

My Experiences With Feminist Camp

Mon, 06/12/2023 - 00:00

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Feminist Camp this January was an eye-opening experience in which I had the opportunity to network with individuals within national organizations based in New York City. One of the main things I took away from this camp is that feminism exists in many ways within various spaces. Several of the organizations we met embodied feminism in their own unique way to uplift their communities, including women and other marginalized communities. This could look like giving back to the community, hosting a feminist book club, providing mentorship, or actively fighting against

oppressive systems. Feminism can be practiced in our personal lives and the spaces we enter, including in academia, work, and relationships. From this experience, I also learned to meet folks where they were at because everyone is on their own feminist journey. When there were moments of discomfort and vulnerability, it was also a moment of growth and learning for many of us.

During Feminist Camp, the moments that had the most impact on me were during Reproductive Justice day. On this day, we had the pleasure of meeting individuals from the organizations Pregnancy Justice, Reproductive Health Access Project, and Ancient Song Doula. Pregnancy Justice is a legal advocacy organization for pregnancy-related criminalization. Knowing that pregnancy-related criminalization disproportionately impacts low-income, communities of color, as well as those that experience substance abuse, their work to advocate for these individuals is crucial. We met Emma Roth, a civil rights attorney, who works to protect the rights of pregnant individuals in Alabama, specifically those who are most vulnerable to criminalization and being targeted by means of state control. Later on that day at the Reproductive Health Access Project, we participated in a Papaya workshop, which is meant to model a Manual Vacuum Aspiration abortion using a papaya as the uterine structure. This organization is dedicated to training primary care physicians and advocating for accessible sexual and reproductive healthcare to everyone. Last but not least, we had the opportunity to speak to Anabel Rivera, a doula who works with the organization Ancient Song Doula. Anabel shared her experience working as a doula, including the challenges of her role and learning to navigate the healthcare system that we know to have barriers in place to make access to care inequitable.

Reproductive Justice Day was the most emotional day for me because I had a strong connection for the values and work that those organizations are committed to do. This camp was not only a space for me to learn more about different types of careers but was inspiring to see the folks involved in Reproductive Justice and feminist work in a variety of ways. Spaces such as Feminist Camp are necessary because it allows us to share knowledge and wisdom to reimagine a world in which we want to live in.