U.S. [violates international law](#). The U.S. signed and ratified several treaties that uphold abortion access, and the new restrictions violate those terms.

The end of *Roe* has meant an increase in the number of states treating self-managed abortion as a crime. An ongoing [study](#) by If/When/How tracks these cases. In Nebraska, a mother and daughter are both facing jail time for the daughter's self-managed abortion. The teen was [sentenced](#) to 90 days in jail and two years of probation.



INCREASED VIOLENCE AND THREATS

The LGBTQ Safe Spaces National Needs Assessment survey conducted between December 2022 and March 2023 **shows** that close to three out of every five LGBTQ+ organizations experienced hate incidents. Nine out of 10 community centers experienced at least one incident of phone or in-person harassment as well as heightened online trolling. Youth organizations experienced the highest rates of violence. Survey respondents reported that nearly half of incidents were organized by white nationalist hate groups. The attacks impact LGBTQIA+ organizations far and wide in the U.S., and most of the organizations surveyed in the study are fearful of being targeted again.



The National Abortion Federation's **2022 Violence and Disruption Statistics** also shows a serious uptick in violence in the past year, particularly in states where abortion is available:

In 2022, many anti-abortion extremists shifted their attention to states after dozens of clinics were forced to close in states that banned abortion. Clinics in protective states saw a disproportionate increase in violence and disruption this year:

Stalking
increased by **913%**
(from 8 in 2021 to 81 in 2022)

Burglaries
increase by **100%**
(from 5 in 2021 to 10 in 2022)

Obstructions
increased **538%**
(from 45 in 2021 to 287 in 2022)

Assault and batteries
increased by **29%**
(from 7 in 2021 to 9 in 2022)

Bomb threats
increased by **133%**
(from 3 in 2021 to 7 in 2022)

This corresponds with a rise in hate rhetoric and attacks Black social justice activists experienced. A recent report by three anonymous Black women, "***We All Deserve Safety and Peace***," breaks down how Black women fighting for social justice are targeted for hate crimes. "For women of color in general and Black women specifically, there is an extra level of outrage, hate and vitriol reserved for us. And it is rooted in racism, misogyny, and fear of our power." The report authors have had to remain anonymous because of their experiences, which they bravely chronicle in the report. They link the rise in such hate with overt racism and prejudice, like the rise in the Great Replacement conspiracy theory, which claims that elites are orchestrating mass immigration of Black and brown peoples to the U.S. to replace white populations for political gain.

INTERSECTION OF ATTACKS ON ABORTION AND TRANS COMMUNITIES

	TACTICS	ANTI-TRANS	ANTI-ABORTION
DEMONIZING PROPAGANDA AND DISINFORMATION	PRODUCING & SPREADING POLITICIZED SCIENCE	Myths like “rapid onset gender dysphoria,” which holds that more kids are coerced to become trans by “social contagion”	Studies that wrongly associate abortion with health risks like elevated risk of breast cancer
	PROMOTING “REGRET” FOR BECOMING TRANS OR HAVING AN ABORTION	Hyping rare stories of detransitioners to undermine trans identity as legitimate and long lasting	Spreading the concept of “abortion regret” in crisis pregnancy centers to dissuade people from seeking abortion
	VILIFYING HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS AS CRIMINALS	False propaganda about sterilizing children with gender-affirming care	Naming providers as criminals for performing abortion
	AMPLIFIED DISINFORMATION & DISTRUST	Painting trans people as predatory and anti-women	Claiming to save vulnerable women from unnecessary abortions
ERODING LEGALLY PROTECTED RIGHTS	INCREASING THE NUMBER OF ANTI-TRANS & ANTI-ABORTION BILLS	Anti-trans bills with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrictions on student athletics. • Medical care bans. • Restrictions on curriculum, sex ed and LGBTQ+ books. • Criminalizing sex work, drag performances and HIV transmission. 	Anti-abortion restrictions that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include bans. • Enact gestational limits. • Treat self-managed abortion as a crime.
	DISPROPORTIONATE BARRIERS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE	Restrictions on gender-affirming care, bathroom use, access to information, and sports participation	Parental consent laws
INCREASED VIOLENCE AND THREATS	RISE IN HATE INCIDENTS	Three out of every five LGBTQ organizations	Anti-abortion extremists’ attacks on protective states

STRATEGIES AND VISIONS FOR CHANGE

At Collective Power 2023, leaders and emerging visionaries discussed strategies for our collective liberation. **We found that challenging white supremacy and the drive toward fascism will require us to uproot our sense of urgency and crisis, create community, share our histories, and live the long game.** Here are some of our preliminary strategy recommendations.



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1 UPROOT WHITE SUPREMACISM, URGENCY AND CRISIS

"The times are urgent,
let us slow down."

— BAYO AKOMOLAFE,
THE EMERGENCE NETWORK

The intensity of this political moment can make everything feel like a crisis. It can feel impossible to slow down. All things can feel pressurized. Our work is increasingly surveilled by trolls and law enforcement. For far too many, our bodies, identities and communities are under attack.

At Collective Power 2023, we talked about how important it is to stand up and be there for each other. Central to this is to **organize in ways that move beyond a crisis mindset, even when it feels like everything is on fire**. Conference participants offered ideas on what we can do.

"We need the **space and time to prioritize what we need**," Greenesmith asserted in the conference plenary. We need the time to slow down and gather across movements, to share strategies, and to deepen

our understanding of our overlapping oppressions. Conference speakers identified the need for shared definitions of concepts like fascism, white supremacy, and misogyny. It takes time to fully generate shared understandings that build on multiple viewpoints and insights. Participants also identified the opportunity for facilitation guides to support nuanced conversations about today's politics and collectively generate our political priorities and strategies.

OPEN POSSIBILITIES FOR CREATIVITY AND SLOW-MOVING, RELATIONAL PERSPECTIVES AND CONNECTIONS. As one participant noted, "We need more than a 75-minute conversation, and then we all just go our own way. What do we do with that? We're building these relationships, and we're building these connections, and then we just all go back to what we were doing before." Collective Power for Reproductive Justice plans to continue creating virtual and in-person spaces for our community to connect across the movement. Our annual conference is one of the direct spaces to keep these dialogues going.

ENGAGE WITH LIBERATORY FRAMEWORKS. For example, [Healing Justice](#), which co-creators describe as “[collective care and protection strategies](#).” It is a political strategy created by the [Kindred Southern Healing Justice Collective](#) in 2006 “to intervene, respond, and transform conditions of generational trauma and systemic oppression, and build community/survivor led responses rooted in southern traditions of resiliency to sustain our emotional/physical/spiritual/psychic and environmental well-being.” Members of the collective, including Collective Power 2023 speaker Cara Page, explain the strategy in the 2023 book, “[Healing Justice Lineages: Dreaming at the Crossroads of Liberation, Collective Care and Safety](#).” Rooted in reproductive, disability, environmental, and transformative justice, harm reduction and abolition, Healing Justice “seeks to address the ways events or conditions impact entire communities and movements and envision ways for us to hold each other together.”

FACE WHITE SUPREMACISM, URGENCY, AND CRISIS IN OUR THINKING AND ACTIONS. We know abortion and reproductive health care have never been intersectional enough to ensure access for all. Drawing from the Collective Power 2022 [report](#), “Roe never ensured that everyone could access abortion care. Restrictive legislation including the 1976 Hyde Amendment, which banned Medicaid funding for abortion, and Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers (TRAP) laws, which imposed burdensome standards on abortion providers, have consistently limited abortion access for those who need it most.” The racialized and economic barriers enforced by this tiered system of abortion care reflects, in part, the crisis mindset surrounding abortion activism and regulation in the past.

“Roe is not the floor we want to build on,” Oriaku Njoku, executive director of National Network of Abortion Funds, reminded us. **Embracing trans liberation, disability justice, and racial justice in abortion and reproductive health care is what is necessary right now.**

This means uprooting white supremacy in abortion rights movements and discussing white supremacy to develop shared definitions and responses within our communities and across movements.

So, **let’s talk about white supremacy.** Long-time activist Elizabeth “Betia” Martinez [defined white supremacy](#) as “an historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations, and people of color by white peoples and nations of the European continent, for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power, and privilege.” This definition helps us think about how white supremacy is systematic and sustained over time, and it is dense! The [expanded](#) commentary breaks down each part of the definition.

INVITE COLLECTIVE CONSIDERATION OF THE CONCEPT OF WHITE SUPREMACY. Especially in relation to power imbalances, inequity, and oppressions as we seek to build [movements and our organizations](#). An example is “[How \(Not\) to Dismantle White Supremacy](#),” a conversation between five racial justice leaders on how we can nuance the idea of white supremacy while building power among social justice organizations, upholding BIPOC leaders, and fighting authoritarianism.

2 CREATE COLLECTIVITY

“There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.”

— AUDRE LORDE

There is a power that arises from coming together. We can build strong, welcoming solidarities centered around those most impacted by far-right attacks. We can stretch across movement boundaries. We can support one another to grow, work in solidarity, and face the challenges of organizing today.

In doing this work, we encounter increased criminalization of activism, harassment from right-wing trolls, doxxing, and polarizing disinformation campaigns. **We can collectively define what security and safety look like** in the interest of protecting queer, trans, and BIPOC moving forward.

This hits home for us because a right-wing provocateur attended Collective Power 2023. Afterward, they broadcasted stigmatizing commentary of conference presenters and politics on social media, targeting trans-health providers and the **Stigma-Free Zone**. This person was a mouthpiece for the type of violent and dehumanizing propaganda we talk about in the first section of this report. Their appearance at the conference highlights the need for organizational and community awareness of a new level of right-wing surveillance and hostility to the RJ movement, in line with what many social justice activists are experiencing.

Taking the lead from healing justice, we can find ways to hold one another across issue areas, movement spaces, and communities. We can uphold those

targeted by hate rhetoric and actions, like the report **“We All Deserve Safety and Peace,”** which shares the stories of three Black women who have been the targets of far-right trolling, harassment, and surveillance. The report calls for “cultivating a peer support community” that can offer “listening ears” from those who are “in tune and not downplaying what we’re seeing before our eyes.” It also calls for financial funds for BIPOC social justice activists who need to relocate to a new home either temporarily or permanently because of in-person harassment and surveillance. The report authors reference the Media Democracy Fund’s **Unicorn Fund** as a support for “under-resourced grassroots leaders in the United States who face attacks for expressing their ideas, telling the truth, and taking a stand on the front lines of narrative change.” Overall, the report recommends the need for our movements to “establish a comprehensive security case management organization” that provides organizations and people with everything they need to address safety issues and respond to potential threats at in-person and online events.

PROTECT QUEER AND TRANS INDIVIDUALS IN SPACES AND HAVE EACH OTHER’S BACKS.

Investigate through research and advocacy **preemptive protection steps** before attacks might happen. We can also organize to protect ourselves by maintaining internet safety practices like **internet scrubbing** and spelling your name a little differently on social media. **Hacking//Hustling** is a collective of “sex workers, survivors and accomplices” that recommends how to “interrupt violence facilitated by technology.” It offers **suggestions** for how to more safely attend a protest, curate your social media presence, or respond if you’ve been doxxed.

USE ONLINE RESOURCES TO IDENTIFY POTENTIAL THREATS. Greenesmith spreads awareness about how to **use free online tools to monitor the opposition** as a tactic for our collective resistance. In Greenesmith's 2023 [workshop](#) "Opposition 101," they suggested "setting the target and scope" of what specific person/group you are looking to monitor and using "open-source intelligence" to research and collect data on the right. Open-source intelligence can be collected for free online, through the media, or in person at public events. Opposition monitoring serves as a strategy for catching anti-LGBTQIA+ bills before lawmakers pass them into law.

As we continue to find ways to stand up for all who are under attack, we can also actively challenge anti-trans, anti-abortion rhetoric and stigma and project a strong solidarity with TGNC people in the RJ movement with our language and inclusive organizing.

An excellent [resource](#) from the Transgender Law Center gives us concrete tactics to support inclusive RJ that intentionally recognizes trans people, nonbinary people, and people with disabilities. Suggestions include using accurate language to talk about RJ and gender-neutral language in RJ advocacy; rejecting the right's propagandizing and renaming reproductive health care; and "refram[ing] misinformed narratives about pregnancy," including refuting the far-right rhetoric mentioned above about gender-affirming care as sterilization. Also, check out Political Research Associate's "[Combating Anti-](#)

[Transgender Disinformation](#)" for more strategies. With this disruption of language, rhetoric, and stigma in our moments, we can also **cultivate spaces for queers of color (QPOC) to thrive, decenter whiteness, and acknowledge when race is erased from the conversation of queerness.** Collective Power for Reproductive Justice Fellow Khiari Neal gave a powerful workshop called "Uncovering Belonging in the Mess of Queer of Color Critique." [Queer of color critique](#) (QOCC) is a "means of combating erasure of QPOC in history, creating collective spaces for QPOC to thrive." Queer of color critique asks us to account for the racialized, sexualized, and gendered factors that determine queer people of color's life experiences. It is an important tool for RJ thinkers.

UPLIFT INDIGENOUS RJ PRIORITIES AS WE WORK TO DECENTER WHITENESS IN OUR MOVEMENTS. [Building the Fire Fund](#) is an Indigenous-led RJ fund that works to ensure there is "ongoing infrastructure" that sustains Indigenous women and birthing people's leadership in the RJ movement. At Collective Power 2023, Building the Fire Fund advisory council urged participants to support laws like ICWA and to be aware of all the anti-Indigenous legislation that the right is attempting to pass.

EXERCISE OUR CREATIVITY COLLECTIVELY. One Collective Power 2023 contributor urged us to consider "cultural organizing and the use of art and culture as a site that's working well, but is a place that we want to be able to explore more." We talked about creativity as a muscle that we must work on building because, "when it's time to use our imaginations to create a new world or new systems, we need to have already built that muscle."

3SHARE OUR STORIES

“We talked a lot about humanization as a tool, dehumanization as a tool to push policies through, and how we can counter that with humanization.”

— COLLECTIVE POWER 2023 PARTICIPANT

Our stories are powerful. Trans, queer, BIPOC, and immigrant storytelling and media can counter disinformation and hate rhetoric about our lives. Abortion stories can reduce stigma. An important collective recommendation that emerged from the conference is to **use our stories as a tool to push back against dehumanizing narratives and create visibility**. Here we include a few beautiful examples of storytelling that show us the way.

Imara Jones is a Black trans woman working to tell the truth about trans and gender nonconforming people. In 2018, she founded **TransLash Media** a nonprofit Black trans news organization that produces digital news for trans people. The group directly counters the disinformation and propaganda that is spreading rampantly about trans and gender nonconforming people in the media and news, which the opposition uses to feed their hate crimes and violence. **TransLash Media** “creates and curates experiences to advance trans narratives, histories, healing, and – most importantly – the human rights of trans people.”

Abortion On Our Own Terms brought its experiential art exhibit, the **“Stigma-Free Zone,”** to Collective Power 2023. The exhibit demonstrates self-managed

abortion, a safe and effective way to terminate a pregnancy. The exhibit invites participants “to co-vision a liberatory future for reclaiming abortion.” It can provide healing for people who have had abortions, reduces stigma around abortion, and spreads awareness around abortion as medical care.

The Roots of Reproductive Justice project is creating a digital toolkit that places the history of U.S. organizing for sexual freedom and reproductive health and rights in activists' hands. The project sees history as a strategy for movement building. The forthcoming website, *Roots of RJ: 500 Years of Movement Stories*, features low-income, queer, and Indigenous people and women of color struggling for bodily autonomy as they organize around many issues, including colonization and sovereignty; poverty and immigration; adoption and foster care; sexual violence and gender criminalization; disability and environment; as well as contraception, abortion, and sterilization. The interactive site will invite users to weave their own community histories and personal experiences into the emerging narrative.





Black Women for Wellness (BW4W) is doing profound work creating self-authored and positive narratives about young Black folx and their body image. BW4W promotes educating and advocating for Black women, girls, and young people's health and wellness. BW4W staff, Lonnell Schuler and Miyana Evans, led a workshop titled "Black Body Culture: A Discussion on Body Image," which was based on their sex education program "**Get Smart B4U Get Sexy**." It centered on talking about the need for the Black community to have a strong self-definition of positive body image. Embracing the beauty and power of Black bodies is a strategy for resistance against reproductive oppression and changing narratives.

The Healing Histories Project was created by and for BIPOC to challenge the **Medical Industrial Complex** through building solidarity and common purpose among activists, healers, medical workers, and organizers through the power of storytelling. Its interactive "**A Timeline of the Medical Industrial**

Complex" engages viewers with carefully curated stories, such as histories of medical racism and ableism, alongside critical resistance to those harms. Project organizers "generate change through research, action and building collaborative strategies & stories with BIPOC-led communities, institutions and movements organizing for dignified collective care." This project demonstrates how storytelling and standing in solidarity with each other can be used to challenge corrupt systems.

Narrative change organization **Define American** is "humanizing the immigrant narrative, one story at a time." Its **report**, "Immigration Will Destroy Us, and Other Talking Points," gives concrete ideas of how to combat disinformation and misinformation about immigrants with storytelling and narrative change. Racial justice organization **Race Forward** offers the **Butterfly Lab Narrative Design Toolkit** to sharpen your narrative and tell your story. It is based in the immigrant rights movement and is applicable beyond.

4 LIVE THE LONG GAME— BUILD LONG-TERM STRATEGIES FOR OUR LIBERATION

LENGTHEN AND STRENGTHEN OUR MEMORIES.

To paraphrase a Collective Power 2023 participant's insight, "We need longer memories to help us think beyond two- to four-year cycles of political gain. We need to be thinking in 30- to 40-year cycles or beyond, as well as thinking back that long and acknowledging, yes, we've been here."

Above, we talked about tools to help us engage in active memory work and to learn from past social justice activism, today's storytelling, and cautionary tales. How can we also begin to think forward and expand our organizing horizons to the long term?

URGE FUNDERS TO MOVE TOWARD LONG-TERM FUNDING HORIZONS. To sustain our movements, we need funding that is aligned with our forward-thinking visions and long-term needs, not short-term results. Collective Power 2023 speakers Etobssie Wako and Anne Hendrixson [invited](#) funders and others to reckon with how population control and eugenics has informed their funding practices. It is a call to reimagine equitable and just funding models that are centered on RJ priorities and BIPOC leadership. "Reimagining grantmaking calls for community informed, long-term, and trust-based funding. It requires rethinking funding practices that fragment resources."

ENVISION A POST-DOBBS REPRODUCTIVE REALITY THAT CENTERS BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, AND YOUNG PEOPLE RATHER THAN COMPROMISING OUR FUTURES FOR SHORTER-TERM GAIN. The *Dobbs* decision, which ended the federal right to abortion in the U.S., and subsequent right-wing attacks on abortion access reveal a long-term strategy to criminalize abortion. Our collective response must also be long term. One step is to learn from the cautionary tales of the past. How can our response address racism in the movement as well as disability justice issues and legacies of eugenics? How can we heal from mistakes and harms of the past? Another step is to lengthen our organizing time frames. Expanding our time horizons invites us to vision beyond the limits to the *Roe* decision. What is an inclusive future for abortion access and care in the context of community-appropriate, comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care and health care more generally?

Many are already envisioning a long-term, more inclusive future for abortion. Here we can learn from the thoughtful work of groups working to strengthen and expand visions for abortion in the context of RJ frameworks. We name a few, including those that advocate for centering Indigenous, disability justice, and LGBTQIA+ perspectives in liberatory visions: Forward Together's vision for RJ, based on a [study](#) of Indigenous communities located in New Mexico; Sins Invalid's [Reproductive justice is Disability Justice](#); a recent Ipas and Political Research Associates' report,

"From Invisible to Indispensable," which makes suggestions for how to meet the needs of bisexual and pansexual youth with comprehensive sexuality education; the Transgender Law Center's **resource** that includes TGNC people in RJ; TransLash's **"The Road From Roe: Trans Bodies, Trans Choices."** In addition, a joint statement from U.S. RJ organizations and leaders, **"Visioning New Futures for Reproductive Justice,"** looks far beyond *Roe* to liberatory futures. It endorses the Indigenous **Land Back movement**, which supports Indigenous reclamation of lands taken through colonization. The statement also endorses abolition and an "end to police, prisons, family surveillance, and detention centers which are designed to harm Black and Brown bodies and break up our families."

IMMERSE OUR EFFORTS IN FRAMEWORKS, LIKE HEALING JUSTICE, THAT CULTIVATE ACTIVIST LONGEVITY. We can organize in ways that support and nurture us. Healing justice frameworks offer pathways to community care. **Transformative justice** practices can help us to hold one another accountable within the RJ movement and sustain movement spaces that seek to address and resolve conflict without causing more harm. As one Collective Power 2023 participant suggested, we need to make "sure that we're moving as if we know that people are not disposable, and that we need people in the movement to stay and to be more comfortable being in principled struggle with each other."

REIMAGINE THE MEASURES OF SUCCESS TO ALIGN WITH SOCIAL-JUSTICE VALUES. For decades, BIPOC feminist researchers have led efforts to center liberatory research methodologies that **"inherently challenge mainstream constructions of knowledge, ideologies, and interpretations of the world."** Funders can invest in those voices that are critically evaluating status quo metrics.

EMBRACE ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE JUSTICE GOALS AS CORE TO RJ VISIONS.

Long-term RJ visions and strategies will be stronger when fully conceptualized in the context of environmental challenges. Climate change is harming reproductive health by **worsening pregnancy outcomes**, disrupting health care provision, causing unhealthy heat waves and flooding, and stressing us out. Aligning with environmental and climate justice activists on systems change will strengthen our priorities, alliances, and impact.

"The Racism that Upends the Cradle" is a great example of how to integrate RJ concerns in a larger social justice frame. The report calls for systems change through a radical racial, environmental, and RJ lens. It traces 25 ways that historic and current inequalities have harmed Black children. Co-authors Jacqui Patterson and Nsedu Obot Witherspoon build from this analysis of harm to advance a platform for systems change that will advance health and healing. They include calls to transform energy systems, support local food systems, ensure access to clean water, and support transportation justice.

Systemic change can upend mainstream views of reproductive health and the environment, which promote contraception to lower population growth rates and as a win-win-win for women's empowerment, economic growth, and environmental sustainability. In contrast, **transformative feminist approaches** can "decouple fertility from ideas about progress and development. and understands the dangers of instrumentalizing BIPOC fertility to achieve other aims."

STRATEGIES AND VISIONS FOR CHANGE

1 UPROOT WHITE SUPREMACISM, URGENCY, AND CRISIS

- Make time to slow down and find shared understanding and strategies for our overlapping oppressions.
- Open possibilities for creativity and slow-moving relational perspectives and connections.
- Keep these dialogues going in person and virtually as a movement priority.
- Engage with liberatory frameworks like [Healing Justice](#).
- Face white supremacy, urgency, and crisis in our thinking and action.

2 CREATE COLLECTIVELY

- Redefine safety and security in the interest of queer, trans, and BIPOC.
- Uphold those targeted by hate rhetoric and actions.
- Protect queer and trans people and cultivate queer spaces.
- Use online resources to identify potential threats.
- Challenge anti-trans, anti-abortion propaganda.
- Uplift Indigenous RJ priorities.
- Exercise our creativity collectively.

3 SHARE OUR STORIES

- Promote humanizing narratives to combat disinformation.
- Counter dehumanizing stigma and broaden our visibility.
- Learn from and share excellent work of the organizations mentioned on pages 18 and 19.

4 LIVE THE LONG GAME: BUILDING LONG-TERM STRATEGIES FOR OUR LIBERATION

- Lengthen and strengthen our memories beyond short-term political election cycles.
- Reorient funding to focus on forward-thinking visions and long-term needs.
- Envision a post-*Dobbs* reproductive reality that centers BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and young people.
- Engage with frameworks that cultivate activist longevity.
- Reimagine the measures of success in grant-making.
- Embrace environmental and climate justice strategies and goals as core to reproductive justice visions.

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