



## SPRING 2022

### *Letter from the Director*

#### **D**ear Feminist Community,

The 2022 Gensler Symposium revolved around reproductive justice. As we listened to our speakers Loretta Ross, Carrie N. Baker, and Roslyn Banish (see articles about their talks in this issue), we did not assume that a reversal of *Roe v. Wade* would be so imminent. It's been two weeks since Supreme Court Justice Sam Alito's draft opinion that would make abortion as state matter rather than a constitutional issue was published by Politico on May 2, 2022. This blatant violation of people's bodily autonomy has sent thousands of advocates for reproductive justice into the streets. Two of our faculty members, GSFS professors Carly Thomsen (together with co-authors Carrie N. Baker and Zach Levitt) and Laurie Essig, have published their research and opinions in the *New York Times* and *Ms. Magazine*, attesting to the pernicious and deceitful behaviors of crisis pregnancy centers and the patriarchal roots of opposition to abortion. GSFS student Meg Farley '24, together with Ev Berger-Wolf '23, Bess Gramling '23, Daleelah Saleh '23, and Nadia Hare '25, organized a protest aligned with the Reproductive Freedom (RF) coalition of 20+ colleges to hold space for the five decades of legacy of *Roe v. Wade* (coverage here).

It's in time like these that we need to draw on our inner resources and replenish them. One way to do this is in community. On May 13, 2022, the Feminist of the Year

Awards, a time-honored tradition since 1994, brought together many nominees who had done amazing work over the last year on May 13, 2022. Victoria Luksch won the staff prize. Ever since joining the GSFS team as a coordinator, Victoria has gone above and beyond to help create feminist community on campus by supporting students, staff, and faculty alike, a particularly difficult task during the pandemic. Mez Baker-Medard (Environmental Studies) and Tanya Byker (Economics) garnered the award in the faculty category. Professor Baker-Medard was lauded for providing students with the knowledge to dismantle sexist, racist, and homophobic structures of oppression through an environmental justice lens in classes such as "Gender Health Environment," "Transnational Feminist Conservation," and "Environmental Intimacies, Injustice and the Politics of Care." Most recently, she has also been connecting the topic of reproductive justice to environmental themes in her classes. In her scholarship, Professor Byker focuses on how family leave policies shape labor participation, thus emphasizing the importance of gender to the economy. Serving on the Resources Committee of the American Association of University Professors, Professor Byker has fought for basic feminist causes such as fair wages, not using the pandemic as an excuse to gut employee compensation, but rather

advocating for a cost-of-living adjustment for all employees at Middlebury. Caring about the relationship between structure and individual, economy and gender is at the heart of feminist work.

The board of the student organization Womxn of Color (WOC)—Tanya Chen '24, Olivia Dixon '24, Camila Martinez-Diaz '22, Jarlenys Mendez '23, Samia Sami '24, and Crystal Zhou '24—received the student award. They have been amazing in creating community and providing a place of self-care and self-expression for WOC on this campus. Their biweekly meetings have been very well thought through—folks have been able to talk about topics that concern them and reflect on their lives at a PWI. They were also able to continue the time-honored traditions of the Black Pearl Ball and the WOC Gallery that demonstrate to the wider campus community that WOC are a force to be reckoned with at Middlebury. Rose Evans '22.5 and Elise Morris '22.5 also garnered the student prize for re-launching the

sexual violence speak-out “It Happens Here” after a pandemic hiatus. They planned the event with great intentionality and provided a space for witnessing, for art, for healing, for safety, and for voices and stories to be heard and validated. They used their feminist and queer theoretical knowledge to inform their decisions and goals.

Other nominees included Professor Kristy Bright (Anthropology) and students Melanie Chow '22, Julia Goydan '22, Kate Hyde '22.5, Ella Jones '24, Kyra McNerney '24, Madison Middleton '22, Lu Mila '25, Andrés Oyaga '24, Halsey Smith '23, and Nick Wagg '22. Please congratulate all the nominees and winners when you see them!

**Karin Hanta**  
**Director of the Feminist Resource Center at**  
**Chellis House**



**The Winners of Feminist of the Year, (from left to right) Mez Baker Medard, Crystal Zhou, Camila Martinez-Diaz, Tanya Byker, Elise Morris, and Rose Evans**

# BRING ON THE FEMINIST JOY!

By Mei Dwyer-Frattalone '24

During the first week of April 2022, Catharine Wright's "Feminist Joy" class collaborated with guest artist Maree ReMalia. Together with staff and faculty from the Middlebury Dance Program and the Art Museum, students considered connections between somatic based healing and pleasure activism based on what they had learned from contemporary queer Black feminist thinkers and other forms of feminist scholarship. Through interactive events on April 8 in the Atrium of the Mahaney Center of the Arts, the community was

invited to explore ways of researching joy in/ and feminist interventions through the arts. After introductory movement exercises, students led activities such as writing and reflection, drawing and collage-making. The idea was to channel joy... for ALL bodies. The event acknowledged that activism efforts can be draining. Therefore, the class offered two workshops to promote rest:

a guided mindfulness sessions and a comfortable napping area.

The event ended with a reflective group exercise in which each individual in the circle chose one word to describe how they felt after the event and express this feeling through a movement.

Common words included "peaceful," "open," "centered," and "grounded." These were appropriate, given that the event aimed at meeting each participant where they were at and providing them with the tools to reflect and express their experiences through the lens of feminist joy.

Maree

Remalia's residency was sponsored by the Mahaney Arts Center; the Program in Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies; the Art Gensler Fund; the Middlebury Dance Program; the Middlebury College Museum of Art; and the Axinn Center Public Humanities Lab Initiative.



The event in the Mahaney Art Center

# ALISON FRAKER PRIZE

By Ellie Broeren '22

Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies students, faculty, and staff gathered at Chellis House on March 8th, 2022, International Women's Day, to celebrate the Fraker Prize nominees and recipients.

The Fraker Prize is awarded by the Program in Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies to the best paper or project written or designed in the field.

Rose Evans won first prize for her research and writing on transformative justice and community accountability in Carly Thomsen's "Feminist Engaged Research" class. She will bring these topics into conversation with support groups in her thesis through both critical and creative components.

The play centered on sexual assault support groups. Kamari Williams, Ellie Broeren,

Mia Pangasnan, and Eva Stanley received second prize for their game "Motherhood,"

which focuses on how race, class, sexuality, and education affect motherhood and the ability to parent.

This game was developed for Carly Thomsen's "Politics of Reproduction"

class. Other nominated projects included Christian Kummer's paper "The Preservation of White Dominance through Gay Porn and Grindr Culture," Olivia Rieur's zine "Whither Gender," Sophie Schmidt's paper "Reading Disco Demolition Night as a Spectacle Lynching," Emma Wheeler's zine "Sex and Gender in Emergency Medicine: Creation and Maintenance of the Binary," and Mira Vance's paper "He Will Make You Sikh."

Congratulations to all!



**Top (left to right):** Ellie Broeren, Kamari Williams, Mia Pangasnan, Emma Wheeler, Sophie Schmidt, Olivia Rieur, and Rose Evans, **Left:** First and Second Prize Recipients, **Right:** First Prize Recipient Rose Evans with Interim GSFS Chair Catharine Wright

# A Tradition: Gottshall Performs Her Poetry

On March 16, Karin Gottshall, Associate Professor of English, resumed a time-honored tradition: her reading for the Feminist Resource Center at Chellis House on her birthday in celebration of women's

history month.

Even though Chellis House was too small to host the masked crowd, the Abernethy Room provided a welcoming frame for this event. Professor Gottshall read with her typical

cadence that transports listeners to a state of trance where images and scenes float by like in a dream.

Below is her poem "More Lies," a long-time audience favorite:

*Sometimes I say I'm going to  
meet my sister at the café—  
even though I have no sister—  
just because it's such  
a beautiful thing to say. I've  
always thought so, ever since*

*I read a novel in which two  
sisters were constantly  
meeting  
in cafés. Today, for example, I  
walked alone  
on the wet sidewalk, wearing  
my rain boots, expecting*

*someone might ask where I  
was headed. I bought  
a steno pad and a watch  
battery, the store windows  
fogged up. Rain in April is a  
kind of promise, and it costs*



*nothing. I carried a bag of  
books to the café and ordered  
tea. I like a place that's lit by  
lamps. I like a place  
where you can hear people  
talk about small things,*

*like the difference between  
azure and cerulean,  
and the price of tulips. It's  
going down. I watched  
someone who could be my  
sister walk in, shaking the  
rain*

*from her hair. I thought, even  
now florists are filling  
their coolers with tulips, five  
dollars a bundle. All over  
the city there are sisters. Any  
one of them could be mine.*



**Above: Karin Gottshall,  
Left: Her reading in the  
Axinn Abernethy Room**

# The Gods Enjoy LP at a Theatre in Montreal

By Catharine Wright

*"I'll never go to heaven  
'cause I don't know how"*

*L.P.*

*Bacchus and Aphrodite have  
been quarreling and now he  
snores in a queen size bed.  
They have come to this  
northern city to hear  
the minor goddess Callisto  
who, on overcast nights, parks  
the Ursa Major and inhabits  
the body of LP,  
the hot queer singer with a ship  
tattooed on her chest.*

*Bacchus loved the wine at the  
concert, clear  
plastic cups that people lined  
up to buy and sip back in  
standing room only. But  
Aphrodite focused on the lift of  
LP's lip and sweep of her hand  
over sections of the audience.  
It had been years since she and  
Callisto last met by water in  
the South.*

*Callisto played it cool, as  
neither goddess wanted  
things to get sloppy, planned to  
keep Bacchus'  
thyrsus tucked in his vest  
pocket. Once he  
passed out they would meet on  
a balcony somewhere.  
But Bacchus felt something to  
his left when LP sang  
raise a glass or two. It was  
Aphrodite, blowing a  
kiss over the human crowd. It  
hit the stage,*

*the lights burst, and LP's  
guitar went dead.*

*Callisto pulled out LP's  
harmonica fast on the old  
wood stage, molding restored  
like a gilded anniversary  
cake and the humans got quiet.  
They were scared  
of other people in the dark but  
then felt  
felt bear breath on their skin.*

*Aphrodite took the chance  
quick to leap to the  
stage and run a hand over LP's  
ship. She flashed  
her mirror at the audience who  
glimpsed their own minds in  
the half dark. Jealous,  
Bacchus stormed the bar to  
hand out free  
glasses of wine, which gave  
Aphro and Calli time  
for a quickie under the  
harmonica's moans.*

*By the time LP returned to her  
senses, she was  
on the encore, the moon had  
come out, and  
Ursa Major was bright. People  
growled when the show ended,  
scratched their chests,  
the hall smelled like fermented  
dandelions and damp fur. They  
stampeded back stage  
but only dressing room lights  
winked beside the mirrors.*

*Aphro and Bacchus by then had  
locked their hotel*

*door, and Bacchus confessed  
his love for LP and her ship.  
Aphrodite said sharply that  
ships were symbols of slavery,  
death  
and rape, and women's breasts  
bore the brunt  
of the prow.*

*Bacchus poured more wine.  
Aphrodite disappeared in the  
bathroom.*

*Outside, the concert goers felt  
strangely alive and  
sex ran through the city raw  
and humping.  
A grizzly bear escaped from the  
zoo and one man  
was sent to the hospital for  
claw marks.*

*Aphrodite and Bacchus argued  
about  
why there was still war on  
earth  
even after the Pantheon pulled  
out, what combination  
of wine and love was best for  
humans, and whether the  
gods' protest for climate justice  
was having an effect.  
Halfway through his point  
about food equity Bacchus fell  
asleep,  
and Aphrodite slipped out on  
the balcony.*

*There she raised her glass to  
Callisto.  
Callisto sent back a shooting  
star.*

# LESLIE SMITH READS FROM HER MEMOIR *SPITFIRE*

By Mei Dwyer-Frattalone '24

On March 10th, 2022, Leslie Smith revealed excerpts from her upcoming memoir, *Spitfire*. She began the reading with an interactive prompt for the audience: close your hand into a fist. After demonstrating this, Smith then instructed everyone to quickly open their fists and stretch their fingers wide. The audience promptly did so and waited in silence as Smith, her fingers still slowly unfurling, patiently watched herself complete the same task in double the time. This set the stage for what she would highlight: living with myotonic muscular dystrophy and writing to heal.

In one of the passages Smith chose to read, she described her love of high heels that was far from superficial. Wearing high heels was a way for Smith to express her femininity; dressy heels were symbolic fashion pieces that she wore with confidence. As she lost her ability to walk in high heels, she suffered a significant loss in her life. Heavy grief is a human experience, and Smith has successfully drawn upon this aspect of humanity to create connection and empathy. She describes her experiences with denial and anger as stages of grief, which we can all relate to. Smith has surely accomplished her goal to reach others with her story, even though her book has yet to be published.

Smith isn't afraid to share personal anecdotes about how her diagnosis of myotonic muscular dystrophy has shaped her identity as a tennis athlete. However, her passion for the



Leslie Smith

sport has remained unwavering throughout. That is why she is competing in wheelchair tennis on a national level. This is consistent with her dismissal of a childhood wish to be a boy; over time, she realized she wanted to beat the boys.

Her word of choice: badass.

The title of her memoir appropriately describes her determined persona since being nicknamed “spitfire” in the hospital shortly after birth with a 50% chance of survival. Smith has surely fought hard, living up to her nickname, and her writing serves to further showcase her strength.

To end the event, Smith left the audience with fitting lyrics from Rachel Platten:

*This is my fight song  
Take back my life song  
Prove I’m alright song  
My power’s turned on  
Starting right now I’ll be strong  
I’ll play my fight song  
And I don’t really care if nobody else believes  
’Cause I’ve still got a lot of fight left in me*

Leslie Smith leads the way for us all in terms of honesty and ingenuity. She is a dedicated, independent woman with the strength to be vulnerable.



Above: A Photo from the Event

# An Excerpt from *SPITFIRE*

I was moving the clothes from the washer to the dryer in the basement of my mother's house when I felt a wave of dizziness crest over me. Had I stayed in bed too long? Was it the Diet Coke I'd been drinking? Maybe I hadn't eaten enough? Or perhaps this was just me not feeling well and getting dizzy, as I sometimes do. Typically, when this happened, my response was to wait it out. But this didn't feel like ordinary light-headedness. It was far more intense.

I'd been advised to sit down if I ever felt woozy. I sank to the floor, blackness closing in around me. The next thing I knew, a freight train was heading straight towards me, headlight blinding in the pitch dark. Then I felt a powerful jolt to my body, strong enough to jerk me back to consciousness. I could feel the cold concrete floor beneath me, and as I opened my eyes, I could see the side of the washing machine. I was lying on my side, but why? I recalled feeling dizzy and then the freight train. Now what I felt was panic. What had just happened to me? A sudden pain in my chest told me everything I needed to know. My defibrillator had just fired. The first call I made was to my

husband. Please come, I begged him through my tears. The next call was to my mother, who was currently three thousand miles away in California with my dad and brother and not scheduled to return for at least two months. I'd barely finished telling my mother what happened before she'd gone into what I'd come to think of as her "rallying the troops" mode. The minute we were off the phone, she phoned my godmother and asked her to accompany my husband, then called a neighbor to come and sit with me while the others were on their way.

"Are you sitting down?" my mother asked when she called back a few minutes later to share all of this information with me.

"I had to get up to answer the phone," I said, reminding her that the antiquated rotary phone that she'd just called me on was obviously not cordless.

While I was feeling a little better—enough to express my irritation with my mother—I was still freaked out about what had just happened. My defibrillator had fired once before but it hadn't been anything like this. Fortunately when Rob arrived, he'd brought not just my godmother but

my portable heart monitor. That meant that I could send a transmission to my cardiologist who could then read the activity on my defibrillator.

After checking in with my doctors in Vermont and at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, I was given the choice of heading directly to the hospital or waiting until the morning. In the meantime, the on-call doctor took a look at the transmission and put a name to what had happened to me: ventricular tachycardia. It's a kind of arrhythmia that will kill you in a few short moments if you don't have an ICD, otherwise known as an implantable cardioverter-defibrillator. It was the arrhythmia that had caused me to pass out, the firing of the ICD then jolting me back to consciousness. The doctor assured us that it was fine for me to stay home, but if this happened again, we'd have to call 911 to transport me to the hospital. Since it was Sunday

night, I overruled my assisting entourage and voted to just go home. Rob and I drove directly there. I made it out of the car and up the stairs to our front door when that same feeling of intense dizziness washed over me. I sunk to the porch.

"Leslie! Leslie!" Rob was shouting my name. When he saw me slumped against the front door, he thought I was dead. He'd later tell me that of all we've been through together, this was by far the saddest,

scariest time of all.

Lost to the black fog of unconsciousness, I couldn't hear him. I had no idea where I was, just that the same awful, blinding headlight of the train was back. Racing towards me out of the darkness, it was shining directly at me and getting closer by the second. People who've had near death experiences often talk about "seeing the light"—a heavenly glow that makes them feel warm, safe and protected. This

light was nothing like that.

Instead of feeling blissful, I was immobilized by stark terror and a sense of impending doom.

Unable to speak or move, and with no knowledge of what was happening around me, all I could do was lie there as the train bore down on me.

As I struggled back to consciousness, I managed to choke out a single word, more moan than speech. The word was "Mama."

# BODY PROJECT 1ST POEM

By Samia Sami '24

Your universe needs you here.  
You breathe air on the face of Earth  
where your lungs have evolved to do so;  
Your ancestors were hairy and dark yet look!  
You are right here right now because of their  
success from long ago.  
Your eyes receive light that has traveled for years  
and years--  
Bouncing off of so many broken stars that are  
larger than you can ever think of.  
This is all just so they can take a small rest in the  
back of your head,  
while you think you must hide these same eyes  
cause of some silly dark circles?  
Your legs have taken you through 26.1 miles of  
the journey  
and so many others that were never counted for  
But you say "Shit! I wish my legs were skinny!"  
Your hair, though thinning, flows straight like the  
Ganga river  
that is worshipped by so many.  
But you say "Damn, why isn't my hair thick and  
shiny?"  
Your waist is too big. Your arms are too flabby.  
You cry too much when your cousin calls you a  
fatty.

Samia, you are not how you are because you  
wanted to be but you needed to be.  
Although minuscule to the point of  
unimaginable,  
The universe needed you here,  
With all the rolls of fat on your back to the funny-  
looking hump on your neck  
The universe needs you here.  
Take up space and make all these aliens in your  
universe cry in rage  
Let the people say what they say because they are  
not the universe that you live in.  
Your body is your universe  
and oh Samia! Understand,  
Your universe needs you here.  
I need you here with me!  
Our universe calls for us so why not answer?  
Live like the owners of this body and not a mere  
guest who hates the bedsheet.  
Live like the owners of this universe and think  
I look the way I look because that's just how I was  
meant to be.  
Because you know what?  
The universe will always love you here just the  
way you've always been

# Reproductive Justice NOW!

By Ellie Broeren '22

On Thursday, April 21, Professors Loretta J. Ross and Carrie N. Baker delivered the keynote addresses for the 2022 Gensler Symposium. Dr. Carly Thomsen (GSFS) facilitated the conversation.

A professor at Smith College, Loretta Ross is one of the founders of SisterSong, an organization focused on strengthening and amplifying the collective voices of indigenous women and women of color to achieve reproductive justice by eradicating reproductive oppression and securing human rights. A regular contributor to *Ms. Magazine* and Middlebury parent, Dr. Baker is the Sylvia Dlugasch Bauman Chair of American Studies, and Professor of the Study of Women and Gender at Smith College.

At the onset of this conversation, Dr. Ross gave a brief overview of the history of

reproductive justice. In June of 1994, Ross was one of 12 Black women who started the reproductive justice movement when they spliced the two concepts of “reproductive rights” and “social

justice” to foster a new way of thinking about the debate. In 1997, SisterSong was created to promote reproductive justice by and for women of color. Professor Ross further explained that even though the women who created SisterSong held both pro-life and pro-choice

views, they all agreed on the concepts of bodily autonomy and self determination.

Professor Ross then defined the four tenets of reproductive justice. The first one is that social justice must be included in the conversation about reproductive rights. The second is the right to have a child. This also includes the right



Dr. Carrie Baker and Dr. Loretta Ross

to a doula or midwife, the right to reject unnecessary c-sections and other medical interventions. The third element is that reproductive justice goes beyond birth, and also includes the human rights to food, shelter, education, and health care. The fourth tenet of reproductive justice is the right to sexual identity and sexual pleasure.

After this overview, Dr. Baker discussed abortion and birth in a post-Roe v. Wade United States. To illustrate her points, she showed statistics on the rapid rise of abortion restrictions after the election of President Obama. She argued that this was a way for specifically white Republicans to rally around a conservative issue. She subsequently discussed Trump's Supreme Court justice appointees, and how

SCOTUS composition has skewed the court towards being much more conservative and anti-abortion. In 2021, 19 states enacted abortion restrictions. If the Supreme Court overturns Roe v. Wade, 26 states will certainly ban abortion. This leaves many asking: What did the United States look like before Roe? And what will it look like if Roe is overturned?

Dr. Baker explained that in pre-Roe America, hospital emergency rooms were filled with women suffering abortion complications. In a post-Roe nation, abortion pills will be available, but heavily restricted. For example, during the pandemic, the FDA lifted all restrictions for people to only receive drugs in-person, yet did not extend this regulation to the abortion pills mifepristone and misoprostol. However, the FDA permanently lifted some restrictions on abortion pills, allowing for virtual clinics across the country. Dr. Baker then highlighted Plan C,



The screening of the event in the Robert A. Jones Conference Room

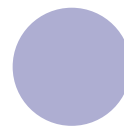
a network of veteran public health advocates, researchers, social justice activists and digital strategists dedicated to providing options for ending early pregnancy to those who need it.

Another resource is Dutch doctor Rebecca Gomperts, who started the nonprofit organization Aid Access to provide pregnant people in the U.S. with abortion pills to manage their abortions. While organization like these have made great strides in increasing access to abortion, abortions are still being more greatly restricted in some states. Dr. Baker mentioned that so far, three states have criminalized self-managed abortions. Though abortion pills are very safe medically, they may become legally unsafe. However, pregnant people's actions have always been policed—in instances where they use prescription drugs or smoke, for example. In addition, some states are trying to give rights to fetuses, which reduces pregnant people to “hosts” and takes away their rights. Dr. Baker finished this section of the conversation by discussing Crisis Pregnancy Centers (CPCs). According to Dr. Baker, CPCs often misinform pregnant people and try to delay care to discourage or prevent pregnant people from getting abortions. Dr. Baker argues CPCs are the eyes and ears of the anti-abortion movement and are incredibly dangerous.

To finish the conversation, Professor

Ross discussed the concept of reproductive futurism, which she defines as a Black feminist theory of reproductive science and technology that prioritizes Black women's reproductive experiences. She then went into a deeper discussion of reproductive technologies, and asked whether we are performing essentialism when we favor the reproduction of our own DNA. Professor Ross then discussed how infertility is also a greater issue in communities of color. She raised the question of whether we can exploit other people through surrogacy if there is a human right to have a child. Professor Ross then argued that scientific and technological developments will increase social inequalities.

Professor Ross then outlined key reproductive justice futurist questions: How will applying the principles of reproductive justice differ in the near future? Since reproductive justice is based on a human rights framework, how will porous borders affect the implementation of this system? Since neoliberal capitalism is in crisis, what different philosophical or economic theories should be considered for moving forward? How will white supremacist regimes try to protect their supremacy as people of color will constitute the majority in the U.S.? Working to answer these questions is at the core of reproductive justice futurism.



# VISUALIZING ABORTION

## Roslyn Banish's photographic exhibition

By Halsey Smith '23

On April 18, 2022, photographer Roslyn Banish spoke about her photography exhibit "Focus on Abortion: Americans Share Their Stories," which was presented for a week in the Davis Family Library. This collection can also be viewed in book format by the same title which includes even more photographs than were shown in the exhibition and very powerful accompanying texts.

The 2016 election made Banish feel like this project was more needed than ever. Prior to this project, she also photographed a series on people living with HIV/AIDS. "I really believe that a photograph in conjunction with a person's words can convey, to some degree, who that person is," Banish said.

She hopes that viewers will feel empathy and learn more about the issue of abortion and that they will learn more about the people who choose to have abortions.

By specifically including the word abortion in the title, the exhibit centers the narrative on the actual issue.

"The first title was 'My Decision Project,'" Banish said.

However, she realized that a vague title drew the focus



**Above: Roslyn Banish,  
Next page: Photos from Exhibition**

away from the individuals' stories. Including the word "abortion" was "in the spirit of the project. I want people to be open, to be out there, to say out loud, 'I had an abortion.'" Banish said.

"I started with people I knew and the project grew

from there. I subsequently interviewed and photographed random people who showed interest in the project."

While collecting materials for the exhibit, Roslyn Banish needed to meet individuals in a quiet, private space. Even this seemingly simple request proved to be difficult.

In order to travel lightly and make her subjects comfortable, she used a small camera and mostly natural light for her photos.

Although Banish acknowledged that many people prefer to smile when their photo is taken, because of the seriousness of the subject, she often asked her subjects not to smile. She felt that the process was extremely gratifying for both her and her subjects. It

was a moment for everyone to reflect. Banish said she could have continued this project for years, but she felt the world was ready for its release in 2019. "I just wanted to put a human connection to abortion," Banish said. "There is an amazing story for each one of them."

Recording for the event here:  
<https://vimeo.com/703346473>



# Liz Kinnamon: Feminist Consciousness Raising

a practice of freedom both now and then

By Halsey Smith '23

Liz Kinnamon, a PhD candidate in the Gender and Women's Studies department at the University of Arizona, spoke to Professors Joyce Mao and Lana Povitz's "American Freedom" class on April 8, 2022. Kinnamon is analyzing the historical concept of feminist consciousness raising as a practice of freedom.

They posed the following question: Can feminist consciousness raising exist in our era of social media?

By analyzing how feminist consciousness raising occurred throughout history, they concluded that being in the same space and sharing stories was essential to consciousness raising sessions.

When people use



**Above: Liz Kinnamon, University of Arizona**

social media, they are often alone, thereby speaking into a sometimes-ignorant void. This bothered Kinnamon. Throughout history,

consciousness raising was an "embodied practice" and a "nice way of being together," Kinnamon said.

It was a time where women could produce and "pool data to develop theories" and discuss "how oppression was operating in their lives."

In this way, these women "took subjective information and made objective theory," Kinnamon said.

It is the power in togetherness that ignites the feelings of obligation to and accountability for other people.

According to Kinnamon, we can apply lessons from traditional consciousness raising efforts to our activism today.

This in turn may help contemporary feminist activists develop similar tools.