

Coming to terms with the State of Women's Reproductive Rights in the US

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Coming into this internship, I was completely open-minded with the intention to learn as much as I could about the legal aspects of women's reproductive justice. A big part of my research was the daunting Texas Bill: SB 8. I had heard of it prior but didn't dive deeply into it because I knew it would stress me out, but it is relevant to

what I was looking to get out of this internship made it a perfect opportunity to dive deeper and it most definitely did and still does stress me out.

As a woman, specifically a black woman. I was already aware that women do not have access to the things we are entitled to. I was also already aware of political climates in reference to abortion as well as Planned Parenthood as a whole. Working with Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast allowed me to see things from a very different perspective. Through workshops and meetings, I have made connections with people outside the state of Louisiana to fight against SB 8 and educate others on the pressing issues that it causes.

Being able to do this was not easy. Coming to terms with the now very clear truth that I may not have the right to make my own choices with my body was tough to handle. I already knew this, but I wasn't aware of how probable it is that this could happen in the very near future. I began channeling that energy into educating others and passionately explaining the need to vote. The advocacy work that I did was far more than just tabling and event planning. It was talking with people individually on campus and with family and friends. The more I advocated with people individually, the more I felt like there was hope. I began going to workshops that Planned Parenthood had and spoke with people on how to educate people and let my voice be heard in a way that might help change the future. That made it easier.

This semester I learned that understanding SB 8 and legal things of that sort are damaging to my mood if I'm doing so without doing something to help. Without doing my part whenever I could, I felt hopeless and that there was nothing that could be done. This internship teaches me daily that there is always something to be done and it starts with one person helping and that person in this case was me.