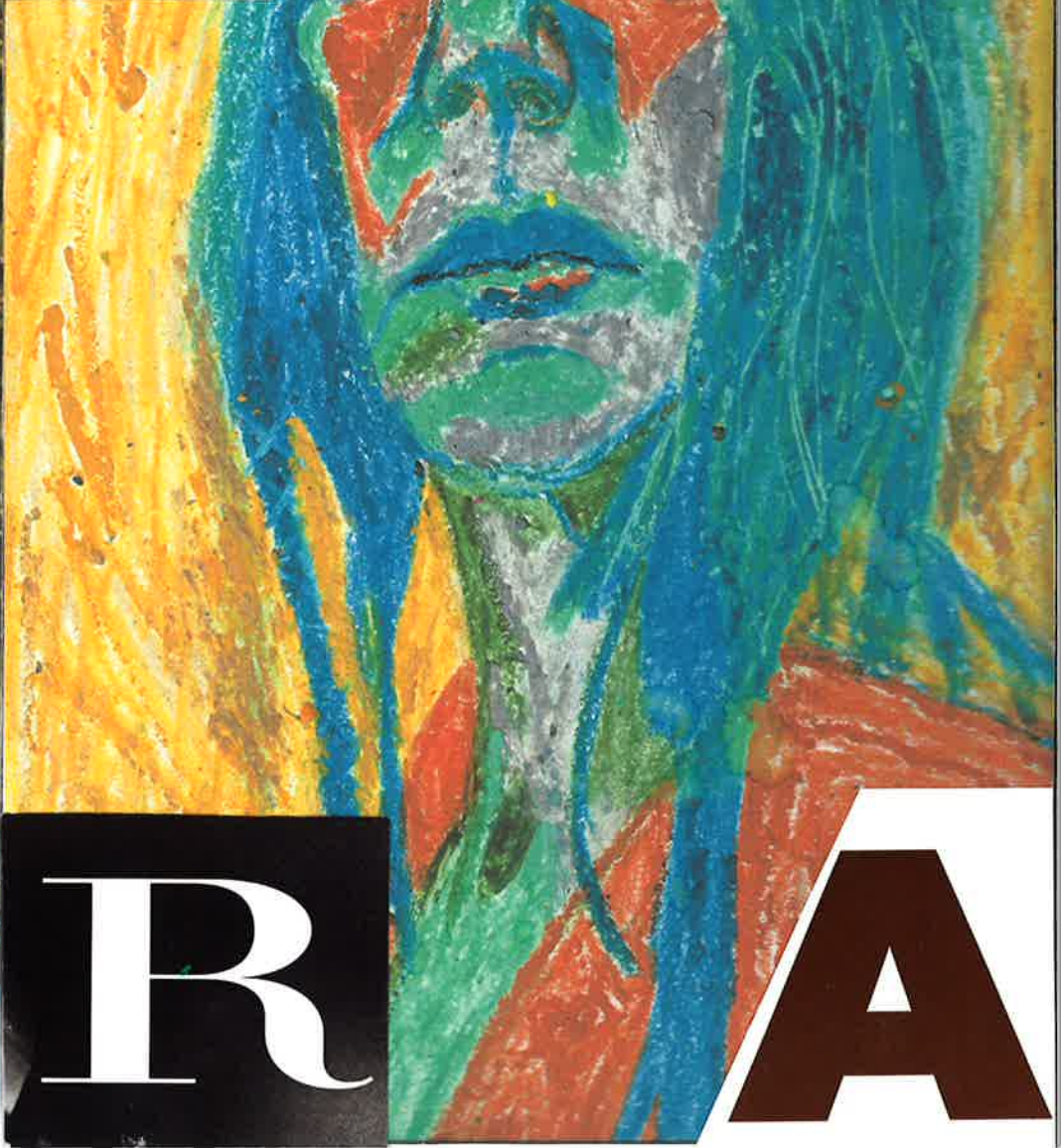


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SERAPHINE COLLECTIVE & MO CAD
PRESENTS

BFF FEST 2
SATURDAY 7/25

@ **MOCAD** 4454 WOODWARD AVE, DETROIT MICHIGAN
2 PM - 12 AM
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\$1 OF EVERY TICKET WILL BE DONATED TO ALTERNATIVES FOR GIRLS, A DETROIT-BASED 501(C)3 NONPROFIT SERVING HOMELESS AND HIGH-RISK GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN.

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◀◀◀ **SERAPHINE ZINE #2** ▶▶▶

◁◁◁ **SPRING 2015** ▷▷▷



♀ **THE FERTILITY ISSUE** ♀



- P1. MY FEARS FOR MY FUTURE SON by Brooke Tucker, Staff Attorney, ACLU of Mich
- P3. I FIRST LEARNED... by Patience Young
- P6. ARTWORK by Samantha Lynn
- P7. I AM NOT (JUST) A VESSEL: FERTILITY AND WOMEN'S HEALTH by Anonymous1
- P13. THE WORST PART ABOUT IT... by Anonymous2
- P14. AM I DEFINED BY MY FERTILITY? OR YOU SHOULD BE READY by Alice Bagley
- P15. [PHOTO] OFFERING OF THE FLESH by Bruno V
- P16. [PHOTO] OFFERING TO THE SUN by Bruno V
- P17. LOGISTICS OF AWAKE by Sierra Elizabeth Hansen
- P18. ANNE KARENINA AND BEES by Sierra Elizabeth Hansen
- P19. FEMINIST COMICS - FERTILITY by Ben
- P21. YOU SHOULD WRITE A SONG by Stacey MacLeod (of Dear Darkness)
- P25. IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW NOW YOU KNOW by Dina Bankole
- P28. ARTWORK by Samantha Lynn
- P29. ROCK FOR CHOICE! playlist by Seraphine
- P31. CALL FOR ART: BFF FEST 2!!
- ★ P32. JUN/JUL/AUG 2015 SHOW CALENDAR

ZINE COVER ART by Stacey MacLeod (front) & Autumn Wetli (back)
LETTERING by SERAPHINE

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My Fears for a Future Son

At 33 years old, my biological clock isn't just ticking any longer – its clamoring at me. Like some incessant internal siren, it wails at me day after day, admonishing me that it's time I started seriously considering having children. But even over the wailing of the siren, I hear another sound: The voice of my mother, who spent much of my life reiterating to me that I had no business having children unless I was sure I could take care of them.

And even though my mom was talking primarily about providing financially, the recent tragedies in places like Ferguson, Mo., Dayton, Ohio and Staten Island, NY, have been painful reminders to me that, as a black woman, I have to consider far more than money when it comes to "taking care" of my future children.

I'll certainly be able to feed and clothe my children. But given that there's a 50/50 chance I could have a son, the recent high-profile police killings of unarmed black men has forced me to think not just about how I will provide – but also about **how I can possibly protect.**

No, there are no guarantees in life. Any number of things can happen to a child regardless of their complexion. But as a **black boy**, my son will have a much broader and dire set of concerns than his paler counterparts. And I will have to teach him about those.

I'll have to tell him that, when his friends are playing cops and robbers on the street, that he can't participate because if he even pretends to have a gun – as kids often do in that game – **he could be killed.**

I'll have to tell him that when he's choosing clothing to wear that he must forego any items with a hood lest he have the temptation to put it on and be automatically deemed "suspicious" — and thus a target.

And, once he gets old enough to walk places by himself, I'll have to take that pinnacle of independence away from him because it is simply unsafe for boys that look like him to walk alone on the street.

Unlike many mothers, I won't be primarily concerned about the accidental calamities that may befall my son, but rather the premeditated ones.

The hardest part of all is that I'll have to find a way to explain it to him while ensuring he realizes **it's not his fault.**

How will I explain to my child that the very people who are supposed to protect him have already pre-judged him as dangerous just for being born with brown skin?

How do I make him understand that regardless of how smart he is, how nice he is, how patriotic he is, **I won't be able to change how black he is** — and thus, even though there is nothing wrong with being black, I have birthed him into a world fraught with constant danger?

And, when I've explained, when I've made him understand, how will I then keep him from expressing his wholly justified outrage since a black boy with a scowl will be deemed a thug, a fatal offense? Finally, I'll have to find a way to answer the hardest question, one sure to break my heart: Why did I have him in the first place if I knew this is the perpetually unfair reality he'd have to endure?

I do not have the answers to these questions yet. And as I read the media accounts of the Ferguson execution— and I steel myself for the inevitability of the next police shooting — there is nothing to suggest that my questions will be answered in the near future. And, therefore, for the first time in my adult life I am actually seriously questioning whether I even want children.

For centuries, **black mothers in this country have watched their sons be executed for such innocuous acts** as looking at white girl. I imagine the instructions those mothers must have given to their sons — just walk down the street with your eyes closed. I understand that those women persevered and made my existence possible. And I am incredibly grateful. But I don't want to join them. I don't want to experience the same heartache that those women and Mrs. Brown have.

I still hold out hope that the recent spates of unjust police violence against black men won't just go down in the history books as another tragic injustice but will instead be the tipping point that leads us to racial equality in this country. Personally, my commitment to achieving civil rights for all has increased in the past few months precisely because of my outrage at these horrors. It's too early to tell but perhaps the events in Ferguson and Staten Island have in fact led us onto a path where black mothers of the future will no longer tremble daily with fear at the fate that may await their sons. And maybe, just maybe, that is enough for me to answer that siren call after all.

-Brooke Tucker, Staff Attorney, ACLU of Michigan

I first learned I most likely would never conceive before I ever had consenting intercourse. It didn't seem strange to me, just another way things were, like how sometimes we weren't allowed to swim in lake St. Clair because it was filled with e. coli or how after 9-11 Halloween suddenly ended before the sun went down. When I thought about it later, as my body started maturing and I starting having relationships and imagining my future, I decided reproducing was irresponsible anyway. I watched wars waged for fear mongering and profit and came to understand how truly dangerous it was to live in some bodies, including my own which became more and more responsible for increasing threats to its safety. I had spent time in foster care and thought that if I ever found myself functional enough I would do my part for the future generation by taking in kids like myself.

“The only magazines they have in the office are plastered with images of smug, healthy pregnant women. Almost like they are rubbing it in.” I was stumbling through clunky feelings as my friend merged onto 94. It was opening day and I had to get a piece of my cervix chopped out 45 minutes away. I rambled on about spring and Easter and Mayday, the rituals of which were meant to honor and pray for fertility and bountiful harvests. I directed him to a diner in the last town I was a dependent and asked him if we could stop by the lake if we had extra time. He smiled, seeming to understand my need for synchronicity, cycles, responding that there were certain places you had to show people when you went home. My appetite wasn't really there. He talked about the farm he wanted to build. He talked about wanting to open a restaurant on the west coast, but only after starting as a dishwasher and getting to know the area. I thought about how I generally try to align myself with people who have this attitude, an attitude that was about becoming a part of the rhythm and whole when most of our human experience is about dominance. We have dominated our surroundings, and we dominate each other. Anything that can produce is subject. For this reason things seen as female are especially suspect. When we call earth mother we think of the things she gives us, water, fertile soil for growing crops, shelter. The world we live in cultivates and dominates with no regard for sustained fertility. I told him about how fertilizer was invented as a direct by-product of war, as a way to get rid of left over chemicals used for killing. I told him that industry did a lot of this to me. That big agribusiness and factory farming used a lot of chemicals that leached into water and were causing increased endocrine disruption in humans and any other creatures that came in

contact with it. These methods leave our soil infertile, and our populations increasingly infertile and cancerous.

We laughed in the parking lot, talking about smoking weed at the lake and greasy spoon farts. I hoped that for once this would be a quick office visit. The room was ugly, the color of the colon. All the pictures on the walls were of women and babies in the renaissance fashion doing weird things, or babies in buckets, or the occasional impressionist landscape. We sunk into an overstuffed couch, the kind that my 80 year old neighbor had a plastic cover on when I came over for lemonade and cookies. He said I was right about the oppressive magazines and we passed time making fun of the décor. Two hours later, after watching an entire waiting room full of women come and go, they called me back. “Well, last time we had atypical squamous cells and no HPV, this time we have HPV and no atypical cells, so I figured what the heck dude, we better just check it out.” Dr. White rolled up his sleeves and walked me through the process. First, they spray a vinegar solution on my cervix, its cold and feels uncomfortable. Then, they peek with a microscope. I held my breath hoping to hear him say “All clear.” If they had to take a sample I couldn't have sex or take a bath for two weeks, oh, and it could be cancerous. “Ok, I see a little something, no big deal, we'll just take a quick sample and if its anything we can wipe it out while we are doing your laparoscopy. You're gonna feel a little pinch.”

In the car I pop on a tape and stare silently out the window. The pain comes in waves and I dig my nails into my friend's shoulder. He distracts me by telling me that he argued with his mom about fracking destroying the environment while everyone is more concerned about the dangers of marijuana legalization. At the gas station he grabs a gallon of water and a lighter. He passes me the packed bowl and we puff it with the windows down, enjoying one of the first days of spring. “It feels like being a women is constant punishment. That's the narrative. Menstruation and painful childbirth were Eve's punishment for eating the apple.” It especially felt that way with HPV. Despite the fact that there are tests for men used in clinical trials, only women can be tested for it publicly. This leaves all the responsibility for owning and spreading this disease on women. Most of my partners were supportive and calm, but some responded negatively and I felt shame and at fault. Nearly all sexually active adults will have an HPV infection at some point in their life and it generally goes away on its own. They will monitor mine every three

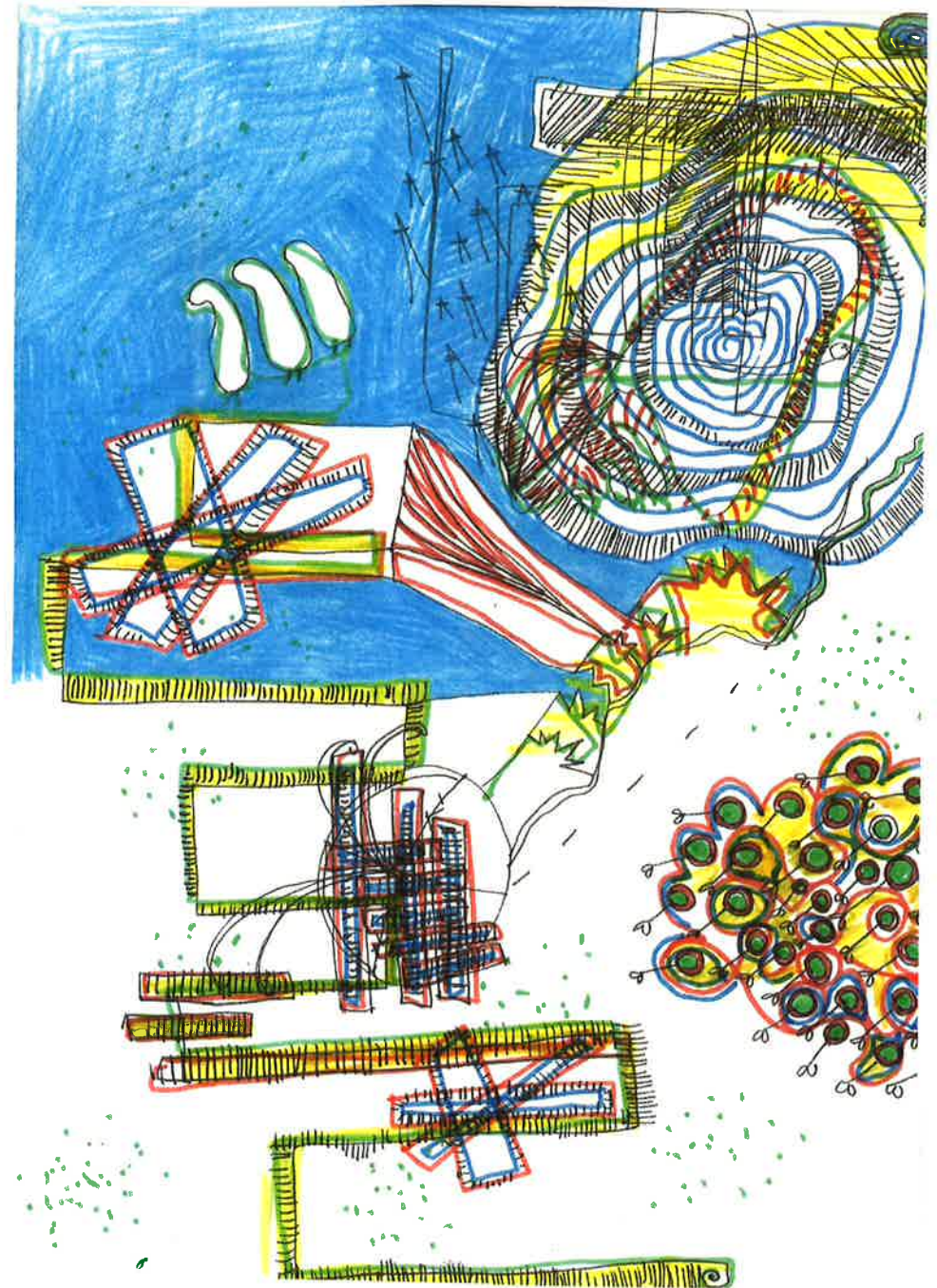
months to be sure it doesn't become cancerous and to hopefully see that it clears up. However due to the health issues I already have and my particular strain, my already shaky fertility is pretty much shot.

“Do you know why they call this Masonic?” He pointed to a sign and we read in a very disjointed manner that the Masons built a pier 1,500 yards into the lake. We sat on rocks near the water, passing the pipe or stashing it from the jogging soccer moms. When I was a teenager I would always come to this park to sort out my feelings. The lake has an infinite quality to it. Its calming, and it reminds me that nature always finds a way to right the wrongs we have done. We talked about the fertile delta and the natural treasure that is Michigan, and about how its resources were being stripped by corporate interests, never mind this is the largest fresh water source in the world. Nestle bottles it, Coca Cola owns it, and thanks to fracking our rivers are filling with oil and we've had two earth quakes in the past few years.

We drove into the city as the baseball patrons filtered out. In light of the traffic he said “Well now Midtown has all these *attractions*.” The streets were strewn with garbage. At home I laid curled in a ball. The minimal pain they described left me popping pills all week.

I know I'm not ready for a baby, but I find myself resentful at my friend's baby showers. I find myself a broken record in vulnerable moments at late night parties. My poly partner of 6 years and I drank beers and talked about the cosmic joke. We bought the house, I finally quit smoking. We sold the house, we are both unlikely to reproduce now. We have commodified fertility, and I'm angry. I'm angry about salmon that can't conceive and that the future of chocolate is threatened because we stripped the soil of its natural sustainability. I'm angry that more little girls will grow up with uterine diseases. The day after mayday a friend and I gather dandelions to brew wine. I try to stay focused on all the fertility I still have. The soil we work together, the community that continues to create and grow no matter what adversity we face, my ability to fight dominion with words, and that's still some pretty powerful stuff.

Patience Young can be found walking her dog at 3a.m. More and contact at sheliveswithanappletree.com



I Am Not (just) a Vessel: Fertility and Women's Health

by Anonymous (1)

When I was in high school, one of my best friends lived with her sister. There was a bottle of dish soap by the sink and now I can't remember which thing it said. It said one of these things:

this is a vessel I am a vessel
this is not a vessel I am not a vessel

My friend was badass, a kind and nurturing badass. She made rad mix tapes and introduced me to zines and riot grrrrl and all sorts of great stuff that helped me make sense out of going from a girl to a woman.

Her sister, older, was a few more steps ahead of her in years on that badass curve. She shaved her head and told me that East Quad was where I would meet most of the good people at UM anyway, even if I decided college wasn't for me.

They lived together and I loved being at their house. It's funny that I can still see that dish soap bottle in

my head, but I can't read it. But that's what I want to talk about, days and years later.

We are not only vessels

Women and girls are often treated as if the only important thing in their reproductive healthcare is, well, their ability to reproduce.

Not only is that reductive and potentially hurtful, but it can cause a hell of a lot of problems on a very real physical level, if a girl or woman's pain or other warning signs are consistently dismissed rather than investigated.

I am not merely valuable as a vessel for a child

I am not only important for what I can or do contain or bring into being. Don't get me wrong. That ability to create life, to have that fertility, it's a powerful thing. But we can be fertile in other ways. We can provide nurturing and love in a multitude of ways, and though "infertility" can be shattering for some, for others it's just a fact to be accepted.

Messiness and “art babies”

“Fertility” often framed only as positive, can be messy and gross and terrifying and scary. I think most of us can think of stories we have when it’s been many of those things for us or for a loved one.

One time when I was on a small tour, my friend told me she responded to her mom’s questions about kids by telling her that she had to have some “art babies” before human ones. I get that completely. If I can’t or don’t have a baby, I still want enough quality of life and energy to make music and projects and other things, create community and care for people.

My value goes beyond producing a child

If I decide not to have a child, or if that is not an option to me, I should still be able to expect to get solid medical care, or have access to resources that let me be fully empowered to make those choices. Some of those resources are informational.

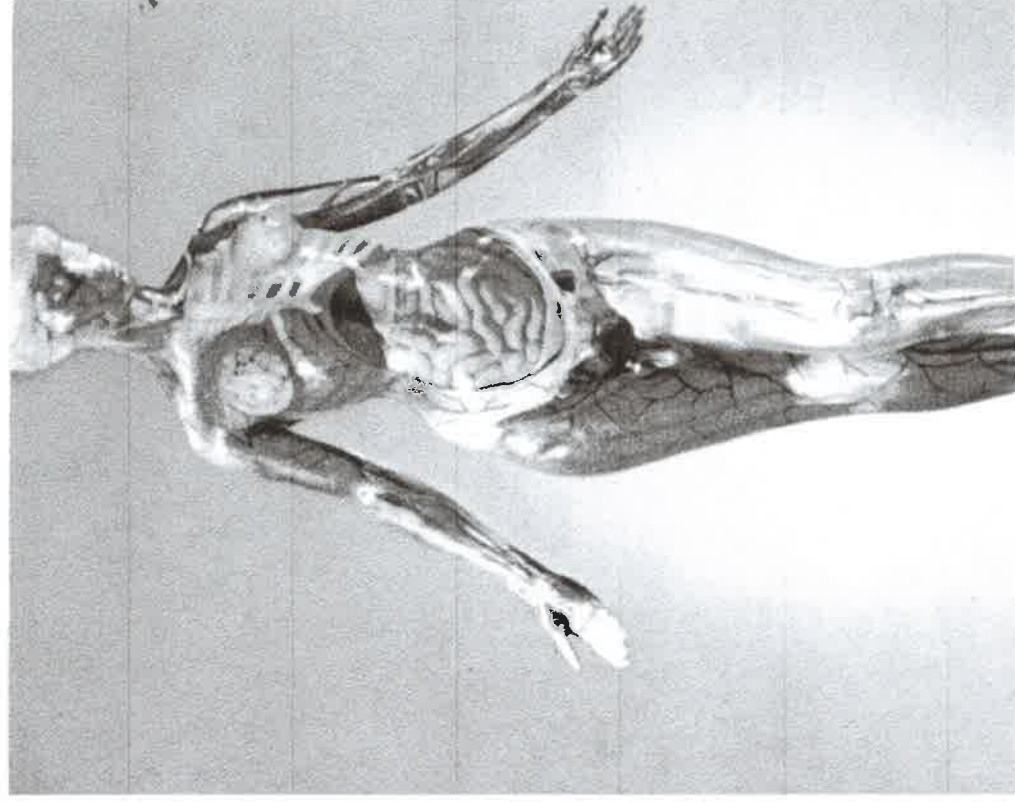
Let’s be real: in my experience, a lot of older GYNs are still working with really outdated myths about a lot of women’s reproductive problems like fibroids, endometriosis and adenomyosis.

Since almost the time of my first period, I’ve stumbled up against

the repercussions of this view over and over and over – that fertility is the main thing that matters. That my present pain and lack of ability to manage my quality of life isn’t really the problem – that if I were to just be/if I just had been a good little girl, this wouldn’t be happening.

*Particularly WTF example of fertility being held above all else:

My GYN telling me to get pregnant (not suggesting or talking it over, but def telling) at 23 because my mom had ovarian cancer and “I’d better get started.” even though I didn’t have a longterm partner or a good job. Uh, thanks but no thanks, dude. Also kinda still pissed.



I want to nurture, to grow something bigger than myself — to help us help each other through awareness of warning signs...

One in ten women have endometriosis. Many are lucky to not have too many symptoms, but even for those women, it's a condition that can slowly show symptoms that are often dismissed as a woman "over-reacting" to pain (echos of hysteria, anyone?) or other symptoms.

The average time from onset of first symptoms/complaints to actual diagnosis for endometriosis is EIGHT TO TEN YEARS. That's a lot of life to be living, y'all. Let's help other young women get diagnosed and treated earlier so they can do that living, make that art, be a good friend, be that rad aunt, or do the other things they need & want to do!

Here's what we can do:

If there are women in your life who are experiencing an inordinate amount of pain with their cycle, believe them. Listen to them. If their doctors are not taking their pain seriously, help them advocate to get a 2nd, 3rd, 4th opinion. It was only after many years and many drugs that I ended up finding a specialist surgeon in Chicago that gave me 5+ years of normal quality of life.

Things to look out for:

- Women shouldn't be in so much pain monthly that they aren't able to do regular activities. Sometimes cramps suck real hard, but if pain goes beyond what advise + rest + diet changes can help manage, look for other answers

- Throwing up from pain on the reg? That's not normal. Don't keep living that way or let yr friends live that way. There are anti-nausea meds that can help, but in the big picture, it's probably time to find a more knowledgeable Dr. to find/treat a root problem that's causing that

- Yeah, eating certain foods during your period can make your body grumpy or retain water, etc., but if your digestion actually seems to stop entirely for a week no matter what you eat, there's likely more going on

Be aware:

- There's not just one answer to problems of cysts, endometriosis or adenomyosis. Be wary of anyone who leads you to believe that. Likewise, though, just because something is "natural" doesn't mean it's better. Sometimes surgery is necessary. You have to try what you can and see how it goes. You can help provide perspective to a friend working through what is/isn't helping. LISTEN.

- If you just try to "tough out" bad pain, there can be other consequences too, like musculoskeletal issues in the lower back and hips from tensing up.

- Help the women around you be informed consumers abt their healthcare. Certain medications have repercussions yrs after. I'm thankful for the drug I took that let me finish a degree and go on tour. But - I thought the side effects I had at the time were it - (surprise!) sometimes there are more later.

Most of all: TALK ABOUT THESE THINGS. Work against the stigma around menstruation and women's health in whatever ways are comfortable to you.

The worst part about it wasn't the actual thing itself. The older I get, the more expansive the gray. It eats most of the easy dichotomies. At 19 it was real simple [for me]. I had expectations of duplication. What ever is the exact same over and over and over again? Nothing. The worst part wasn't approaching the desk, holding a cherished little hand, head lowered and voice quiet with the fantasized hypocrisy of doubt and a motherhood failed. That was just humbling and weird.

The worst part was That Ringer we all know how to get trapped in; some version of Self rehashed and insecure and messy. I don't believe in clean anymore. It's overrated and mythical. The worst part wasn't the seemingly endless vacillation, either. I am proud of our humanness and emotional complexity. Our wildness. Honestly, the worst part was Michigan's Informed Consent for Abortion Law. I am a feminist, an activist, a [usually] informed voter. But on this Law I was ignorant to implementation...I hadn't thought through the barriers of paperwork and computer access and blinded timelines. I hadn't recognized the detriment of force fed embryonic images. Click. Next. Click. Next. Click. Really? And print that now. In Work. In Library. In wherever. Grab it quick. Secret-like. Is the printer-date set right? Is that a valid time? Is it within 24 hours? Don't forget that paper, don't tear it with that hasty shove into your pocket.

When will our confident, declarative voices ever be enough?

Yes. I am aware. I understand. Hear me: Do this now, not because I have this paper (+ its spanking new manila folder) tucked neatly in the back pocket of my briefcase; but Do This Now, please, because I am a grown woman who is capable of making decisions about my life and my family and my universe. Do this now because my voice is strong. Do this now because it is my body and my right, and because I am telling you to.

- Anonymous (2)

**Am I defined by my fertility?
Or
You Should Be Ready**

by Alice Bagley

Society says: I'm defined by my fertility. At one point, in the recent past, the CDC suggested that all women of childbearing age abstain from any substance that might harm a growing fetus, because at any point a woman might become pregnant. And she should be ready. A large swath of society sees women as a vessel for a growing a fetus until it becomes a baby. Even people who believe in birth control, even many people who would say that they are for legal abortion. The most often cited pro-choice argument these days is that it should be legal, safe, and rare. An abortion should be an exception. An abortion should only occur when there are reasons of health, family, or financial circumstance that make raising a child undesirable. Just not wanting a baby, well, you should have used birth control, better birth control. Even many progressives will make this argument. Because really, if you're a woman you should want a baby. If it's up to you, you should be ready.

Society says: if you don't want to get pregnant, but you want to have heterosexual, penetrative sex, you should use birth control. You can use condoms: prone to user error, unpopular with penis-having people, breakable. You can use a copper IUD: somewhat risky (though less so than it's reputation), often with side affects that include heavy, painful, and irregular periods. You can use hormonal birth control (pills, patches, rings, IUDs): few immediate side affects for most, but increasing your risk of problems like cancer and stroke. If you're responsible, and want to have sex, you'll choose one. And if you get pregnant, you better be ready.

Society says: the choice is: to bear a child, or make a choice.

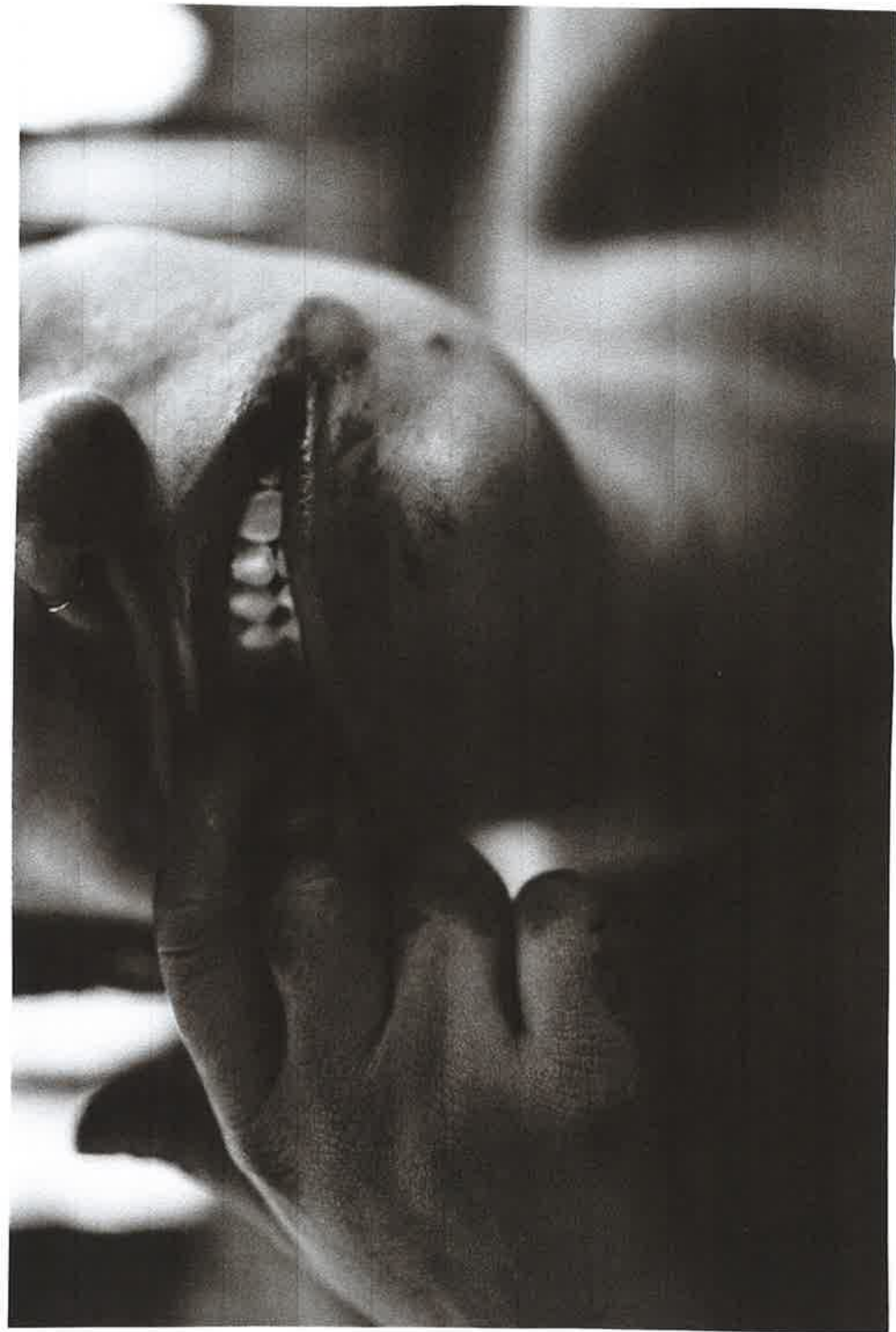
Society says: that choice should be hard. And one outcome ought to be rare. And people will lie to you about the risk of that choice. And you better be ready.

I say: I am a sexually active woman who uses a hormonal IUD to prevent pregnancy.

This is one of the most reliable ways to prevent pregnancy, especially since it is inserted and lasts for years so it eliminates user error. There are no guarantees in life but the likelihood of my becoming pregnant is incredibly unlikely, I haven't had my period in over a year. I am not fertile, at least not right now. And so that's one choice.

And sometimes I feel like that choice, to truncate my fertility, makes me less of a woman. As obnoxious as getting your period is, it brings you into the sisterhood. The bleeding is a sign that you're a special human, the half that can create a life. I don't know where my divacup is right now. I'm not bleeding. My body is not ready, to create a person.

If I fell into the incredibly unlikely area where I got pregnant, I would get an abortion. I am stable; emotionally, financially, health-wise. I'm in a committed relationship. Lots of my friends are having babies these days. I have no interest in doing so. If I got pregnant I would not bear a child, and my reason would be that I don't want to. Every child should be choice.



Logistics of Awake
Sierra Elizabeth Hansen

"We're all going to be" "ok," "be" "ok." "But the logistics of stopping it" "like a prognosis" "are dirt poor." "Swim with me" "but don't look at me." "It's almost better from a distance" "so, maybe you need some distance?"

"Hurry me away" "because I don't want you" "to fall out of touch." "We're always so" "disembodied and depersonalized" "in slim volumes" "of ocean."

"You're not fat" "you're curvy," "and appreciate what you" "want." "Think about the woman you will become" "by the" "end of days." "What if" "we were" "nocturnal and full" "of insomnia?"

"As a species," "we try" "to be awake." "Slap me" "if you want" "to stay awake together."

"What happened to the Neanderthals?" "Why did they disappear?" "What's it to you?" "I can't hear you." "Soundless" "holes filled in" "with lots and lots of coffee." "Break the cycle" "and when the water crests" "as they chant" "dirges to forget their losses," "fill the tank with gasoline."

"Leave then."

Sierra Elizabeth Hansen

Anne Karenina and Bees

You started in a dark place, cells rioting inside of your mother. Eating inside, no table. No chairs. Cocooned, your liquid hammock within a body.

One day, you will ask yourself, why am I by myself with no chairs? Why is it so dark, but warm and infinite? Somebody outside will tell you why, and you will still squirm, grabbing, infantilized by the hint of light glowing in a window. One day, you make it out, and you are cut loose. Somebody presses porcelain against your cheek and tells you to squeeze your doll until you become it. *It's a girl*, they say.

Every line in your face spans the length of time you've been alive, like the deep etched lines inside an oak tree. One day you will find a porch swing with a smattering of dead bees and wonder why they have to die because they sting.

Nobody wants to die of heartache, like the split apart Anna Karenina. I say this because Anna Karenina was a real person, and her story was more real than the fiction. Someone died that way.

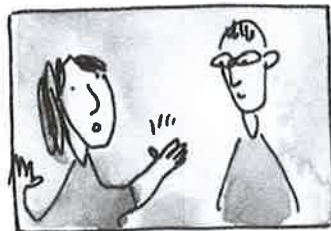
A mysterious nexus of ideas is how people's lives become reconceptualized as the dramatic. You say it is happening in a parallel world, and it already has. *It really happened, once.*

FEMINIST COMICS — FERTILITY

For this issue of the Seraphine Collective Zine, I tried to actually stay on the theme : Fertility. Graphic Medicine is a growing genre of comics, similar to autobiographic comics, but with a narrative that centers around medicine and the body. Recently, Ellen Forney's award winning and well reviewed *Marbles: Mania, Depression, Michelangelo, and Me* examined her lived experience with Bipolar Disorder. Def worth checking out, most libraries have it! For this article, I was actually able to find a few comics telling pregnancy narratives you don't normally hear, written by different Feminist comics authors.



In the morning, I notice my pubes and armpit hair are falling out.



'Damn, I'm not fighting the patriarchy any more.'



Lovely doctor from the pain team has heard I'm back in hospital and comes to see me. 'Sorry to see you and nice to see you! How are things?' Comforting to see familiar faces.



I'm surprised by how many male midwives there are. Nifty blue pyjamas and orange Crocs. One listens to the baby again. Sounds like one of the wood pigeons is in there too.

From *Probably Nothing*

Matilda Tristram 2014

FEMINIST COMICS — FERTILITY

Matilda Tristram's *Probably Nothing* looks at the author's pregnancy which was concurrent with an experience with cancer treatment, including chemotherapy. Tristram had to make a difficult decision at the beginning, whether to delay chemo, a risk to herself (option 1), to abort (option 2), or to try chemo during pregnancy (option 3). She decides to try to save herself and her baby, choosing option 3. The comic is very long with many panels. You learn a lot about the National Health Service, and that though in many ways it is more systematized, it is much friendlier for pregnancy / childbirth / motherhood! Tristram never loses her sense of humor with panels such as the opposing ones, but her journey is quite grueling and difficult!



From *Pregnant Butch*

A.K. Summers 2014

Pregnant Butch is the story of A.K. Summers's experience with pregnancy as a butch woman. Summers talks a lot about different issues of gender in ways that remind me the sharp wit of Alison Bechdel or Jennifer Camper. Many times reading *Pregnant Butch*, I sighed, missing one of my strong Feminist butch friends, or yelled out loud in agreement forgetting I was at the library. :P

Summers often depicts herself as Herge's *Tintin* (if *Tintin* were pregnant) and references panels from different *Tintin* comics. However, I love her comic most for its hard, radical, critical, Feminist discussions of identity politics, the medical industry, butch erasure, and family. In her intro, Summers notes that "it is the job of the mainstream to normalize and assimilate queer characters into the overall fabric of their stories, but it remains the job of the LBFTQ comics underground to celebrate, analyze, and shed light on the profound complexities of queer experiences from an insider's perspective." Well put. Ask for this at your library!

Ben 2015

You Should Write A Song

By: Stacey MacLeod of Dear Darkness

In order to write a song, you need one thing-- desire to write a song. It is helpful to have a tuned guitar with all its strings, but a perfect instrument is not necessary for writing a song, nor is formal knowledge of the instrument, whether guitar, keyboard, drums, bass, or wash tub. You don't have to know how to read music. You don't need someone to tell you are good at it beforehand. You should write a song--if you want to.

Some claim they cannot write a song, because they don't have musical "talent," so they don't have "a natural aptitude or skill for" music. Notice that "talent" is a noun, not an adjective. When a person who lacks talent writes a song, the quality of the song is not equal to the amount of talent the creator has or doesn't have. If you aren't talented, then your process may be different than the process of a writer who possesses this abstract and not measurable aptitude. Musician and speaker, Henry Rollins attests, "I don't have talent. I have tenacity. I have discipline. I have focus." You may have to work a little more, if you don't have talent. You may have to ask more questions and take greater time. But the notion that you lack talent should not stop you from attempting to write a song. You should write a song.

If you don't think you have a "good" voice or lack formal training on your instrument, then you should write a song. While it's true that talent and knowledge are strengths and allow writers to expand their palettes, not having experience and/or not having a popular-sounding voice (like perhaps, a tortured, folk-waif) could be where your genius lays. For instance, Tom Waits' voice isn't clear and full of whispering vibrato, but it is luxuriously textured, like gravel. It sounds like the month of November. What makes his voice "bad," flawed, is what makes his voice "good." Moreover, if you don't know the names of musical notes, chords, and scales on your guitar, you still have the ability to produce the same sounds as someone who does. Just like in prose writing, the simplest language is often the most clearly understood. A song based on two dissonant chords may be more effective than a song of chords arranged according to formal rules, standards, and expectations. A sound that is unexpected is often moving and startling. As a writer experiments with her instrument, she becomes her own rule-maker. So, not being "good" or having a mastery of your instrument should not stop you from songwriting.

The lack of money is the root of all evil, but it should not stop you from writing a song. People who lack money and resources are in a raw state of need: One definition of "raw" is "painfully open," so a writer who lacks money is already open to expose her unique, human experience. The most moving of songs are about pain, suffering, and desperation. The most moving of songs begin in authentic and unprocessed expression. Often, when songwriters become wealthy (their need) their pain is dulled and the songs they write sound superficial. True, people with money can write valuable music, but not having money and resources doesn't mean you can't write a song-- 'cause, you know, you should write a song.

Set aside what you feel you lack and know it makes no difference to the end result of songwriting. The only essential to writing a song is will. Decide you want to write a song and then do it.

After desire, inspiration is essential to the writing process. A writer has to be raw, sensitive, observant, and willing to confront and examine definitions and personal experiences. For example, if the boy or girl who the songwriter is in love with doesn't notice her, then she takes the feeling of being invisible and makes it auditory. This alchemy may require she meditate on a mental image of the boy or girl and her environment in the moment, or that she, in sound, admit her frustration with humility and vulnerability. While challenging, taking inspiration and molding it into a song, only requires a willingness to feel, think, associate, and reckon. Take an emotional inventory and magnify the world from your perspective, and a focused song will rise.

Some writers begin the songwriting process with emotional and /or intellectual inspiration. Perhaps the writer finds a phrase like "cream puff," while she is reading. These couple words can lead to an epic exploration of human weakness and timidity. The writer can play her guitar, or keyboard, or flute, or drums, or tic-tac box, and meditate on the state of cream-puffiness. How she plays her instrument will depend on her concentration on the essence of cream-puffiness. Maybe the heaviness of the beat will create contrast with the lightness of being a cream puff, and highlight the state.

Yet, some writers begin with a seemingly, physical feeling. A writer may grab her guitar out of a need to distract herself from her troubles or boredom. Once she begins to strum, play, and hum along, that is when whatever emotions she feels drives her body to create. The sounds she makes-- maybe hard and fast or soft and long-- inspires her to experiment with words that match. She creates a dominant tone.

Eventually, with desire,--but no matter where the process begins--the creation of a song unites the mind, heart, and body. You should write a song.

IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW

SPEEDY ORTIZ – Foil Deer (Carpark, 2015)

Speedy is back with a new album! And it's aaaaaawesome! Keeping their brand of dense 90's intelligent rock mixed with front lady/poet Sadie Dupuis's always unique and sophisticated lyrics ("If I feel like it could have come from someone else's voice, it's not good enough for me" – NME Interview), Speedy Ortiz's *Foil Deer* is as finely worked and honed as their previous releases, but boosted from a solidified and unified lineup and a whole lot of tour milage. Make *Foil Deer* part of your summer soundtrack!

Remember: "I'm not bossy. I'm the boss" - Raising the Skate, SPEEDY ORTIZ

NEW ALBUMS/SINGLES!

CHASTITY BELT – Time to Go Home (Hardly Art, 2015)

Seattle's Chastity Belt wants you to know that the best of the awkward 90's are back (tapered acid wash jeans anyone?) and, as always, that sweet, sweet jams are all the rage. Their new album out on Hardly Art is CB at its best - mellow, groovy songs about existential wonderings, sexual relationships, and of course cool sluttitude, all set afloat on a sea of shimmering pacific northwestern reverb.

◀◀◀See Chastity Belt @ UFO Factory (Detroit) on 6/21!▶▶▶

Check out the Fuck Chastity Belt EP! It's my favorite:

<https://chastity-belt.bandcamp.com/album/fuck-chastity-belt>

GIRLPOOL – Before the World Was Big (Witchita, 6/2/2015 Release)

If you were able to get into the UFO Factory on 5/9 you know why UK band GIRLPOOL is worth risking heat exhaustion and dehydration (but seriously, stay hydrated people). Check out GIRLPOOL's dreamy, rhythmic, harmony laden debut album *Before the World Was Big* now!

NOW YOU KNOW

by Dina Bankole

PROTOMARTYR
R. RING



A HALF OF SEVEN

R.RING = BFF FEST 2015 HEADLINER!!

R. RING / PROTOMARTYR - Split 7"

(Hardly Art, physical release 6/16, download available now)

Hometown heroes Protomartyr have teamed up with Kelley Deal and Mike Montgomery's R.Ring for a seven inch split of amazingness! You may be wondering when R.Ring will play Michigan. Well, wonder no longer. Seraphine Collective is making it happen just for you! **R.Ring is headlining this year's BFF FEST AAAAAAHH!!** So catch them at **MOCAD on 7/25!!** Eeeeeeee!!

Best thing: An R.Ring track for you to have and to hold!

Best moments: Kelley Deal's guest vocals on "Blues Festival."

Best lyrics ever: "Hell is forever being local support" – Blues Festival, PROTOMARTYR (too true, too true)

Unpretty Rapstar (Mnet, 2015)

Watch online on Dailymotion or Kshowonline

Though unfortunately titled, Mnet's *Unpretty Rapstar* tv show features a lineup of some of Korea's fiercest and fly-est rappers... who all happen to be women. Created as a spin-off of the popular rap competition program *Show Me the Money* in order to give much deserved screen time to female rappers that the original show sadly lacked, *Unpretty Rapstar* goes above and beyond its parent program with less focus on eliminations and more focus on track creation, (tense) teamwork, and epic diss battles...!

Show Me the Money 4 starts off in June and actually promises to have more women involved! I do hope however, that *Unpretty Rapstar 2* happens next year!

Rappers you need to know: Cheetah, Jessi, Jimin (of AOA)

Listen to the *Unpretty Rapstar* Compilation on iTunes!

<http://tinyurl.com/unprettyrapstar>

WATCH!



HUNGER MAKES ME A MODERN GIRL by Carrie Brownstein

(Riverhead Books, 10/27/2015) *preorder @ Amazon!

Sleater-Kinney guitarist/Portlandia star/coolest woman ever/your super crush Carrie Brownstein is releasing a memoir this year!!! Prepare to be inspired and amazed!

#coolassladymemoirs2015 #goingstrong

READ!



GRRRL COLLECTION (Sweden)

<http://grrrlcollection.tictail.com/>

Snag this shirt full of Riot Grrrl/90's heroes from Stockholm based group GRRRL COLLECTION!

WEAR!



WACKY WAKO (LA)

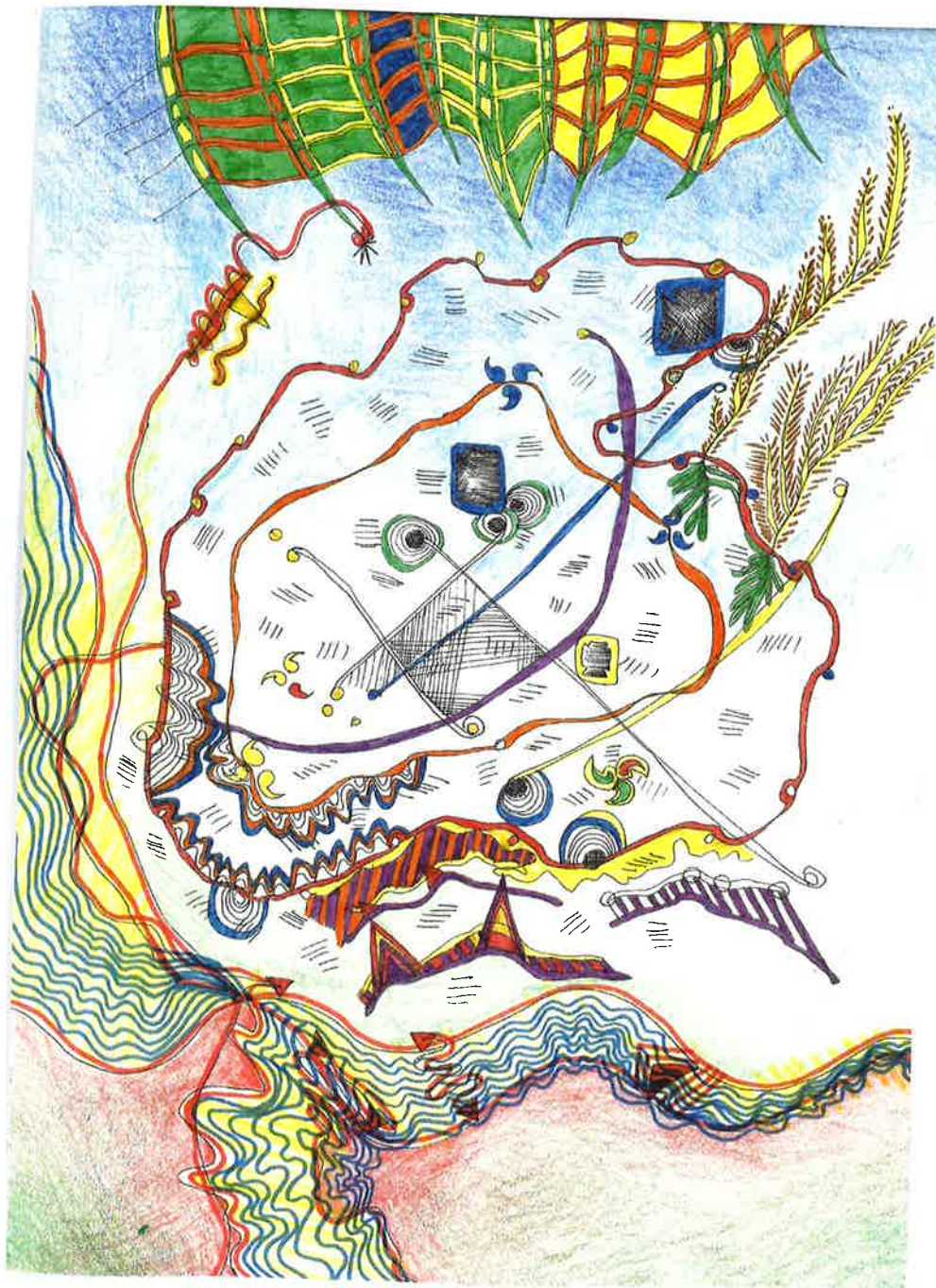
<http://wackywacko.bigcartel.com/>

Seth Bogart's (of Hunx & His Punx) Wacky Wacko shop is a brilliantly colorful tribute to badass ladies, maxi pads, and cigarettes.

Highly recommended:

The Grrrls Do Everything Better tee/sweatshirt/all over button up /undies!

RuPaul for President!



ROCK FOR CHOICE MIX!

ROCK FOR CHOICE was a series of benefit concerts held from 1991 - 2001 created to allow musicians to show support for the pro-choice movement in the fight to protect abortion rights and women's health clinics. Originally founded by L7 and LA Weekly music editor Sue Cummings and later partnered with Gloria Steinem's Feminist Majority Foundation, the Rock For Choice concerts quickly spread across the country from the inaugural Los Angeles show (10/21/1991) to dozens of cities across America and Canada. Here's a sweet playlist of just a handful of bands that have played R4C over the years.

<http://www.feminist.org/rock4c/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rock_for_Choice

WATCH THE YOUTUBE PLAYLIST HERE!
<http://tinyurl.com/seraR4Cmix>

NIRVANA - Drain You (Rock For Choice, Hollywood, 1991)



MUDHONEY - Suck You Dry

L7 - Pretend That We're Dead (Live The World, 1992)

HOLE - She Walks Over Me (Washington D.C., 1994)

SEVEN YEAR BITCH - The Scratch (Long Beach, 1993)

BIKINI KILL - New Radio (Lincoln, 1994)

JOAN JETT - Cherry Bomb w/ L7 (Rock For Choice,

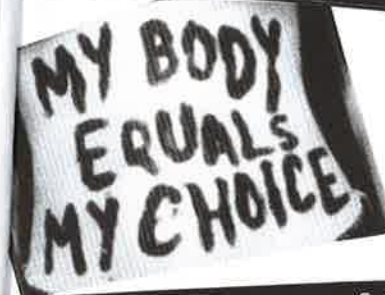
Hollywood 1992)



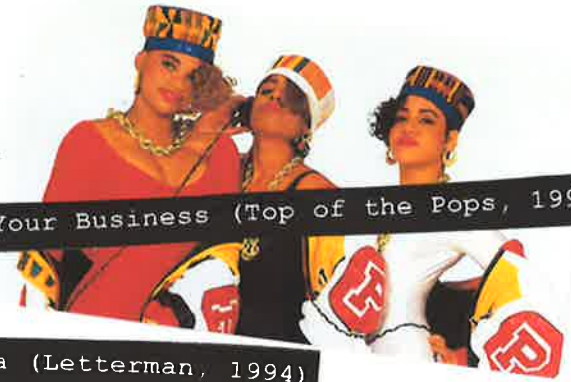
FUGAZI - Suggestion (Washington D.C., 1991)

FREE KITTEN - Teenie Weenie Boppie

GY POP - Candy feat. Kate Pierson (Arsenio Hall Show, 1991)



SALT-N- PEPA - None of Your Business (Top of the Pops, 1993)



LIZ PHAIR - Supernova (Letterman, 1994)

ROCK
LETTERS TO CLEO - Demon Rock (Boston, 1996)

FOO FIGHTERS - Everlong (Jules Holland, 1997)

STONE TEMPLE PILOTS - Big Bang Baby (Letterman, 1996)

CALL FOR ART!



BFF FEST 2



Friday, July 24

This one night only exhibition is the pre-celebration for BFF Festival

Theme: Riot

Deadline: July 13

Exhibition: Friday, July 24, 7pm

Install: Thursday, July 23

Guidelines: All work must be framed and ready to hang.

Email Submissions:

hello@seraphinecollective.org

R I ♀ T

BFF Fest is an all-age inclusive summer music festival in Detroit created to highlight, celebrate, and promote the talents of Michigan's diverse community of musicians and artists.

For more information visit seraphinecollective.org

▷▷▷ UPCOMING SHOWS!!! ◁◁◁

- 6/12** - Insect Ark (CA/NY) // Ritual Howls // A Death Cinematic // Real Ghosts @ UFO Factory, Detroit
- 6/13** - Seraphine Collective presents: Pretty Ghouls Record Release Show // Mystery Actions (Chicago) // Junglefowl (Ypsilanti) @ Trumbullpex 4210 Trumbull St, Detroit
- 6/13** - White Lung // Obliterations @ Lager House, Detroit
- 6/13** - Olivia Neutron-John // Dear Darkness // CRODE + Shells @ UFO Factory, Detroit
- 6/16** - Lower Dens @ Loving Touch, Ferndale
- 6/19** - Guantanamo Baywatch (OR) // Brothels // Junk Food Junkies @ Painted Lady, Hamtramck
- 6/21** - Chastity Belt (WA) // American Wrestlers // Casual Sweetheart @ UFO Factory, Detroit
- 6/27** - Pins @ Loving Touch, Ferndale
- 7/2** - Seraphine Collective Presents: Double Winter // K9 Sniffies // Blurb (CHI) // Best Exes @ The New Hybrid Moments
- 7/3** - Things Feel Heavy Art Show wsg Mexican Knives // Bonny Doon (ft. Fred Thomas) @ Tangent Gallery, Detroit
- 7/3** - Rebel Kind // Broken Water (Olympia) // Weed (Vancouver) // Stef @ Lo & Behold, Hamtramck
- 7/15** - No Age // Sun Foot // Devin, Gary, & Ross -Generationalpictomusicapolis @ UFO Factory, Detroit
- 7/18** - Jaill (TN) // White Mystery (CHI) // Dirty Fences @ UFO Factory, Detroit
- 7/24** - Pre BFF Art Show wsg Rebel Kind // Sharkmuffin (NY) // Casual Sweetheart // Double Winter // Alice Bag book reading @ UFO Factory, Detroit
- 7/25** - 2nd Annual BFF FEST, Detroit @ MOCAD / Fest After Party @ Donovan's Detroit, 12:00A
- 7/28** - Amanda X/ The Spirit of the Beehive @ UFO Factory, Detroit
- 8/2** - Seraphine Collective presents: Numb Bats (AZ) // Bloodstone // Tin Foil // Best Exes @ Lager House, Detroit
- 8/20** - Royal Headache // Sheer Mag @ UFO Factory, Detroit
- **6/7 - 8/2** ♪ JENNYOKE: karaoke sundays w JENNY JUNIOR @ UFO Factory, Detroit