

Focus on Self-Managed Abortion July 2024

A Note from Our New Program Associate

Dear Friends,

I am delighted to introduce myself to you all! My name is Grace Koch and I am the new Program Associate at Our Bodies Ourselves Today. I deeply admire the legacy of Our Bodies Ourselves and am grateful for the opportunity to contribute, both to women's empowerment and to reproductive justice for all.



I will forever remember when Roe v. Wade was overturned, sitting on my porch at my childhood home in rural Wisconsin, and the months of fear and confusion that followed. Wisconsin still has a restrictive abortion policy, with very few abortion clinics and multiple TRAP laws. I have seen firsthand how comprehensive abortion care can be overwhelmingly inaccessible. Starting with poor sexual/reproductive health education, many women in my community struggle to access contraceptives, birth control, specialized gynecologic care, and have to travel great lengths to receive abortion services. Geography, stigma, misinformation, and poor sex education isolate many women across the Midwest, and throughout the U.S.

The abortion pills mifepristone and misoprostol provide a safe and effective self-managed abortion option. Medication abortion can be especially empowering for people who face barriers in access to abortion services. However, new and existing policies are actively trying to curtail access to abortion pills. For example, Wisconsin prohibits medication abortion by mail, so it is available only in person. If I still lived where I grew up, I would have to drive over two hours to get pills. In addition, anti-abortion "pregnancy crisis centers" are expanding across the country.

I came to OBOS Today because of issues like this, to fight for reproductive rights, bodily autonomy, and accessible and reliable health education for everyone. It is more important now than ever to spread awareness, create conversations, destigmatize reproductive health, and uplift oppressed voices.

In solidarity,
Grace Koch

Explore Our Resources

**What Self-Managed Medication Abortion is
Really Like**

Since the overturn of *Roe v. Wade*, the number of self-managed medication abortions, using the abortion pill, has increased. This article from *Teen Vogue* provides an overview of self-managed abortions, including how the pill works, what you can expect if you take the pill, and how to get the pill. It also features expert testimony on the effectiveness of the pill and the personal story of someone who chose to have a medication abortion at home.



[Read the Full Article](#)

Meet Our Content Experts



Candace Bond-Therault, content expert on *Abortion for Our Bodies Ourselves Today*

This month, we spoke with Candace Bond-Therault (she/her), a Black queer feminist lawyer, writer, and social justice advocate. Stanford University Press will publish her new book, *Queering Reproductive Justice: An Invitation*, in August.

What brought you to *Our Bodies Ourselves Today*?

I remember reading excerpts from the *Our Bodies Ourselves* book back in college. At the time, very few feminist anthologies spoke to issues surrounding abortion and how to access this form of healthcare. Fast forward to a few years ago: I was asked to join the newest iteration of *Our Bodies Ourselves Today*, the website. I loved the idea of helping to curate an online platform that provides accurate peer-reviewed information about abortion. Today we live in a world with so much misinformation about abortion itself and how to safely access this healthcare without experiencing stigma, criminalization, or violence. As a professor teaching a course on Reproductive Justice and Social Justice Activism at Howard University, I feel confident sharing this website as a resource for students to learn more about abortion and other forms of reproductive healthcare.

What's one thing related to sexuality that we need to understand better?

I think that we are moving into a world where self-managed abortion is becoming more accessible and a safer option for many people. However, there is still a lack of education about what it actually means to self-manage one's abortion. The emphasis on "self" in self-managed abortion is important and empowering because every person should be able to access this form of healthcare without needing the assistance of others. However, I would love to see the self-managed movement also speak more to community-managed abortion models, recognizing that everyone may not want to have an abortion on their own, but would want to have one in a safe supportive community. I love that abortion doulas are becoming more

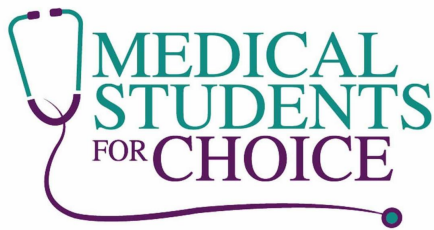
prominent and I think this is a step forward to ensure that folks do not feel isolated, unless they want to be!

What gives you hope?

I am hopeful that more and more people are finally understanding the importance of reproductive justice and I no longer feel like I'm screaming into the void. Instead, I feel like I'm actually connecting with everyday folks who are really interested in learning more about reproductive justice and abortion access than ever before. I would love to see all colleges and universities have a mandated orientation on reproductive justice -- in addition to the trainings on sexual harassment and assault-- so that students go throughout college feeling empowered to not just speak out about violence and harassment, but also to speak out about the positive personal political power that they possess to make reproductive decisions for their bodies.

[More about Candace Bond-Therault](#)

Organizing for Change: Abortion Rights



Medical Students for Choice

Founded in 1993, Medical Students for Choice works to ensure that medical students and trainees are informed about and educated on the full spectrum of reproductive health care, including abortion care. They accomplish this by empowering

student organizing through their over 220 student chapters around the world, hosting gatherings that provide training on family planning and abortion, and providing access to and support for clinical abortion training. [Pamela Merritt](#), the Our Bodies Ourselves Today content expert chair on Abortion, has been Medical Students for Choice's Executive Director since 2021.

[More about Medical Students for Choice](#)

Deciding to Have an Abortion

If I Had Listened to Abortion Protesters, Things Would Be Different

In this story by A'yen Tran, originally published in the 2005 edition of "Our Bodies, Ourselves," Tran reflects on how different her life would be had she not had an abortion. She discusses her decision-making process for having both of her abortions as well as the support she felt after having her second abortion.



[Read Tran's Story](#)

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News and Events



I'm a doctor from Tennessee who survived an ectopic pregnancy, but others aren't so lucky

In this article, physician and Our Bodies Ourselves Today content expert [Rebekah Rollston](#) highlights the ways that abortion restrictions can affect people who experience ectopic pregnancies.

When Rollston herself had an ectopic pregnancy, she received necessary and lifesaving medical care. She took mifepristone and misoprostol for miscarriage management, following the same process used in medication abortion. After confirmation of the ectopic pregnancy, she was given methotrexate. The Dobbs v. Jackson decision threatens access to methotrexate, mifepristone, and misoprostol, putting the lives of women and gender expansive people at risk.

[Read the Full Article](#)

Save the Date! Celebrate Our Website Relaunch

A new, redesigned Our Bodies Ourselves website is coming -- and we're hosting a hybrid party at Suffolk University to celebrate it! More info to follow. For now, please mark your calendars:

**Thursday, September 26th
5-7:30pm
Sargent Hall
Suffolk University
Boston, Massachusetts**

Your accurate *and* inclusive
guide to health, sexuality, *and*
reproductive justice

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