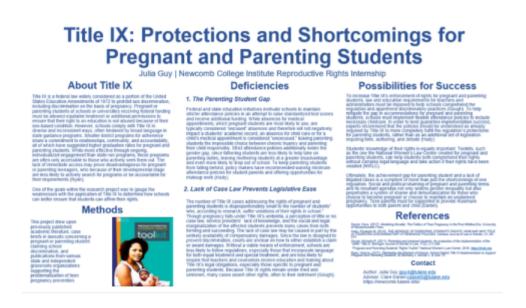
New Semester, New Look at Young Parenthood

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Julia Guy newcomb@tulane.edu

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Hello! My name is Julia Guy, and I am thrilled to be joining Newcomb College Institute's Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Health Internship program this spring! I am a sophomore studying political economy and environmental studies, and I hope to pursue a career within environmental advocacy and policy. Reproductive justice is additional passion of mine, so I am grateful that I have this opportunity outside of the classroom to advance RJ research while learning about research skills, social justice advocacy, and the intersection of grassroots activism and legislative approaches.

This semester, I am continuing a project I began as a research assistant for Dr. Clare Daniel last fall in which I am collecting and categorizing distribution materials from grassroots campaigns aiming to eliminate the stigma surrounding young parenthood as well as shame tactics utilized in teen pregnancy prevention campaigns. Additionally, I am documenting court cases concerning Title IX rights abuses of pregnant and parenting students, and I am conducting a literature review of shameful teen pregnancy prevention campaigns and support systems (or lack thereof) for pregnant and parenting youth. I am looking forward to share some of this information in the Conceiving Equity poster session later in the semester (see my poster above!). This semester, we are adding research on the discrepancy within both reproductive justice and mainstream consciousness between comprehensive sexuality education and elimination of shameful narratives for young parents. Using "teen pregnancy prevention" as a benchmark for sex education not only reinforces the narrative of young parents as irresponsible and unworthy of support despite often large socioeconomic inequalities, but also undermines the greater goal of reproductive justice to have the power, freedom, and resources to make healthy decisions about our bodies, sexuality, and reproduction for ourselves, including the decision to become a parent.

While I greatly enjoy working with Dr. Daniel, developing my research skills, and building my policy knowledge, another aspect of this internship I really appreciate is the biweekly RRRH intern meetings that have allowed me to meet other students working on reproductive justice research and advocacy for a wide variety of organizations and professors. Not only is it a great way to facilitate group discussions around reproductive justice as both a framework for academics and a lens for current events, but these meetings have also helped me learn more about the advocacy and nonprofit world in New Orleans with guest speakers from organizations ranging from fair housing assurance to abortion funding. This internship is already proving to be a fantastic opportunity, and I am excited to see where the rest of the semester leads!