

(silence)

(music, brass and funk)

(fast paced, energetic music)

(music fades out)

MARIA ANGELICA: (speaking in Spanish)

Good evening. I will first do this
introduction in Spanish, and then in
English. (speaking in Spanish)

Good afternoon, or good evening. My
name is Maria Angelica. My pronouns are she
and they. And this evening, my colleague
Flavia and I are providing English to
Spanish interpretation services, and also
acknowledging our colleagues Krystal and
Marina who are providing ASL interpretation.
This is to provide access to the space in
the ways we prefer to communicate.

So today, everything will be in

English. And you can activate the Zoom interpretation Spanish if you would like to listen to Spanish, if you are able to, in this way. In the bottom right hand corner of your Zoom screen if you are connecting from your computer, you can click on the globe that says "interpretation." There you choose the language that you prefer, and that is all. Now, if you're joining us from your phone and you want to listen in Spanish if you can, it's a little bit different. When you have your Zoom meeting open on your phone, please tap your phone screen at the bottom right hand corner. There is three little dots that say "more." Please tap on the dots, choose language interpretation, the language that you prefer, and at the top right tap "done."

I'm gonna drop these instructions in the chat so you may have them for your reference. And if you have any questions or any challenges with your interpretation, please let us know in the chat and we'll be happy to support you. Thank you. Gracias.

ADAKU UTAH: Thank you so much, Flavia, Marina, Krystal, and Maria, for grounding us in language justice and making this space for accessible. This is part of the work.

Good evening, y'all. Good afternoon, depending on where you are. It is so incredible to have you all here. Thank you for making spaciousness in the midst of so much that's pulling our attention right now. My name is Adaku Utah. I use all pronouns. I am currently beaming to you from Lenape land, also known as Brooklyn, New York,

which is a colonizer name. And I have the sacred honor of being the organizing director at the National Network of Abortion Funds, where we get to build power with our members shout out to the members that are up in this space removing logistical and economical barriers that get in the way of folks getting access to abortion. And we do that also by organizing at the intersections of racial, economic, and reproductive justice.

I am a dark skinned Black Nigerian femme. I'm wearing awkward glasses, a black and gold hat, a jacket that has multiple colors including red, a zebra ish print color. I have a septum gold ring, and there's a beautiful library of books behind me, as well as my plant comrades all around

in the back as well.

In addition to language justice, I wanted to share a couple of the other accessibility offerings that we have in this space. As Marina's offered, we also have live captioning. The chat function is also on. To honor our safety, the safety of the folks in this space, you can only chat to the cohosts and the hosts. So we will be taking in your feedback, your reflections, your questions; send them our way. And you can also share in the question and answer feature that's on the bottom.

This space will be recorded, and we're going to be sending the recording out to equal post this, this space, so you can use it in your own community spaces with your families, in your homes.

And I wanna give a big shout out to our access team again for all the behind the scenes work in co shaping this space. And my collaborators from Interrupting Criminalization, Andrea Ritchie and Maria Thomas. It has been a joy to work with y'all on this.

So, we want to name and acknowledge that talking about criminalization, being inside of a world where so many of us myself included who have siblings, family members, loved ones, who are impacted by policing and criminalization, being in a space where we're having this conversation can bring up all kinds of things. We welcome all the feelings here. They make a lot of sense: the anger, the rage, the grief. And, we wanna invite you to, ah, be

kind and compassionate, with yourself.

Extend the care that you might need to move through this space. So whether that is grabbing water or food or a furry animal.

If you need to lay down, please do so. Um.

If you need to be with nature, please do so.

There is also a really incredible self care and resource guide. Shout out to the New York Transformative Justice Hub. That has a bunch of really incredible activities, grounding practices, things that you can do to nourish and support your body, as... we move through this space. And afterwards! So feel free to take a peek and use them as you need.

And obviously, there are things that your body knows as well that you can tap into; please listen to them and move through

with them, as... as you need.

So, y'all! We are about to embark on a conversation that is futuristic. We are deeply invested in creating and practicing worlds that are free from policing, surveillance, and punishment. And we know that in order for us to be able to build these worlds, we need to have deeper solidarity across our movements. We know that the collective strategies that we need need to match what we're collectively facing right now. And so, we're hoping that this conversation helps to draw really necessary connections between abortion access, reproductive justice, and movements to... to end criminalization and police violence. So wherever you are, across the kaleidoscope of movements, you are welcome here. We all

have so much to learn around how to be in
deeper relationship with one another.

Before we begin, I wanna offer
Andrea and I are gonna be offering some
context, because this work has roots. And
we wanna ground in where this, this work
stems from, and also give reverence to the
ancestors and transcestors and the land.
Folks or elders who have shaped the work
that we've been doing for years? And also
the work that we are gonna be talking about
today.

If you have reverence or grounding
practices that you do, I invite you to do
that as well. If you need to take a breath;
be by your altar; offer thank you! To the
folks who have shaped your own lineage,
whether blood or chosen in this work; please

do so.

I want to start out by giving thanks, y'all, to the twelve Black women who came together in 1994. Folks like Terri James, Bisola Maringay, Toni M. Bond Leonard, Lorretta Ross. These women said hell to the fucking no to Clinton's reform, and they were bold and precise about the theory and praxis of reproductive justice, which is the human right to bodily autonomy without coercion and violence from the state. Reproductive justice also welcomes us to create the families and kin that we need to survive, now and into the future. It celebrates and honors how we're able to prevent or end pregnancies with dignity, safety, and respect. Whether you're choosing to parent or not, reproductive

justice makes sure that you have abundant care and support wrapped around you. AND, through movement building and building power, really making sure that we're cocreating the necessary ecosystems to support our folks in whatever communities they choose to.

And even before our foreparents who cultivated this language around reproductive justice, there are so many folks who have been organizing even before that to support our reproductive freedom. I wanna give a shout out to the Welfare Warriors who came together in 1986 to organize for reproductive justice for folks and children who were living in poverty. I want to give reverence to the Young Lords, y'all, who took over the Lincoln Hospital in the

Bronx. Shout out to the Bronx. In 1970, to make sure our people had access to care without the police. I want to give reverence to the organizers who mobilized and organized in the Atascadero State Prison in California to put a stop to over 4,000 lobotomies that were happening to queer prisoners. And can we talk about Norma Jean Serena, a trans woman of Indigenous ancestry, who issued the first challenge to sterilization making sure that our voices are heard and listened to outside of the state.

This, y'all, is the kind of organizing that won Roe v. Wade in 1973. It was not just through the courts; it was won on the streets through grassroots mobilization by Black, Indigenous, and folks of color. And

we know that while the legal right to an abortion is vital it's absolutely necessary? our people need SO much more. Our folks need and deserve more. We need recognition that the criminalization of bodily autonomy is rooted in white supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism. We need freedom from state harassment to make choices concerning our sacred bodies. We need thriving wages, y'all we need them coins! (chuckles) So that our folks can access care with dignity! And for parents who are choosing to have kids, they we, they need housing and financial support to be able to do this really incredible, hard, and important work of parenting. We also need sex positive and gender affirming sex education so folks can build loving and

safer relationships with their bodies, and
safer and consensual relationships with
other bodies.

Here at the National Network of
Abortion Funds, we continue to see how the
wages of the pandemic, racial, gender, and
reproductive injustice, and the growing
strength of authoritarianism, climate
catastrophe, and global instability all
of these things are working together to
create unnecessary obstacles to care,
especially for Black, Indigenous, and people
of color. This summer, the Supreme Court is
gonna be deciding on whether or not to
overturn Roe v. Wade. And for folks who are
like "what is that?," this law legalized
abortion in the U.S., almost 50 years ago,
as of January 22nd. And we're anticipating

a number of different decisions. So, the Supreme Court could eliminate federal protections entirely, leaving abortion access to the, to states across the country. They could strike down pre viability protections and create even more conservative federal frameworks across the nation. And regardless of the decision, we know that access to abortion, as we've been seeing, will get even more and more challenging. Right now, there are only 14 states and the District of Columbia that have laws that explicitly protect access to abortion. 22 of those states, y'all, are laws or constitutional amendments, already in place that would restrict access in Roe was overturned. So this means half, roughly half, of U.S. states could lose

access to legal abortion within the next year. So this means significant travel, increased criminalization for a lot of folks, particularly for Black, Indigenous, and people of color. And these are patterns that we've been seeing and also responding to for years.

These very same states, where abortion restrictions are increasing, are also places where voting rights for folks of color are being under attack, and have been for a while, and are producing state governments that do not represent us and what our people need right now. They're also states where funding for social service programs are being gutted leaving more of our people hungry and pushing them closer to poverty. They're places where there's the lowest

incomes in the country and highest levels of uninsured children, where contraception is also being gutted. And unfortunately, they're also places where our folks do not have enough clean water, or are experiencing dangerous storms and the impacts of climate disaster, and all kinds of environmental racism. These are places where folks who are poor are being impacted, and also the ability for land sovereignty is being taken away.

And again, these are these are not new patterns; these are patterns that we've been seeing and studying and making spaciousness for in the work that we've been doing and responding to. It is also... WHY we do the work that we do. It is why we exist; it is why a number of you exist right

now. Because we know that another world is possible. And, we are proof of that! We are proof of that; we are shaping that world right now, and into the future. We've been around for NNAF has been around for almost 30 years, and through that time, inside of this growing grassroots network, we've been connecting hundreds of thousands of people to compassionate care. And we've been making health care, abortion care, a reality outside of the state. AND also within the state. And making sure that our folks can really affirm and be inside of their, their dignity, when it comes to our bodily autonomy and sovereignty.

When our institutions and these governments fail us and they will continue to do so we... will show up.

And we've been showing up every single day.

In the absence of systemic care, we are the ones that are creating the safety, care, and security that we need.

So, let me just you know! Brag on abortion funds real quick. They are...! Taking folks across state lines! To receive the care that they need. They're banding together to raise literally millions of dollars, grassroots style! To make sure folks don't have to take out a payday loan, y'all, because insurance won't cover the procedure in some states. They are meeting folks in gas stations, to pick folks up to travel miles and miles and hours away sometimes days away, to the nearest clinic. They're opening up their homes for people who have been kicked out of their own

communities. Abortion fund leaders are translating medical information in multiple languages. They are babysitting our children! And they are... standing alongside with folks, holding their hand, letting folks know that... we got you. And that you are not alone. We're here for you.

And not only are abortion funds providing this critical support, they are also meeting gaps by organizing through movement building. Organizing around thriving wages, around abolishing ICE in hospitals and borders, around ending fatphobia in medical institutions, making sure our folks get access to gender affirming care, land sovereignty AND we're creating spaces for joy, grieving, and healing. So we're answering the call.

We know that... as as abortion barriers continue to increase over the next couple years, people are going to be... self determined! They're going to look for options to have abortion on their own terms, including self managed abortion. And for those who don't know, self managed abortion includes all of the ways that folks have ended, or have tried to end, their own pregnancies. And some of these methods look like things like herbs shout out to the plants that have been used for thousands of years. And then abortion with pills. And that's relatively new. And because there's a lot of safety and ease using pills, abortion pills have drastically changed the health implications that folks are facing right now.

In our work, we name that overregulation, antiabortion policies, legal threats, queerphobia, transphobia, classism, ableism, these are the things that put our people at risk of punishment for self managing their own abortions, and for seeking a range of outcomes. And all of these NEED to be resisted. We are committed to critiquing, to and to not just ensuring access to abortion, but normalizing it, y'all. AND creating a full range of options to safety and care.

This is the work of abolitionist futures! And, we're here for it. So more of us can be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect, be safe and be cared for. Thank you for joining us and for the work you've already been doing in this.

I'm excited to bring on Andrea to offer more context to this mix.

ANDREA RITCHIE: Ah, I don't know how much more context I have to offer, but I have a lot of gratitude and appreciation. Both for Adaku and your leadership and grounding in this moment and, you know, in every moment of crisis you know, when Trump was first elected; now that there's this rash of bills. I've seen you meet each moment with ground, and giving the rest of us ground in doing that? And also remembering that we have everything we need, and bringing joy and certainty that we will show up for each other to those moments. So I just wanted to appreciate you for that.

I'm Andrea Ritchie. I am a very light skinned Black woman, sitting in a field.

(chuckles) Where I'm gathered with some defund organizers in Southern California. I will only be able to join you for a few minutes because of that. But also, you're gonna hear from folks who are gonna break down far more than I could. But I did wanna jump on to welcome you all on behalf of Interrupting Criminalization. And to sort of share why we are... cohosting this conversation. Why we host Maria Thomas, the brilliant fellow at Interrupting Criminalization who shepherded the process of drafting the brief that we'll be talking about today. And to just name why I'm calling you from a field where defund organizers are organizing and seeing it as the same fight.

And, our goal when we cofounded

Interrupting Criminalization, that Mariame Kaba and I cofounded together in 2018, was we're not very original with the name. We wanted to interrupt... criminalization.

(laughs) And! We understand criminalization to be the process through which systems and relationships of power that we abhor and want to get rid of, uh, move! And that therefore we need to interrupt criminalization as the process of taking power away from us, of separating us from each other physically, but also in community. And also, the process by which people's bodily autonomy and self determination is taken away!

And so, we immediately saw that... that was happening, not only in the ways that we tend to think of? In terms of policing in

the streets, and the things that defund movements are focused on: police killings, police beatings. To a lesser extent, police sexual violence and other forms of police harm. But also through criminalization! Which happens when the cop you know, when you are arrested, taken out of the hospital, for something that has been a medical procedure that has been criminalized where you are. As Patel was, around self managed abortion, an accusation of self managed abortion in Indiana. But also through many other processes that don't necessarily have to do with laws per se that say that abortion is criminal, or criminalized somewhere. It's about populations who are criminalized and put behind prison walls, where or immigration detention walls,

where access to abortion is regulated by the state in ways that they're not when you're NOT behind those walls. When your conditions of probation or parole keep you from being able to access abortion care. When... you access abortion care outside the framework that the state has provided for you to do that in? And do it using plant friends, using medication, medicine that you've obtained some other way. And... and essentially criminalization is something that we want to sort of highlight as a political process. As something that is actually not about the criminal laws and whether they exist or not; it's a process of deciding who gets to exercise self determination and autonomy, and who doesn't. And that runs all the way up from self

defense, and even you know, we tend to think, well, some things, you know, are should be like killing someone, right? That's criminalized for everybody. It's not! Some people can kill in self defense. Some people can kill entire populations of people. Some people can kill... you know, with impunity, like cops. And others cannot! So it's really a process of deciding who gets to defend themselves, who gets to exercise rights of self defense, who gets to exercise autonomy. In any situation!

And, so... for us, the laws that are criminalizing abortion now are very much linked to laws that are criminalizing our people in many, many ways. Whether that's criminalization of drug use, criminalization

of accessing gender, um, and sexual health care as we're seeing in these attacks on trans youth accessing health care, and their families for providing it or enabling them to access it, across the country. For people who self manage health care through other means! Including using... um, drugs! Things that are criminalized, controlled substances.

And, so... really I want to highlight the opportunities that are available and are created by that reproductive justice frame, and the frames that Adaku highlighted, where we see, you know, access to the resources you need wages, working conditions, money, health care all of that is taken away when you're criminalized, and criminalization is a way of justifying

denying entire groups of people and individuals access to the things you need to survive. Including abortion care, and including reproductive care, and including trans health care, and including health care of all kinds, and care generally meaning access to the things we need to survive of all kinds.

And so, for us that, in some ways, really expands the opportunity beyond just thinking about whether a particular medical procedure is legal or not, and allows us to build solidarities across all the people and populations who experience criminalization and denial of humanity, reproductive, sexual, gender, economic, spiritual autonomy as a result? And to build across those coalitions. And that's what we're doing

through the Beyond Do No Harm work that looks at criminalization through access to medical care for ALL the people I named. People in the sex trade; for disabled people; for HIV positive people; for migrants. For all the people for whom seeking care! Could lead to criminalization and denial of reproductive and sexual autonomy. Including people seeking abortion care.

So... and so we know that that can happen whether there's a law or not? You can criminalize someone for... performing an abortion without a license. You can criminalize someone for "improper" disposal of remains. You can criminalize someone for getting into a fight with someone, and they shoot you, and you lose your pregnancy, and

then you get criminalized. So we wanted to really highlight that for people, which is that it's not as much about the laws as it is about the process. The laws are important; the process is even more important. And we want to find ways to jump in to disrupt the notion of criminalization as a whole, and the ways in which that contributes to this fight.

So that's, that's our sort of big picture of how we come to this conversation. Why we're thrilled to be cohosting it. And to just close by naming the abolitionist futures that Adaku described, that you all are creating! The ways in which we create networks of care for each other, around accessing abortion care or reproductive care, is the exact methodology and practice

that is how we create a world without
policing, punishment, surveillance, or
deprivation. It's by taking responsibility
for the fact that we each are responsible to
making sure that all of us have what we
need. Erin Miles Cloud of Family Power
said, you know, everyone cares about
someone's safety, sometime? Abolitionists
care about everyone's safety, ALL the time.
And that's what this is about! And abortion
care is safety. Safety includes abortion
care. And the ways in which people are
modeling creating that safety around THIS
issue can be a way of modeling the world we
want to build when we think about
abolitionist futures.

So, we're so grateful to be in
partnership and in conversation with y'all.

I'm sorry to be so rude, to like drop in and then run back to organizing over there. But I promise, I'm bringing the energy from here and the commitment to these issues and to this front of the fight against criminalization and for abolitionist futures... over there, and they are sending their love and energy to y'all, and we are gonna share the fight and be grateful for the opportunity.

ADAKU UTAH: Ugh! Andrea!! Black love. We feel that energy palpably. Thank you so much for your work, and your commitment and your partnership. I am just internally grateful to you. And please send our love and our care to your folks, too.

(soft laugh)

All right, y'all. Thank you for being

inside of that context setting and that grounding. I hope y'all are feeling, FEELING us inside of this. We are getting ready to dive in deeper into this conversation. I'm gonna pass it on to my comrade, sibling in the struggle, Maria Thomas, who's gonna be holding down this really, really rich conversation with, ah, incredible comrades. Thanks, Maria. Pass it to you.

MT: Thank you, Adaku. And thank you, Andrea, for grounding us. Just so, so grateful to be here. Thank you to everyone who has joined, and to the amazing panelists here. My name is Maria Thomas. I'm a light skinned South Asian femme, with black curly hair a little above my shoulder, and crescent shaped gold earrings. I'm sitting

in a room with purple walls and a beautiful snake plant behind me. And... I just wanna invite the panelists into the space as well, and I'll be inviting them to introduce themselves as they'd like. But we are SO grateful, and so thrilled, to have Oriaku Njoku from Access Reproductive Care Southeast; Paris Hatcher from Black Feminist Future; Erin Grant from Abortion Care Network; and Imara Jones from TransLash Media.

And I would just like to start by inviting each of our esteemed and BRILLIANT panelists to introduce yourselves, as you would like. And let's just get right into the conversation that Adaku and Andrea have set up so beautifully and powerfully for us. And if you could start by sharing a little

bit about yourself and what brings you to this work, and WHY you think it is SO critical and important to connect abortion criminalization and access to the larger fight against policing and criminalization.

So let's, let's start there. And Oriaku, if I could call on you first, perhaps.

ORIAKU NJOKU: Sure! Sure. Thank you. Hey, all. My name is Oriaku Njoku. I use she and they pronouns. Feel free to mix it up. I'm a director at Access Reproductive Care Southeast. I am wearing... a situation. No, just kidding. I'm wearing this like maroon colored dress, with a black and white window pane jacket. I've got a watch, an afro situation going on, these little drop earrings. And... yeah. I think

that's it, as far as what I look like in this moment.

So, you know. I'm really excited about this particular conversation, especially as someone working at an abortion fund? And that is for a few reasons. So, one of the reasons is, you know, we really need to acknowledge the reality that policing and criminalization of our bodies especially in Black and Brown communities is not a result of this current political moment. And we cannot continue doing this work without that acknowledgment. This is something that has been going on since the history of or, the beginning of this country? And that is something that we should absolutely acknowledge.

Also, the reality is that in this

you know, the reality of the moment that we are in right now means, you know, we essentially have to GET ready? And we have to stay ready, as abortion funds. What that means is, you know, we're entering this particular time that is full of so much uncertainty. Um. Which means that we have to prepare for various scenarios that we're coming up into. And as abortion funds, we know those with legislation like SB8 in Texas that has come out, we know that there is the possibility, as abortion funders, volunteers, any and everyone who is supporting someone in accessing an abortion has the possibility of getting arrested? And so, you know. Part of that conversation is really thinking about the risks that we're WANTING to take, and that we're

willing to take as abortion funds, and how that can be in the service of the communities that we work in, especially for our callers. And for our volunteers and anyone doing this work.

And, lastly, I feel like it's super important to get excited in this moment about cocreating ways to not only FUND abortion, but build power with organizations and people... in cross like cross movement partners. Like the folks that are on this call as well. Because we're gonna need all of us to win! You know? And this is the time where we can't keep doing the work in the same way and expecting different results. You know, this is we're coming up on 50 years where Roe v. Wade is still in question, there's still uncertainty about

it, and something's gotta give. So coming into this moment, having this grounding... can really, I feel like, set ALL of us, especially abortion funds, up? In a way that will allow us to... you know, be ready! Get ready, and. To do this work. So. Thank you.

MT: Thank you, Oriaku. Yes, get ready, stay ready. Think about how we build power across movements. And... think about the risks we're willing to take! Right? (soft laugh) Erin, if I could invite you to perhaps... share how you show up in the space, and a little bit more about your thoughts about why these links these fights are so interconnected.

ERIN GRANT: Hi, y'all. My name is Erin Grant. I use they and them pronouns.

And I'm the deputy director at Abortion Care Network, which is a membership organization of independent abortion providers who provide the majority of clinical care in this country, and their allies and advocates. I feel SO lucky? (soft laugh) To be on this call. And to be talking with this specific group of folks. I just wanna underscore, MANY of us have been in this conversation for years? And there's so many folks that came before us. So that grounding was important. I also wanna just shout out Combahee River Collective and Women of All Red Nations, who have really been talking about the history of sterilization in gynecology for so long.

I come to this work through the institutional and clinical aspects of

providing care, and I come with a serious message that we actually don't have enough. Criminalization of any reproductive health care, at this point, is due to the fact that we're living in, ah, conditions that are not really meant for people to thrive and to reproduce. I also know that we have a responsibility, as folks that are working in the medical industrial complex, to name the ways TO our community which our community already knows that we act as agents of the state. And the ways that we can support, and the ways that we may NOT be able to support. I come here with deep hope, because abortion clinics across this country are... surrounded by love, in the form of escorts. People who gather without any type of police connection to ensure the

safety of people walking in and out of reproductive health care services, everyday. I believe that we are more creative, and we are more compassionate, than punitive, police, or any type of criminalization process. I believe that we are more creative than cages and forced sterilization. And I also have to say that... I also believe that others in this community get a wrench in their gut when they know that they're engaging in policing. And that they're acting as an agent of harm. I want to be in the hope that all of us are here to talk about today, and the fact that there's just a different way? And I wanna hold for all of us that we all have that wrench in our stomach, that second thought, when we're participating in what is constant

criminalization.

So, thank you for having me here, and I REALLY look forward to this conversation.

MT: Thank you SO much, Erin. And... just thank you for bringing the, the Black feminists of the Combahee River Collective into this space here, and naming that lineage and the history again, and how these fights HAVE to be antiracist, anti capitalist, internationalist, and feminist, or we're not going to win! Right? And I think that's the, the perfect invitation to have Paris from Black Feminist Future to introduce herself.

PARIS HATCHER: Yes. That was, that was really great. Um. Thank you. Thanks, y'all, so much. It's so great to be here. I'm Paris Hatcher, the founder and director

at Black Feminist Future. We're a national Black feminist organization membership that's building Black feminist power.

And... wow! I am actually really excited to be here, because I'm a perpetual... learner? And we have some of the most brilliant minds in this space. But from my perspective, though I'm gonna start here, but I really want to share more. What's been brought up for me... I remember thinking, as I saw all of these bans you know, they're just coming they're everywhere, y'all. So Texas was where it started but, I mean. And for those of us who've done this work, we've seen all these bans as they've escalated over the years. I thought to myself... are we gonna really be satisfied, when we look back, that we may have our

501(c)3 structure in place, but abortion is no longer available? Right. Are we gonna be able to proudly look at the next generation or just even five years from now and say "we did all that we COULD, in the face of it."

So, I'm curious around... how we really address how the legal fight especially the Roe decision? How it has really set what we think is moral. And how we actually and it has impacted our collective imagination? And how we need something bigger. And I really HAVE seen abortion funds be, ah, an opportunity to experiment around what can be more? But, Andrea mentioned this: Talking about police and prisons, criminality... is really in our hearts and our minds. Right. Just like

police and prisons. We don't need an actual physical like, you say police and prison, it already brings up right and wrong, who did this and this. That's actually legal. So, I'm really interested in the legal, what is moral, and what is just. And my calling, for this moment, is that we must do what is just. And what's legal there that is set by rules? And we know who makes the rules! So if we know who makes the rules, then you can always almost guarantee they're not gonna be just! Right? And then our morals are...! What are set by principles but oftentimes, our morals are influenced by systems of oppression as well! Right? And I DO think that, when we talk about what is just, this is the opportunity where we can think about our vision! Our

values. Thinking about what liberation means, right. Thinking about power and privilege. It allows us another way to be. Another way to vision. And I think right now, THAT's what I am... excited about being in this conversation about, is to really allow us to radically imagine what just what it means... for justice! For our people for ourselves, right now. So I'm excited to be on this panel, and to keep chattin' with y'all.

MT: Whoof! Yes! Thank you, Paris, for taking us into that space of imagination, and. You know, it's reminding me of that Erica Meiners quote of how liberation under oppression is unthinkable by design! So, how do we break free from that? How do we create justice which is,

as brother Cornel West reminds us, what love... looks like in public. Which is what you all are DOING! Which is the world you all are shaping, every day! And and YES to killing the cops in our head, and these ideas of policing each other, as Paula Rojas mentions. Right? And again! There was so much you packed in, Paris, about how the nonprofit industrial complex isn't going to save us. Right? The revolution will not be funded. It is how we... reshape things in radical ways! And. Imara. Imara Jones. So grateful you're here with us tonight, and I would just love to invite you into the space to share your thoughts and introduce yourself.

IMARA JONES: Thank you for that. My name is Imara Jones. Um. For people

without sight, I am a Black woman. I have braids. My braids have blue in them. I'm wearing a blue sweater dress, and I am in a room with patterned wallpaper.

Um... yeah! So, your question was how necessarily I came into this work. And, I come into this work as the head of an organization that tells stories. And it specifically tells stories that are grounded in reality. That are grounded in journalism and in nonfiction. That's what TransLash is all about! And specifically, of course, we spotlight trans stories! And, the way in which it's essential for us to center trans humanity at this particular time. Violence against our community, in every single way; it's our belief that that violence that takes place against our community is very

much driven by the inability of people to see us as human. And so, an essential way to begin to combat that violence, since 9 out of 10 people say that they don't personally KNOW someone who's trans, is actually through storytelling. And through... all the ways in which we DO that. And, you know, what we say at TransLash is that we tell trans stories to save trans lives. And a part of telling trans stories that we did last year is one of the contributors that we have at TransLash is a limited series investigative podcast called the Anti Trans Hate Machine: A Plot Against Equality. And that rose out of this understanding of me seeing these bills begin to pop up all across the country. And it was actually when the second anti trans bill

came up that was about banning trans women from sports. This was in the beginning in the 2019, beginning of 2020. And, you know... the first bill that I'd heard about along those lines was in Alabama. The second one that I'd heard about was in, um... Idaho. And, just from my time kind of as a journalist, the time that I had spent in D.C., and a lot of other things that I have done in my life, I know that the same thing happening in a different place in the exact same way is usually not a coincidence. Right? I think it's that old line from The Matrix, which is that "I believe in coincidence; I just don't trust coincidence"? So, it made me begin to want to find out where these bills were coming from.

So, I put together an investigative journalism team. And we spent about a year looking into where these bills were coming from. And all of what we learned, we gathered up into the first season of the Anti Trans Hate Machine: A Plot Against Equality. Now we're going into the second season to be launched in June.

And one of the things that struck me as I began to look into the anti trans hate machine and I won't go into all of that structure; you can listen to the podcast on the TransLash website, or wherever you get your podcasts, or we can have another conversation about that. But one of the things that like struck me... in looking at that, is that if you look at all of the organizations that have been both fueling

and at the tip of the spear of the antiabortion movements... those exact same groups are the exact same ones that are driving the anti trans movement and the bills. Mainly, the Alliance Defending Freedom, the Family Research Council and Focus on the Family, and the Heritage Foundation. And they are then funded by the same set of billionaires that are very much involved in the antiabortion movement. So, the Wilkes family. The DeVos family that name may be familiar. The Prince family. On and on. And, it then occurred to me that one of the things that was happening on the right, and the reason why they were beginning to have a lot of success so... you know, the fact that there were basically six anti trans bills roughly a handful

in 2019, and then 198 last year! Right? So
in two years, you go from 6 to almost 200.
There's nothing accidental, coincidental
about that; that's the result of a plan. Is
that these organizations on the right were
doing something that wasn't happening on the
left. That is to say, that they were seeing
these issues intersectionally. That is to
say, they outintersectional OUR
intersectional. And what I mean by that is
that they understand the way in which the
issues around gender, gender identity, body
autonomy, reproductive justice, the ability
for you to be able to control literally the
skin that you were in... plays across a
whole host of areas, and a whole host of
arena. And that if they were going to be
actually fundamentally successful in

reframing America according to their radical interpretation of the Bible. I have to say, they have a very radical interpretation of the Bible, and of religion. But they had to do that across the board in an integrated way.

And so, while the left talks intersectional, the right acts intersectionally. Right, they see the way in which all of the issues interplay. And that one of the reasons why abortion hangs by a thread is because the abortion mainstream abortion rights movement has not done that? It's then found itself isolated and seen as a secondary issue. And so, it's a problem.

The second thing that occurred to me in unpacking the series... is that EVERY single

person that I spoke to every single person. That had, had spent decades studying the right some of them going undercover at secret right wing conferences, literally for decades. A lot of their research, I don't know why progressives don't listen to these people? But, I mean. ...that's a whole 'nother issue. In any event, they, um, they said fundamentally that the... the right thinks abortion is dead! Like, they realize that abortion is dead, and they're moving on to the next thing. And so while the left is all of a sudden saying Roe v. Wade hangs by a thread, they're like, Roe v. Wade is dead! Like, Roe v. Wade's a dead letter. And they're moving on to the next fight. And for them, very much the next fight is the fight over

trans rights. And we're already seeing the abortion rights movement literally transfer the techniques, the knowledge, the organization, all of those things that they learned for fighting this as long as I've been alive. You know, since whenever, however long they've been fighting abortion and are putting that into the anti trans movement. So, this year for the first time we are seeing the growth, for example, of the protesting outside of doctors that perform gender affirming care! Where they are showing up outside those doctors' offices. We're talking in New York City! With signs about them slow down? With, um... with signs, um, of them... ah... with signs of "surgeries," in quotes, that they've done. Saying that they're

mutilating children. Saying that they're castrating children. And there's been a growing list of articles that have been written about this in Time Magazine, recently, a big expose in The Nation at the end of last year underscoring the way in which the antiabortion movement sees trans as the next big fight, and trans issues as the next big fight in body autonomy.

And so once Roe v. Wade gets ruled against, all they're planning on doing is taking the entire infrastructure they've built and turning it against trans issues. And the thing that fascinates me about that is... that that means that we're just at the beginning of the fight over trans issues. Right. Everything that we're experiencing right now is just a road test.

And it is clear to me, however, that the fight over abortion isn't going to end. So just because Roe v. Wade is about to be let's just be honest about it. Is about to be at the Supreme Court ruled to be a dead letter in some way. Right. The question's how extreme, but it's essentially going away as we know it. But, no one on this cause going away! Right? None of these organizations are going away! So the question is, what does the next fight... the next iteration of the fight over body autonomy, and abortion, and reproductive justice writ large which we should talk about looks like. You know, we know that that fight's gonna move to the federal government; we know that that fight's gonna move to the states in certain ways.

And, it's really clear, then, in whatever way this movement picks up itself, that... confronting and integrating and acting in an intersectional way, in which trans issues are seen as a really vital part of the need to push back and hold a line on body autonomy, HAS to be a part of the conversation, IF we are and a key goal: IF body autonomy is going to be preserved at ALL in the United States. Because that's the way the right wing is fighting it.

And, one last thing that I tell people all the time that I find interesting is how... you know, the right has been looking for this moment, around trans issues, for about a decade. This is a fight that they've been hunting for, literally. And, they poured a lot of money into bringing us

to this point. And so I constantly tell people that if you're just waking up to issues around the access and control of trans people to control our bodies, then you are ten years, and about \$100 million, behind the right. So we're already extremely late. The hour is late, right, in terms of like turning back.

So, I think that we have to cast a MUCH wider lens. There has to be a radical change in the way in which people approach these issues. There has to be a completely different approach, in terms of the language that we use, the organizations that we work with, the goals that we have, if there is to be this preservation. Because that is happening on the right. And so, there has to be some type of DE specialization of this

conversation. You know? We can't only be talking to ourselves. (chuckles) We can't only be talking to... you know, those who speak our same language. There has to be just a radical recasting.

And so, that's what brings me to this work. Is understanding these intersections. Of having spent, you know, more than a year looking at the right wing, seeing how they build organizations, seeing how they work together, seeing how they take all of the disparate things that they have and bring them together.

And I'm sorry, one last thing. I know I'm going on, but I have literally one last thing to say on this. Or maybe not one last thing, but! You know, basically. Um! Is that... you know, people love to say, "oh!

80% of Americans are pro choice." Right?

But the way that people think about that... in terms of progressives, is that, oh, just that means that people are with us, and things are on our side, and that's all we have to do is say that we're pro choice.

Ah, but... the right has figured out that y'all progressives have a coalition, and that that coalition has a hierarchy, and that there's certain things that people care about more than others. And while they say and while they know that progressives say that 80% of the country, you know, supports Roe v. Wade, they know that 80% of the country ain't willing to vote on Roe v. Wade...! They know that 80% of the country isn't willing to make it its top issue.

They know that, you know, even though the

population generally is supportive of trans rights, they know that people aren't going to go to the polls on that. They know, however, that 25% of the population... is going to make abortion its number one issue. They know that 25% of the population is willing to vote on trans issues. And so that's how they figured out that their 25% beats your 80%!

And so, the question is how we are able to totally transform, remake, reorganize, restructure, rethink... how to transform the, the paper strength! That these issues have. On paper, how to transfer that into actual power! Right. How that, and THAT has to be... the fundamental conversation. And to Paris' point, and to everyone else's point, the way that these movements have

been organized ain't it, because that's how we got here. So whatever is happening isn't working.

MT: Mm hmm.

IMARA JONES: And that means that the organizations that get the most money, the people that have the loudest microphone... you know, all the rest of it? That that's not working! That's not, that's not gettin' us there. And so there has to be a complete inversion and rethinking of how to talk about these issues, in a way that expands...! Rather than limits...! The people that are involved. That expands the people that are covered by the conversations. That engages in a much larger point of view. And THAT's what has to happen, moving forward, if we're gonna

ultimately be victorious in the fundamental idea that everyone gets to control their own bodies.

MT: Yes. Oh my gosh, Imara. I mean! I was just reading in the chat, and I think everyone's feeling this. Right, I can listen to Imara all day long! And just...! Every time! Every time I, I listen to you and everybody, please! DO check out TransLash Media and the Anti Trans Hate Machine. The resources have been dropped in the chat, but. I hope you'll get time to talk a little more about what you've talked about, Imara. How DO we hold the line? How DO we move from this weak coalition that can easily be splintered with different factions being picked off! Right? How do we move beyond just talking intersectionality to

actually... ACTING it. How DO we radically shift? And that WILL be the last question.

But before that, I wanted to just add another question. And Erin, you Grant you foreshadowed this a little earlier, when you talked about... (timer goes off)

Providers! Medical providers. Physicians as agents of the state. Different people being deputized, into these harms! And.

Imara, what you were saying about how...

things are exported from ONE fascist

playbook to another. Right? Antiabortion,

to anti trans legislation, bills, executive

orders. Right? How... (scoffs) Road

testing of physicians! Is, again, deputized

agents of the state. And so how do we

interrupt criminalization that happens in

medical care spaces? Given what we know of

the long history of eugenics and complicity,
experimentation...! On Black, Brown, and
Indigenous bodies. Right?

So, one of the things that the brief
talks about, and our conversations have
BEEN, have been about medical care and how
it's been a site, and continues to be a
site, of criminalization. I just wanna
invite anyone who would like to speak a
little more TO that. Because that IS a site
of struggle, and I think that's another
space in which we need to be thinking about
how do we resist, how do we build outside
of, and how do we stop the harms despite the
Hippocratic Oath of DOING no harm. And how
do we move BEYOND doing no harm, to the
worlds we yearn for, and how do we build
that.

So how has medical care been and continued to be a site of criminalization? If any of you would like to jump in and share thoughts on that specific strand.

ERIN GRANT: Well. Hi, everyone. This is Erin Grant again. Just really quickly, for a visual. I like to think of myself as like a caramel shade of Black? I am genderqueer. I have long locs, and am the ONLY person other than the interpreters who are wearing over the head headphones. I'm wearing pink blue blocker glasses; gray and black are my clothes. And I have a blurred background, because as I stated before I work in abortion care.

Um... I wanna jump in, because I want to honor the humaneness of deciding to do care work. And this country has made

(chopping up) And I just wanna keep saying, Imara's right! There's... there's... a global move for having, ah, a gender ideology that we, in this country, don't TALK about blatantly. Other people are naming their fascism; they're naming their historical context. And in this United States, it has been woefully forgetful. Although our bodies are reminding us everyday. So I just wanna, again, say for all of the providers that have that second thought. That, that plug in your stomach please contact the help desk at Interrupting Criminalization. We wanna talk to you; we wanna work it through with you; we wanna find a new... a new pathway? There are pitfalls everywhere. I think of it like an Atari game. Where like,

sometimes you didn't hit the button, and other times it's cheating? Um. So, it's important to name that... the system itself is flawed. Folks are going to show up and do the best that they can, having a Black or Brown or Indigenous or trans provider does not guarantee safety. Our communities already know this. I already act accordingly, and many of us do.

The other pieces are things that are either... misrepresentations or miscommunications that are forced by the state. And I really wanna name that. There's no medical reason to wait for gender affirming care OR abortion care! There's nobody needs to think it over, more. They're coming to you for a service. The institution gets paid. Your insurance,

you're TOLD, is your choice, is actually a contract determined between your insurance carrier and the other systems that be! So again, I just wanna relieve the, the heavy hammer of the providers? Providers can be sites of care. But surely, this country, its history of eugenics, gynecology, the decision to, ah... how we do the count for our census! Is based off of our own bias. And totally supported even the claims that Imara is talking about that are used by Heritage Foundation there's a scientist that is SAYING that science. So I just wanna be really cautious here.

I also wanna say that providers are asked to report and give information that they know is not accurate, that they know is not helpful, that they know is not what they

want to be providing? Because of the state. So, today Oklahoma's legislature made the decision to do a total abortion ban. That's not where we're at! The decision between jobs... has not happened! So, we don't we still have a constitutional right to care. So the smoke and mirrors the culture! That allows you to think that you can report your neighbor who's parenting a child? All of these things are things that are deep within us as civilians, as well as in our provider community.

I do wanna say again, I'm here to say that the people who are actively having that bubble gut, when they are called to be police: You're not alone? Um. The World Health Organization has said that abortion, no matter what gestation, has NO need for

criminalization. There's NO data anywhere that says that putting someone in a cage for medical care is... the medical response??

There's n there's nothing like that. I want to shout out the folks of Argentina! The folks of Chile! The folks of Mexico and Colombia. Our friends, who have gotten the message around the gender ideology, and work! Honestly and openly! Around the violence that the state has done, to women. Women, trans women, gender non binary people. They are breaking that barrier down. And again, just highlighting what Imara is saying, that there's like a difference between having control of a narrative? And actually just wanting to have your issue win! And when you show up powerfully just to have YOUR sole issue be

pushed through, with a bunch of others that are not necessarily bought into again, THEY wouldn't say they're bought into a gender ideology. But they know exactly how to respond to key questions.

So that feels really important. I wanna keep saying that criminalization you know, we talk a lot about decrim Imara blew my mind the other day, 'cause I wanna stop TALKING about decrim? And start talking about quitting criminalization! How are you actively quitting criminalization? How are you actively not taking that location of a patient? You know, clinics are seen as unhelpful if they don't comply with laws. Even though we know that you don't NEED to talk to a doctor 24 hours before and be told that you're going to get

breast cancer, because that's not...! True!
It's not. True. And it just makes it so
that the doctors are untrustworthy. It
makes it so when you're getting mutual aid,
that THEY don't seem trustworthy. It makes
everyone extremely gaslit in the community
about what is real. And the real is that we
take care of each other. That we have each
other. That we can help each other find
care. And that we are sites of care, and
worthy of care.

So, I just... keep thinking about who's
doing it? Even though we keep saying it
can't be done. Um. I don't think I
answered your question. (chuckles)

MT: You did MORE than that. I also
wanna leave space for Q&A at the end, so.
If I could just move us into inviting...

your calls to action! What CAN we do to resist criminalization of bodily autonomy? How do we quit criminalization? How do we move beyond just undoing... a static thing? To interrupting an entire process. What, what ARE the radical shifts that we need to make? So.

And I also want to just offer the invitation to share whatever you would like to share. This is... the question, is like what is your call to action. What can we resist how what can we do to resist the criminalization of bodily autonomy? But really, if there is anything else that you would like to offer, that you would like to share? I just want to invite that as well. Because you are brilliant, and I wanna make space for...! As much of that brilliance as

this virtual space can contain. So. But those are some prompts, but also feel free to share anything, and then we'll move into Q&A from folks on the call.

PARIS HATCHER: That sounds great. I wanted to jump in. Um. Imara and Erin built so wonderfully on each other. And I prepared some remarks, because I... like I told you, I have been struggling. And I think a lot of us have been struggling with this moment. And, when we start to draw the connections. So why... is the fight the legal, the legality of abortion? Right? We should also think about the legality of midwifery. I mean, so many fights around midwifery is around who can be a midwife! Like in Georgia, you can be a granny midwife, meaning you were brought up and

trained by someone, have a great record
been doing it for 30, 40 years. That is
considered guess what, y'all? Illegal!
Right? You have to get a certain type of
certification. So. Again, why what does
it benefit, to create this type of... power
and control? Right? And I think that's the
thing around it. When those of us who have
been oppressed especially because of our
gender. So gender oppressed people. Women!
Right? Girls. Non binary folks. Trans
folks! Being able to say "I can do this, at
home, in a private sphere," really
interrupts a power dynamic. I know it seems
like an oversimplification, but... really,
these stories that we're talking about,
these acts, are acts of freedom! These are
acts of opportunity! These are acts of...

being able to live to your like a
different, broader desire. And when we live
in a patriarchal society that is white
supremacist, capitalist, racist, that throws
EVERYTHING into you taking those steps us
TAKING that. Right? Self determining!
What we want to do with our bodies. Is
literally saying "you cannot control this."
Well, you can imagine a system that's set up
on power and control...! Is not going to
let that fly.

So when we think about when the
legalization of abortion, or the
criminalization of abortion, along with the
criminalization of midwifery, along with the
criminalization or the stating of like
the binary it is no coincidence that we
are seeing literal control of autonomy? Of

those of us who move through the world,
through as gender oppressed people. When
we destabilize this especially when we
think about reproductive labor. And it's
not just the reproductive labor of HAVING
people, children, that you raise up to go
into the workforce that can do your goods
and services that create a class of people
who will be able to do goods and services
you know. There's THAT, but there's also
the reproductive labor... of caring! Right?
It's the invisible labor! That actually,
patriarchs, those in power, require! I
wanna remind folks that there can be no
shelter in place if you did not have a whole
invisible economy of people who were saying
to just shelter in place we know who
those people were! They're women and gender

expansive people and girls who talked about how the pandemic, for them, for us, MORE work! I'm working 24 hours! Because the kids are at home! I have to now do this! But guess who... were able to kind of keep status quo life. Right? We talk about cis men and boys.

So, it's really important that abortion really IS around a possibility of freedom. And what Imara mentioned, which is really key, is that the work that we have inherited we are second generation inheritants of the Roe decision, as well as all the work organizing to be pro choice. What that has meant is that... these are not necessarily folks that were as invested in a liberation movement! Right? It became really singularly focused around a

particular service, and not about what abortion means. So abortion is as much around the procedure as it's not! Abortion is about what I am saying, possibility! And when you break it free from that and make it solely around a legality of, you know, this gestation and that, it really weakens what's possible.

And, we're dealing with safe legal rare. Right? We're dealing with, again, two decades of inheritance of a movement that, I think, you know... had some intention! (laughing) I don't know, had SOME intention! But I can tell you that they never thought that we'd be here 50 years later. Right? So, we are in this interesting place. And, you know... we cannot allow the future meaning this

moment on be impacted by that two
decades. Right? We have to really ask
ourselves... what do we want our vision to
be? And how can we continue to yearn and
create something more? Because I believe
that our imagination is unlimited. I have
been in the spaces where the everyday blow
of the bans, of what the right is up to, the
right is doing this, the right is doing
that, has literally dictated our movement!
So it's been really difficult to be like,
okay...! So, IF we want this, how do we
make this and I'm even talking about
myself! I think about this a lot, because I
yearn to imagine what it will take. And
that, for me you know, we're talking
about Roe collapsing, and I think within the
last two to three years folks have been

really vocal around it. Now, we've been saying, it's going away! Yet our responses have been really status quo in many ways! It's going away...! Let's do a narrative project! It's going away...! Let's do... you know, something that it feels like we're almost like... And I get it! Right. It's survival it is a survival mode.

So, we're dealing with something that has a legal reality? That actually has impacted our justice purpose. Right? And I think that we need to start thinking about... it's what IS legal, what is moral, what is just. And what are we willing to do? What are we willing to do for ourselves? What are we willing to do as a collective? What are my values that are guiding this work? And I think for myself,

as a Black feminist, and as we are working with our Black feminist membership, these are the type of questions that we're asking! What can I say and like, as I mentioned before... what can I say to those coming behind me? What can I say to my elders at this moment? That I have done... to not just grow the nonprofit world. 'Cause guess what, more resources are gonna flow! But to ensure...! That we are going to break these BREAK these bans! Make them ungovernable; impossible! Right? That there are the many of us! And that they may say that this is legal, but we are saying that they are not just and they are immoral, and that we're going to proceed in this type of way.

So, I am really saying, as a call of

action, as I conclude, that... it is time to think about the inside outside strategy.

Right? So what may you do, in your 9 to 5, and what MUST we do in our communities?

What are the skills that we might need to learn? Right? What are the things that we will need to do? What are we willing to do. To rewrite, and right course. And as Imara was saying, we need a whole new cast! Of actors? And I believe we are the people THIS is the crew to do it? And, let's go get it.

MT: Yes! Oh my gosh. Yeah, I mean... whoof. What ARE we willing to do? What risks ARE we willing to take, in service of our values? What is that... Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. quote about how it is a moral duty, to disobey unjust laws? And so,

Paris, thank you for... making the distinction between legality, morality, and justice!

Oriaku, I saw you nodding and responding to a lot of what Paris was saying. I, I just wanted to invite you to share your calls to action. And, and then we can perhaps close out with... Erin and Imara, whatever you'd like to share. But Oriaku, would love to hear from you.

ORIAKU NJOKU: Yeah, sure. So one of the things I've been thinking about actually I've been thinking about a lot of things recently? But. Really wanting to understand the history, of how we even got to this place? The history of what policing bodies has been in this country. And so this is a little plug. I know the Baltimore

Abortion Fund is currently having their Book Week! And, I'm recommending The Unfit Heiress: The Tragic Life and Scandalous Sterilization of Ann Cooper Hewitt. It reads like if TMZ was around in the early 1900s. Um! Talking about what was happening in this particular case. But also with a lot of historical context around, you know, the policing of our bodies, through eugenics, sterilization all an attempt to preserve white supremacy in this country. So. It's a good read.

And, you know. I know it can be hard in this moment to imagine a future of reproductive justice when there's SO much uncertainty around the legality of Roe. And in the spirit of a radical imagination and radical love for our communities that has

been mentioned earlier, you know, dreaming of a future that is grounded in reforming systems rooted in white supremacy and the cisheteropatriarchy is insufficient. I personally don't want to imagine a future that has been catalyzed by trauma, but I want one that WE get to cocreate, ON our own terms, that allows all of us to thrive.

There's a quote that says "movement requires rhythm"? And lately I've been thinking about what our movement's rhythm is. How do we get our movement to move. It's not only about building a movement, or building power, but it's mobilizing and moving a movement towards the future of reproductive justice that we want, and need, for US? AND for future generations.

So, you know. Other questions I have

been asking myself is, who is ready to throw
my throw down? Like, who's ready to
throw down and take some risks... by any
means necessary. AND, how can we support
the folks that AREN'T ready? To stay out of
our way. And do their personal work that
they need to do that is required to join us.
I feel like we've made sooo many
compromises? And this is not the time to
continue compromising. This is not the time
to... pretend like everything is okay, or
have this doomsday mentality. Like, this is
not this is not the time for that. You
know? And, I DO absolutely believe that we
as a movement or across movements, even
should not be the barriers to our own
collective liberation. So. My call is to
find joy and resistance! You know? Get

excited about... showing up! And showing out. And doing whatever you can to make sure that the folks that we talk to at our abortion funds have everything that they need to be able to have the abortion in that moment? But also to imagine a future for themselves as well that calls for something that is different than what we have been told to accept as... the truth. What we've been told to accept as what is what we only have available to us.

So, you know. It's gonna take us being creative! It's gonna take us getting a little wild! It's gonna take us, you know, having the conversations that we need to have... not on Zoom. Sometimes in person; sometimes on a Signal chat, 'cause. Things can get real. But having those

conversations! This is the time to really start getting our game plans together, getting folks across all sorts of movements to join us, and... yeah! I'm just I'm ready. And! I hope y'all are ready, too? Um... yeah! I hope y'all are ready too.

MT: Yes! I, I'm... just I had to write down, "I don't want a future catalyzed by trauma. What is our movement's rhythm? Join us or get out of the way! This is not the time for compromise." I'm... just so invigorated by all of those calls to action? Erin, Imara, anything you would like to add, but. Yeah. I'M ready! And I would imagine that the few hundred folks we have on the call are also getting... activated and inspired in ways that I hope we'll all think about how we can plug in and have those

conversations about what we're willing to do.

Other calls to action, before we maybe field a couple of questions from the chat?

IMARA JONES: So, for me you know. I'm gonna pick up where Paris left off, which is like what do we DO. Right, what's the response that we can do. So, I have to say that one of the things that we just did at TransLash is that we spent the entire month of Trans Month of Visibility working to end IN visibility of trans people when it comes to abortion and body autonomy. We had a month long campaign called Trans Bodies, Trans Choices. And Trans Bodies, Trans Choices was a month long activation that was anchored by three short films which, again, look at on the TransLash YouTube

page of people telling, of trans people telling their abortion stories. And we also amplified it with a special edition of our TransLash podcast called Trans Bodies, Trans Choices. We had several online conversations. A town hall that we did with the LGBTQ Center. Oriaku was on that. And also, a piece written by a trans man about their experience with gynecological care and what that is, what that, you know, means. And all of those things, if you just go to our either our website or our Instagram page, you can find all of that content.

And so, for me, it was about sort of not waiting or believing that we'd have to have permission, or begging groups to pay attention to us and our issues. Just saying, like, we think this is important,

and this is what we're gonna start saying,
and we're gonna empower other people to tell
their stories, and to just basically insert
ourselves in the conversation. Essentially.
And, the way that we did that was not only
doing that alone, but also partnering
with... a number of people actually, one
of the first calls that I made was to Adaku
last actually last winter! Um! But, you
know, lots of different partners in having
that.

And so I think in that, like,
practicing, modeling the ways in which I
think that we have to... do new things, in
new ways, with new partners, in ways that
reach people! And begin to shift the idea
of where we are on these issues. So I think
that, just to pick up on Paris' point of,

you know, how do we do new things and what do we do, that was a new thing that we did! That we just decided to do! And not to spend a lot of time trying to convince people who didn't... necessarily see the value of talking about trans bodies to give us permission to DO that, but just to start doing it. I'm actually just gonna also can I put this in the chat to everybody? Yeah! Also here's like a very easy here's a link to a Teen Vogue piece on Trans Bodies, Trans Choices that encapsulates what we did and links to the things. But I think we have to just start modeling new stuff! We have to just start doing it. And we have to innovate! And then work with other people who wish to innovate as well, and to begin to build momentum that way. And not

spend a whole lot of time worrying about how to convince people who DON'T have shared values and shared vision about what we ought to be doing.

MT: Yes! And, um, the... the Trans Bodies, Trans Choices, there's a resource document we'll also be sharing, and it is in there, along with a lot of resources from all of y'all's organizations. Erin, is there anything you'd like to add? By way of a call to action? And I will also read out some of the questions that we have, if not.

ERIN GRANT: Yeah, I wanna just say that... the formation? It has to be new. It has to be different. There has to be there's no such thing as not having enough space? There's too much to really tackle, at this point. And just to Paris' point,

we've really sat in this place of allowing
legality to speak to what we even think that
we deserve? Um. And it's... it's out of
control. It's, it's within our human
ability to... do better? For each other.
And also acknowledge that care takes more.
Than what bureaucracy is offering us. Care
takes more than a checklist. Care takes
more than putting something behind you and
acting like it never existed? Care takes
more. And so, if we want to be in
communities that are based on care, we're
gonna have to get REALLY comfortable with
things not being in that bureaucratic form?
And one of my favorite things to remind
people is bureaucracy is one mode of
organization; there's thousands. There's
thousands! We don't have to pretend like

there's a manager that can't meet your needs and go through them; we can actually meet your needs up front. You know? We can actually eat lunch before we talk. We don't have to have a working lunch meeting. There's other ways to do things.

So. I just... I think that what I'm walking away with today is reminding everyone that you may not THINK that we're all talking to each other... but there's somebody that's like you who wants to talk about it and wants to do it differently. And there's somebody in your neighborhood who might not understand why you go hard for abortion, but understands why you have food distribution on your block. And that's the conversation. Right? There's somebody who might be really into just one type of care.

And you just have to keep reminding everyone that care is a process; it's not a checklist.

I do wanna say that... we come here today, and we talk really great. And, I'm gonna take off my organizational hat and put on my human hat and say that the call is absolutely still to defund the police.

That's always been the charge. There's too much money going to services that are not rooted in care. When we're talking about the money that's spent on abortion bans?

Nobody's talking about the money that's lost for education, for health care, for clean water. For streets that are drivable.

We're in the middle of inflation? And we're REALLY wasting YOUR dollars, talking about kids, hunting parents, and criminalizing our

neighbors. I want to say that, in Kentucky, our clinics were working for the legal right to have space around their facility (breaking up) To get in and out. The escorts there have been doing the work that the police was never asked to do, because the community knows how to take care of itself. This is a Black and Jewish founded and owned clinic.

...the Louisville Metro Police just recently paid Matt Schrenger, who's a police officer, who is a protester of the clinic. This is the same police department that denied the clinic the physical boundary to allow people to access medical care, and the same police department whose patriarchy and guns! killed... Breonna Taylor.

My organization deals with

institutions. And I'm committed to
institutions figuring out how to not
participate in things that break down the
the community, basically. That create...
little mini cop stations. But the call is
absolutely to defund the police. And I just
don't ever wanna walk away from a call about
the ongoing project of criminalization? The
ongoing project of exploitation? Without
saying that Texas, and what we're seeing,
and what was directly copied into a trans
bill in Arkansas, is a slave catching law.
We don't have any other choices but to work
together. There's more than enough seats at
the table. And you can always sit with me,
if you're clear about this value.

MT: ...just... thank you, Erin. And.
Yeah. ...in, in the brief that you WERE

part of, right. That's one of the central tenets, as well! Is that defund the police includes reproductive justice. Reproductive justice means defund the police. If we care about abortion criminalization, we must care about all criminalization. And if we care about reproductive justice, we have to divest from the carceral state! Because and Oriaku, I was reading about how you were mobilizing folks to testify and have all of these protests of the capitol. Legislators were hiding behind the desk, and there was this huge police presence mobilized! Right? So the connections are clear! There's a denial of... of rights, and access to resources? And that is enforced! So there's, like, organized abandonment, to use Ruthie Wilson Gilmore's term, right. At a

mass scale! In terms of not having livable safe communities, with access to food, education, water! And that organized abandonment... is held in place by the organized violence! Of policing, prisons, and surveillance. So, the connections are clear, and we HAVE to continually insist... ON a different way that divests from ALL of these death making institutions, and invests in those things that... are life affirming!

And, and just... thank you all for the ways in which you DO that. ALL the time, every day. And for the invitations... the CLEAR invitations, in SO many ways, that you offered for others to join that work. With a shared set of values, or step aside.

I wanted to bring into space just a few questions from the chat, and then we will

wrap up. Adaku will close us out, but. You know, we have quite a few questions in the chat, and. One of them has to do with... what advice might you have for folks working in smaller, rural, Southern communities? That might help improve on developing the intersection between trans rights and reproductive rights, normalizing the link in terms of bodily autonomy? So this is specifically a question about smaller rural Southern communities. If anyone would like to take that one... and we can move on to others if not. But just wanted to put that on the table.

PARIS HATCHER: Oriaku, do you want to take that? Because of your work at ARC? I mean, I can share some insights, but I'm going to assume you can.

ORIAKU NJOKU: Yeah, I was going to be like, Imara, would you like to say something? Um. So, yeah, I feel like the part of the conversations that need to be happening you know, there's a lot of jargon that we use in movement. There are a lot of things that we say that regular degular people are like, ha? No one says it like that. No one talks like that. So really figuring I mean, you, you're in your communities. You know how folks talk, you know? And so, you know, not trying to make it this whole... academic situation. Just be real with folks! Make the connection around values. That is something that I've been doing recently? When making those connections. So, we know that reproductive justice is the human right to

bodily autonomy. To parent, to not to parent, and to live in safe and sustainable communities. So the way that I flip that around is just straight up ask people, like: Do you believe that folks should be able to self determine what is best for themselves and their families? Do you feel like, um... you know, you have the human right to make decisions about your body? Do you feel like you can be a parent like no. Do you feel like folks should have any say in your decision to be a parent or not to be a parent? Do you believe that you should be able to raise your child in safe and sustainable communities? I'm gonna say 9 out of 10 times, the answer is gonna be yes. So, finding those shared values, and then being able to keep the conversation going

from there, is something that I've been doing? Especially in tough, tough conversations living here in the South as well, and growing up in a small rural town in Kentucky, too. So, that's my suggestion.

MT: Thank you, Oriaku. Um, the next question is from someone who works in an abortion clinic and is in close cahoots with folks that run our local abortion fund. The question this is Western Pennsylvania Fund for Choice. My question is, what can we as medical care providers do in DAILY practice to show our patients and communities that we are in solidarity with them, and not the state, despite all the restrictions we're being forced to abide by to continue providing care? Anyone wanna take that?

ERIN GRANT: I can go. What up! I'm on Lenni Lenape land in Pennsylvania. So what up to my fellow Pennsylvanians that are working. One of the best ways that you can signal to the patients if you don't have escorts, do that. And orient our escorts in how to do it, and just regrounding in what the response is outside. The other thing is you probably have a window or something where, when folks are coming in for services, they see it there. We used to put little, if you need to communicate with us, put it on the clipboard when checking in, so there's a sneakier way if anybody's in some kind of situation they would need to let us know about. We would put everything up on that window, and make sure our nametags were up, that our pronouns were up. That we

would be humble and expand ourselves. So I just want to say, if you want to expand your table, oh, ba BY, get ready to learn how to apologize! Please! Oh, I'm sorry, can you repeat that? I mispronounced your name. I misgendered you. All of these things are the process, not the checklist, of care. So there's a lot of things that we would do. We used to spell out people's names when it was really tough. We'd say, can you say your name for me, 'cause I want to be able to do that. And also, I think... keeping that repro legal helpline. (chuckles) We used to do just really small things, either our local, like... antiviolence groups. Posters for AA meetings. We would have all kinds of stuff. We used to have Narcan, free Narcan in the clinics. Just signaling

to people that we understand the full scope of humanity. We had, ah, internal condoms, external condoms. Just being real free with it all the time. So, I encourage you to always... think about the subtle ways, but also the materials that you have in the actual waiting room. And if you are a Planned Parenthood, reach out to Planned Parenthood. If you are an indie care clinic, reach out to Abortion Care Network. I would love to get some intersectional artwork up in your lobby making sure that, you know, folks get to see themselves as well. So, I know my information will be shared.

MT: Thank you, Erin. And then, the last question we have in the Q&A is: Is there a role for radical lawyers in the

abolitionist fight? What legal areas should I learn to help the movement? Or should I just give up the whole lawyering thing and figure out some other ways to pay my bills while burning it all down?!

PARIS HATCHER: I'd love to answer this question! It's a good question! Um.

So, nothing... so, yeah. I actually believe that there's a role. Everyone has a role. The issue that I think a lot of us have with lawyers is that (timer goes off) Lawyers have led our movement! That's why we're in this legal case right now! They've been... It's basically like, it's a legal case! Let the lawyers mm mm. Right? So I'm like, yes! Let lawyers can come to the table, that Erin is setting up, but but YOU don't get to set the

strategy. That is how you get to participate! You get to participate as a person that has helpful information to share. Right? That WE'RE thinking about power building, base building, organizing, care, that's actually and movement building? Where lawyering has a role, but is not the it's not the diva! The reality is that and who I mean, I love a diva. Right? But... for 50 years, lawyers have been the, "we just need a lawyer!!" Right? Instead of saying, okay, we actually need a variety of people.

So... I think there's a role for you. You it's just about and I think this is what this movement's doing, is right sizing the role... of the lawyer! So, it's not about you're solo. Right. It's about,

we're a group we're a choir! (laughs)

And, we might all have different times that

we go and do our thing, but it's not

we're not just the backup for the lawyers?

So I think that's what... is what's

possible. Is that, until... we and also

as we're building new things! I mean, there

are different groups who are experimenting

with creating the types of... governance

policies that are in line with what we want.

Right? Which is, you know, using what we're

up against to forward what we want, which is

also an important strategy. So, I think

that if we if you and your lawyer crew

can just reorganize how you show up, I

think for example! Andrea Ritchie who

was on the call. She's a lawyer! And she

really uses her lawyer power for GOOD!

She's in service to movement! Instead of
it you know. Oftentimes, I have
experienced lawyers thinking that movement's
here to serve as my backup.

MT: Thank you, Paris. And the I
think there's just one more in the chat.

ERIN GRANT: Maria, can I just say one
thing? Because it's actually coming up
right now?

MT: Absolutely, Erin.

ERIN GRANT: I don't have a love/hate
for lawyers. I kind of am where Paris is
at, which is I love a diva, and everybody
has their role. I will say that, right now,
this movement is really struggling with
criminal law and having aligned
representation. As folks are being
criminalized, we don't have a great... legal

strategy around supporting the
criminalization of our people, as we're
telling them to take these risks. As we're
encouraging them to put their neck out. And
so, I DO wanna say that... there's a LOT of
things that I'm very interested in. I'm NOT
interested in having more Black, Brown,
Indigenous, disabled, queer... people in...!
Jail! Or in prison, or in, ingested through
this carceral system. And so, one place
that we don't have as deep of a bench, that
would be amazing in making it would have
made us feel totally different in the summer
of 2020, quite frankly is if we knew
that... we would have SOME legal
representation, in making these grand
gestures. Um. It's one thing to say legal,
a legal, moral. It's another thing to act

on those. And so I just think about, yeah, the summer of 2020 when we were all... felt that again, twinge and pull to be in the streets? And the lack of clarity... that was available for criminal law. So. Stay in school. Study up. Don't lose your soul. And then come get us out of jail. Or prevent us from going in.

MT: ...right. And, Erin, what you're saying is making me think about... when we were talking about material needs and ways to support the movement, we also need to be thinking about bail funds! And all you know, all of the things! ALL of the things, in our tactics and strategies.

We are about 10 minutes away from the hour, and. I just wanna express... (sighs) My DEEP, deep gratitude, to just everything

that's been shared, and all of the invitations that have been offered, and ALL of the brilliance. We will be sharing resources with a lot of the links that many of our panelists shared during the course of conversation, but. Thank you, thank you, SO much, for doing this work you do, for being the people you are? Um... yeah. I words, words couldn't suffice to, to express just... how valuable each of you are! And, um, I wanna turn it over to Adaku now, who's going to close us out and also share an evaluation. Thank you, Adaku. It's been such a joy being able to do this with you. And, thank you all for being here! Adaku, it's all yours.

ADAKU UTAH: First, I gotta do this, y'all. (rattling tambourine) Whoo!!

(rattling silenced by Zoom noise canceling)

Y'all gave us what we need right now...? ?

For the week, for the month, and the years
to come. Thank you; thank you, thank you.

In Igbo language, I say ameila, for your
love and labor. I hope y'all feel stirred.

I hope you feel agitated. I hope you are
asking critical questions about... am I
doing work in the way that we need to in
order to get free? What are the ways that I
need to change my tactics? What kinds of
relationships do I need to be building right
now? What do I need to let go OF...?

Y'all, I hope you use whatever seeds that
are planted in here, whatever rumblings, and
actually... put it into work! 'Cause we, we
need you. Whether you're a lawyer, a
parent, a healer, an organizer, someone who

has been organizing for 50 years, or...
maybe you just popped into the movement last
week! (chuckles) Regardless, you have...
life. You have wisdom. You have something
to offer. And, you don't have to do it
alone. Clearly! (chuckles) We've been in
the presence of, um... folks who are deeply
rooted in this work and know a couple things
about some things. And they're not the only
ones! There are so many of us who joined us
in this space. You too have been throwing
down for some time, and we wanna know who
you are; we wanna know the work that you're
up to; and we wanna know how we can work
together with you in order for us to build
the kinds of futures and present moments
that we need... to live, y'all. This is
THIS is about our lives. This is about our

lives. What are we willing what are we willing to do? Right now. Every single moment is an opportunity to make transformation, healing, liberation possible. Are you willing to... do the work? Are you willing to do the work. Hope you are. (laughs)

So, um. We got lots of gifts for y'all. Lots of gems were dropped. I was really trying to harvest them all. Thankfully, this was recorded, so we're gonna be sharing that recording...! Study groups are gonna be set up; that's right. We're also gonna be sharing the transcript. The resource guide is going to expand even more. So if there are additional resources that you wanna add as well, we're gonna be sharing that out with you.

We at NNAF also wanna make a personal invitation to anybody out there who wants to become a member and join our political home. We originally were a network of organizations, and after the 2016 election, we knew we needed more of us to throw down. And we have that space and that opportunity for YOU, and your family and your community members, to join us in this fight, and come alongside and organize with us.

Also, wanna shout out that for the first time EVER, abortion funds came together and wrote, cowrote, a set of demands. CLEARLY, ah, doing a read of our political landscape, and stating what do we wanna see? How do we wanna build power in these times. And they're very specific calls to action... that follow each of those

demands. I'm going to drop that link into the chat so that you can sign on. Wanna shout out the Abortion Care Network who were who ARE our partners, on this demand setting...! (snaps) PLUS so much more.

So yeah, sign up. Sign up, and also pass it around to a family member. We have resources, also around part of what we want to do is shifting the culture around HOW we have these conversations. We know that it's not always easy to be this easeful? And, um. This available to be in conversation and dialogue with one another. And we got you. We got resources and tools, and also community spaces where you can practice. This work not only requires theory, it requires diligent practice, in relationship with one another. And, we got

you there, too.

(clapping) There! Is so much!

Gratitude...! Erin. Thank you. Paris;
thank you. Maria, thank you. Oriaku, thank
you. Imara! Thank you. I wanna give a
shout out to Andrea, who is not here
physically. And yet their spirit just fills
up the space. I wanna shout out the, um,
the organizing team at NNAF who have been
throwing down in front and behind the scenes
to make this space possible. AND, our
ecosystem would not be complete and potent
and palpable without our folks who held down
translation and interpretation. I wanna
give a shout out let me get everybody's
names. Maria and Flavia, Marina, and Cory,
and Sara...! Let me make sure I get
everybody's names...! Um. Erin! Erin

Glasco! (chuckles) Oh my god! Thank you.
Thank you, thank you so much for making sure
that this space is wide enough for more of
us, which is also part of this critical
work.

We are gonna be doing more of these
spaces. We wanna hear back from you about
how was this how WAS it? How was it for
you? Where can we change? Where can we
grow? What can we water? What can we get
rid of? So let us know. There's a link;
thank you for dropping it into the chat.
How was this for you? Be real with us. We
listen.

And... WITH that let me see if
there's anything else that I want to say...!
Um. We are proof. That transformation is
possible. It is so easy to... let despair

take the wheel, and feel a lot of fear that can stop us in our tracks. And it makes a lot of sense, to feel afraid. There's a lot of shit going on. And at the same time? We are the antidotes. We are literally providing the pathways and the blueprints, right now. That come from legacies that we have been a part of, and are also shape shifting and reimagining things, and being hella creative right now. Y'all are doing it. So, when you're like, oof! I'm feeling it; I don't know if I can do it today. I hope you can see a reflection of what is possible today, right here, right now. We got us, we got each other let's go? Let's do the damn thing?! (rattling tambourine) Thank y'all for being here. We will see you soon.

SPEAKER: Thank you! Good night!

(music, upbeat)

(lyrics include rise up)

(for our lives, for our love, get
ready)

(zombie... zombie...)

AUDIO: Recording stopped.

MUSIC: Zombie! Zombie! Zombie!