

The Black Feminist Rants Zine: Art as a Means of Connection & Education in Reproductive Justice

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Since the fall semester of 2023, I have had the opportunity to work with Black Feminist Rants (BFR) podcast through Tulane’s Newcomb Institute as their Research and Content Writing Intern. In my usual day-to-day, I conduct fact sheets on current news topics in reproductive justice (RJ) and perform miscellaneous tasks pertaining

to social media and programming. However, this Spring semester, I began to explore my internship creatively through the process of leading BFR's first zine project.

Being that this project will represent BFR's first print publication, it is necessary that BFR's purpose is fully reflected in the result. BFR aims to center the voices of Black women, femmes, and queer people in reproductive justice, which the BFR team believes to be the path towards liberation. Consistent with BFR's purpose, my supervisor and I, LaKia Williams, aim to use storytelling to explore topics such as abortion, self-managed abortion, liberation, bodily autonomy, queer parenting options, chosen family, birth control, accessing repro healthcare, racism in repro healthcare, and queer liberation as reproductive liberation. Experiences within reproductive justice can be traumatic for many. We want to show truth in these experiences while balancing the zine's content with the liberating aspects of reproductive justice as well.

The BFR zine is to be used as a tool for empowerment, but especially as an educating resource. As a research intern who takes pride in providing accurate and up-to-date information to all BFR listeners, it is especially important that the BFR zine contains information regarding what reproductive justice is, who BFR is, holistic and inclusive information on taboo topics, and national youth-focused reproductive justice organizations that readers can reach out to for more information and resources. As part of BFR's purpose lies in supporting Black youth, it is essential that the zine does just that through connection, support, and providing access to resources for all.

Reproductive justice is rooted in the neglect of Black women, femmes, and queer people's experiences in feminism and all of their identities which intersect. BFR recognizes the value in these experiences, as they have brought us to where we are today in reproductive justice. As zines are a form of art with which artists can shed light on the highs and the lows of real experiences, our goal is to use it as such. Within the BFR zine, we aim to uplift our audience by telling the story of the modern Black feminist experience and highlighting the liberation with it.