

# Mobilizing for Reproductive Freedom in the Battle Over Bodily Sovereignty

*Panelists: Adaku Utah, Cloee Cooper, Loretta Ross, Tara Romano,  
Moderated by Koki Mendis*

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**Koki Mendis:** Thank you for joining Political Research Associates today for our final roundtable discussion of the series, Mobilizing for Reproductive Freedom in the Battle Over Bodily Sovereignty. PRA or Political Research Associates is a national nonprofit celebrating its 40th year this year. We research, monitor, and publicize the agenda and strategies of the U.S and global Right, revealing the powerful intersections of Christian nationalism, White nationalism, and patriarchy. PRA produces investigative reports, articles, and tools; publishes the peer reviewed quarterly magazine, The Public Eye; advises social justice movement organizers; and offers expert commentary for local and national media outlets. Our core issue areas span reproductive justice, LGBTQ rights, racial and immigrant justice, civil liberties, and economic justice.

This conversation comes at the close of a five-part webinar series designed to encapsulate the wisdom that with Trump out of office, the Right and Far Right have not faded into the background. From the wealthy foundations to the fringe movements that have propelled American politics rightward over the past 40 years, these actors remain as relevant as ever. Our conversations over this series span the grim realities of climate change and climate politics, the massive spread of mis- and disinformation, the coordinated legislative attacks against the rights of trans children to exist and flourish, and the material reality of millions of Americans living in a constant state of economic and social precarity. I'm starting today's conversation with this look back for the simple reason that the struggle for reproductive justice encapsulates these struggles for economic and physical security, for equitable healthcare, for the flourishing of individuals within empowered communities, and for narratives that center bodily sovereignty and freedom from patriarchal and cultural hegemony.

In May of this year, as we all know, Texas passed a law deputizing citizens to sue anyone who aids another in obtaining an abortion after six weeks,

and rewards those whose challenges in courts are successful with \$10,000 in attorney fees. This clever and destructive law is the newest development in the ongoing war of attrition against legal abortion. Simultaneously, President Biden's administration has signed into law the American Rescue Plan, which provides an expanded child tax credit that went into effect with its first payment today. This monthly payment, while insufficient to reduce the financial burden of parenthood altogether, is an acknowledgment that parenthood should be a shared social responsibility.

In today's conversation, we will take a look at the state of reproductive justice today, the Right and Far Right strategies to further deteriorate bodily and family autonomy and strategies from our movement partners for finding a way forward. For this ambitious conversation, we are honored to be joined by some incredible minds today. [Adaku Utah](#), Organizing Director at the [National Network of Abortion Funds](#) and Co-Founder and Co-Director of [Harriet's Apothecary](#); [Cloee Cooper](#), Research Analyst at [Political Research Associates](#); [Loretta Ross](#), Associate Professor at [Smith College](#), Co-Founder of [SisterSong](#), a principal partner with 14 Strategies Consultants, and Co-Creator of the theory of Reproductive Justice; and [Tara Romano](#), Executive director of [NARAL Pro-Choice North Carolina](#). So thank you very much to our esteemed panelists and to you, our wonderful audience for joining us today.

Please note the webinar will be recorded and the recording will be distributed by email and on PRA's website in the next few days. Our audience today also has access to live closed captioning, which you can toggle on at the bottom of your screen. Audience members, please feel free to introduce yourself in the chat so we can see who all is with us today. We will also be taking time today for audience questions which can be dropped in the chat at any point in the discussion.

So I'd like to start our conversation today with a clear understanding of what reproductive justice means, and what it encompasses for our movement leaders fighting tooth and nail to achieve it, before we take a closer look at actors on the Right who are engaging in a war of attrition against it. This is a weighty question, but we are honored today to be joined by Dr. Loretta Ross, co-creator of the very concept. So, Loretta, can you please tell us, what is reproductive justice?

**Loretta Ross:** Well, thanks for having me on your panel, and offering me a chance to participate in this wonderful conversation. In 1994, I was one of 12 Black women who were listening to the plans of the Clinton administration for healthcare reform. And yet they somehow, in the Clinton administration, thought that if they omitted reproductive healthcare from healthcare reform,

they could slide it by the opponents in the Republican Party. This strategy made no sense to us as Black feminists, the 12 women I'm talking about, because reproductive healthcare is the main driver of women to the doctor. And if you omit reproductive healthcare, then basically you're presenting a male centric healthcare plan and then asking feminists to endorse it. That made no sense. And by the way, Republicans are cruel, but not necessarily dumb. They knew that they needed to oppose healthcare reform and they were going to continue to oppose healthcare reform, as they have always done. And so we met in the hotel room in Chicago in June of 1994 to discuss what was wrong with this proposed plan.

But the other thing that we problematize was how abortion was also always isolated from other social justice issues. Because when a woman needs an abortion, she's going to be worried about whether or not she has healthcare, whether she has housing for a potential child, whether she can stay in school, or keep her job. And when you isolate abortion from all those other social justice issues, you're treating her as if the pregnancy is the only thing she's worried about in her life. And so we splice together the concept of reproductive rights with social justice and created the term reproductive justice, used it to place a full page ad in *The Washington Post* calling ourselves Black Women for Healthcare Reform. And then SisterSong was founded three years later and decided to use reproductive justice is our organizing platform, and, you know, that's where history was made.

But what reproductive justice basically means is that it's a human rights-based framework, because we were definitely influenced by women in the Global South, who were using human rights to make demands for the things that we were talking about. And so it starts with our overlap with the prochoice movement and fighting for the right to not have children. And that means using birth control, abortion, or abstinence. If you could hold on. The gaps to this is more theory than fact. But anyway, but because this was a theory being created by Black women, we had to fight equally hard for the right to have the children that we wanted to have. Because we are always resisting eugenics and population control, which, of course, is a foundational stance of the White supremacist movement, and really is often in our public discourse about blaming the fertility of women of color in general, and Black women in particular for the ills of society. And then the third tenant is once you have the child, you have the human right to raise that child in safe and healthy environments. And that brings us into conversation with housing policy, tax policy, gun violence, the environment, disability rights, trans rights, all those other issues that aren't necessarily considered part of the prochoice agenda. And then about a decade or so after the original framing happened with those

three tenants, a fourth was added. Around bodily autonomy and the right to sexual pleasure.

So that's reproductive justice of the whole, the right to have children, the right not to have children, the right to raise your children, and whether or not to have children or not, the right to self determination of gender identity and bodily autonomy. And it became such a quickly adapted, capacious framework that kind of surprised us. When we created it, we didn't expect it to have legs beyond that summer of 1994. And the fact that it's had a transformative impact on reproductive politics in America is wonderful. But I don't think we could lie and say, we 12 women weren't surprised because we did not anticipate that.

**Koki Mendis:** Thank you, Loretta. That's fascinating and I love the sort of historical perspective, too, on the concept. I think it really shows how it starts with a...in opposition, which we're going to talk a lot about today, but has grown to be a concept that really holds a lot of very important work that we're still doing in the movement today. So thank you. I know that was a big one.

Continuing with the question and the topic of opposition and the interest of beginning our discussion with a timely update on right-wing organizing against reproductive freedom, I'd like to transition to a discussion of some nascent right-wing movements that are changing the landscape of anti-abortion organizing specifically. Cloee, you've done some incredible recent work for PRA documenting the rise of the so-called abortion abolitionist movement. In an [article](#) co-written with Tina Vasquez, you write that abortion abolitionists are, "a nationwide network of far-right Christians who compare themselves to 19th Century anti-slavery activists...[T]he network advocates for "ministering" in front of municipal and county councils to declare a city or county a "sanctuary for the unborn"—policies that generally seek to ban abortion within city or county limits, criminalize abortion providers and people seeking abortion care, and block pro-choice groups from operating within the jurisdiction. Abortion abolitionists have also worked closely with state legislators to introduce state abortion abolitionist bills. For them, the work is guided by the need to bring the "Gospel into conflict with the evil of the age." Cloee, can you tell us a little about the impact that this movement is having and why, in the struggle for reproductive justice so often located in the judicial and legislature legislative arenas, we should pay attention to far-right anti-abortion organizing?

**Cloee Cooper:** Thank you, Koki. And it's just really wonderful to be here with all of you. I'm oftentimes doing this research where I'm looking deeply into these pockets of kind of right-wing radical theocrats and Patriot movement groups, and to actually be able to bring my work right now into conversation

with those of you who have built so many frameworks for reproductive justice, and are on the frontlines is both an honor, and also kind of some of the reason that I do this work in the first place. So I'm excited for the conversation that's going to unfold from here.

So I'm assuming many people here might know what abortion abolitionists are. But I just want to take a moment first to contextualize them a little bit. For those of you who were really active during the 1990s, in some ways, the contemporary abortion abolitionist movement is drawing heavily on the 1990s radical anti-abortion movement. Which people like Loretta Ross and Fred Clarkson did a lot of amazing work in terms of looking into how that movement then was also working closely with neo-Nazi organizations, and actually very closely with the 1990s militia movement at the time. So I came across the abortion abolitionist movement more from looking at the kind of Patriot movement organizations in this country and seeing how they were doing a lot of work at the local level to nullify, in their case, gun rights laws. And I started seeing, wow, these anti-abortion groups are also working at the local level, and cities, and counties initially, to also nullify any type of reproductive rights laws as well. So what I started quickly finding along with Tina is that these abortion abolitionists, which believe that they should not in any ways compromise with the law, (in fact, they see most of the laws in the United States as secular as laws that shouldn't really exist) and they believe that...they not only believe that anybody who is a part of an abortion in any way should be tried as murder, they also are essentially trying to use abortion to push for a kind of theocratic governance at the local level.

So what we started to see is groups that had had some sway like Free the States and End Abortion Now started to coalesce back in 2020 with their first ever national conference, with a particular agenda of not only trying to get city and county legislation passed that would ban abortion altogether, but also shifting their strategy from just kind of agitating outside of abortion clinics to actually working with state legislators to try to get state legislation introduced, that would also essentially scale up some of their politics. And at the time we did the reporting, we saw that already six states had introduced abortion abolition legislation. As I continue to follow it, I saw that their strategy was continuing to gain steam. And actually, during the 2020 election in Oklahoma, the networks in Oklahoma, including Free the States and others, had actually gotten the candidate to run for state legislator there who ended up winning. Soon after he won, Warren Hamilton, he introduced an abortion abolitionist bill that didn't actually pass, but it helped essentially open the Overton window in the state. Because right after he introduces the abortion abolitionist bill that doesn't pass another bill that actually pushed forward a bunch of restrictions

did pass.

Also Warren Hamilton, the person who won on an abortion abolitionist platform with the backing of the local abortion abolitionists, introduces also a statewide Second Amendment sanctuary. Which, of course, around the country are the ones that have been specifically introduced or backed often by constitutional sheriffs, by Patriot movement organizations. For example, the first ones in Oregon were actually literally written by the Three Percenters—the ordinances. So he introduces it and it does pass in the state. And it passes in the state along with, you know, with several other states around the country where similar kinds of bills got passed. Which to me just demonstrates the fact that he has legitimacy within the Republican Party in the state, that he has sway and influence, and that he is in some ways holding these relationships between both the kind of radical end of the anti-abortion movement and Patriot militia type groups.

The other thing I want to just mention quickly is that part of my real interest in this is to continue to map out more thoroughly how these various Christian Right organizations are working through potentially at times violent means, (working directly with militias and paramilitaries) and also trying to work within the Republican Party to kind of mainstream their politics. This is nothing new, but I still feel like there's a lot to further interrogate about actually the mechanisms that that is happening...through which that is happening. And in just some preliminary digging, along with Frederick Clarkson, we recently found some really troubling intersections in the North West (and we published it in an [article](#) that's available on the website) where we're seeing kind of interlocking ties between the legislative body of the Christian Right, trying to push various legislation, and kind of state legislators, and the Patriot movement literally actively working with paramilitary up in the woods to prepare for a religious war.

So I think we always need to think about scale here because I don't want to overdramatize. I still think we you know, they can't do all the things that they want to do. They're not as big, sometimes, as they say they are and all those types of things. But I do think that the ways that they are starting to gain some power and influence in some areas is definitely something that needs more attention still. And I'm really excited to be in this conversation with you all. Thank you.

**Koki Mendis:** Thank you, Cloee. I think the recent work you've been doing with Fred, and with Tina is fascinating. I think while these movements are small, we know that small movements coalesce in moments like the insurrection, and it doesn't behoove us to dismiss them because they're regional. And so I really

appreciate you taking the time to really dig into some of these iterations of organizing.

Continuing in this vein of thinking about the Right outside of direct legislation and judicial challenges to *Roe*, I'd like to spend some time on the narrative and institutional strategies deployed by the Right to weaken reproductive freedom. Tara, you've written a lot about the cumulative effects of nearly 50 years of this war of attrition waged by the Right. Can you give us a sense of how this ongoing effort has created an atmosphere of stigmatization, disinformation, and outright deceit that confronts people seeking abortions at every turn?

**Tara Romano:** Sure and thank you all for having me. Excited to be on this panel. And so definitely mis- and disinformation is absolutely how the anti-abortion movement works. You know, I'm in North Carolina, and when I came here, many years ago in 1999, like North Carolina certainly wasn't a haven for abortion access, but it was considered more progressive for the South. We...actually in North Carolina, they had legalized some abortion prior to *Roe v. Wade*. There was still a state abortion fund up until the early 2000s. And things—it was—it definitely had restrictions, and too many restrictions, but it wasn't like other southern states. And then things changed in 2010. Like in statehouses across the country, there was the backlash to the election of President Barack Obama. And so things—North Carolina in 2010 had a conservative make up of a general assembly that it had not had in over a hundred years. And so that's when we started seeing actually more restrictions passed in North Carolina—in the ten years...since 2010 than we did in the first 35 of *Roe v. Wade*—of abortion being legal.

And so I wanted to just like—it's hard, like all these restrictions that they keep passing, which are done sort of piecemeal, you're chipping away at access, in ways that maybe people then don't entirely understand how access has been so restricted, but all of these—at the heart, all of these restrictions, like when you have bans on insurance funding, you have bans funding for...any kind of restrictions about the procedure, gestational bans, funding for these anti-abortion clinics, it's all about creating a narrative of what abortion is not. Like they want to say that abortion is dangerous. That's why they have to have all of these restrictions on procedures; that abortion is not healthcare, that it's somehow different and separate from healthcare; that abortion is uncommon. And so really trying to make the case that nobody...who gets abortions? Like it's in common and we have to make sure it's really safe because it's not a common procedure.

I mean, also like saying that abortion is new, like it came around in 1973,

which is...abortion has been happening since people were getting pregnant. And so it really is a common experience that has always existed in reproductive healthcare. And they really try to create—make it sound like it is not. And it's so stigmatized in who they—who could possibly choose abortion because it's just not something people do. You know, they also wanted to—they want to say like it's something that only certain women in particular use, right? People who consider themselves feminists, people who hate kids, like all of these myths. As opposed to, you know, people who already have children or like they get an abortion—and people who have come to the end of the childbearing years...like all of these things. But they really wanted to paint this picture of what abortion access is about. And really separating it from like all of the healthcare, the safety, the economic issues, that all go into these decisions that we make about our reproductive healthcare and our family planning. And it just creates this narrative that...a lot of people think it doesn't probably speak to their experiences, but when it's so stigmatized, you know, and people are not talking about it like something fills that vacuum. And the anti-abortion folks know how to fill that vacuum. And I have met people who consider themselves solidly supportive of abortion access and they still repeat things that are not true. Just because it is so much in our culture.

And so like this, you know, creating this narrative is, of course, how they get these bills passed. And then it just really also you could see, too, like when they passed these restrictions bit by bit, like they're really attacking people who have less power to be able to resist what's going on. Like when they have, you know, parental consent for minors, like that's young people; when they are saying that certain insurance like Medicaid can't cover abortion, it's people of low income; you know, when they closed down clinics and say that, you know, they...it has to be like in a specific clinic, and the clinics have certain things that your clinics close down, you know that's rural communities; people who don't have health insurance like all these...like it's just—prior to *Roe v. Wade*, it was really you know, you can always access abortion if you're wealthy, probably White in this country were able to find and access relatively safe abortion potentially. And it's becoming that same way again. And so that's and it's all based on this...this just really painted a picture of who access abortion, and also who provides abortion, and who supports abortion. Like, the only people who access it are people who just don't want to take, you know, “suffer consequences for their actions.” The people who provide abortions are like these...they're not actual medical doctors, they're incompetent, they're greedy. And then the people who support abortion access, like they want to say that they hate families or that they're immoral, they're not religious. I mean, you know, we see the data, like the majority of people who support abortion access



also are people of faith. But they really have control of this narrative that, well, of course, they don't support abortion access because of such and such religion. And, you know, just really...and I just...it's a lazy narrative, and, you know, we have a media that repeats those kind of things. But that really also does the work because honestly, I feel like if people understood abortion better or who gets it, who provides it, like it would be harder to pass these restrictions. But it really depends on them having this misinformation, this disinformation out there.

**Koki Mendis:** Thank you, Tara. That was very thorough and I think we always need to come back to national narratives and how they impact realities for individuals, and you bring up sort of the role of prochoice religious folks, and I want to point everyone on the call to Fred Clarkson's most recent report that PRA published, which really demonstrates that the majority of people who identify as religious in this country identify as prochoice. And that's an opportunity to organize and to counter these narratives, at least on those grounds.

Before we turn to a discussion of what's next, what's most effective, what's most empowering in the pursuit of full reproductive justice, I'd like for us to take a few minutes to examine the relationship between anti-abortion organizing, and misogyny, and patriarchy more broadly, and the products of both White nationalism and the maintenance of White supremacy. Loretta, you touched on this in the development of the concept of reproductive justice. Cloee, you touched on this in the actual intersection of movements operating on the ground today and historically, and I'd like for us to talk about how the struggle for reproductive freedom intersects with anti-racism and how does the challenge to bodily autonomy relate to the steady creep of authoritarianism. I'd like to start with you, Loretta, and then open the question to our whole panel.

**Loretta Ross:** Well, in the early 1990s, Political Research Associates joined with me at the Center for Democratic Renewal and pointed out the porousness between the hate movements that we were monitoring and the anti-abortion movement that were becoming much more dangerous. And I remember in 1992, I wrote a report called Women's Watch showing that there was a lot of cross-over between the anti-abortion movement and the White supremacist movement. And six months after that report was written, the first doctor who provided abortions was murdered. And so we can see the direct adoption of hate movement strategies into the anti-abortion movement. But it's been a long haul trying to get other groups to be intersectional and to understand that we're dealing with a broad based, what I can only call neo-fascist

movement, that has delegated different things to focus on. Whether it's the LGBT movement, they have people that focus on that; opposition to women's rights, including abortion, they have people that focus on that; opposition to the separation of church and state; and of course, the whole White supremacist movement and the attack on critical race theory and all of those things. This is the same movement with different things that they focus on because they're practicing the politics of divide and conquer. And they want us to deal with things individually in a very siloed way, as opposed to seeing them as having a strategy for overthrowing democracy in America and kind of setting up an apartheid like system, where one man one vote no longer matters, because, right now, only White votes matter. That's what they want.

And so, it wasn't a big surprise to me, 30 years later, to see the insurrection at the U.S Capitol, and that a large number of people at that insurrection were also well known in the anti-abortion movement. This was a coming together for them, kind of like Charlottesville had been in 2017, where they brought together the different strands of their movement and demonstrated that they were going to be united to fight the concept of democracy in general, and to prevent votes from being counted. As a matter of fact, as I quipped one day, they weren't protesting because White votes weren't counted, they were protesting because Black votes were. And so let's be clear, what we're dealing with is the same kind of resurrectionists that Ulysses S. Grant dealt with after the Civil War. People who want a slaveocracy, even though they may not use that term now, where only White people, and I should say, even only a certain kind of White people matter. We're dealing with the fight against White supremacy, not Whiteness as an identity. And so it's been long overdue for us to recognize that White supremacist opposition to abortion actually is very racially specific. What they're trying to do is prevent White women from accessing abortions, and they could care less if women of color have them. Hell, if they knew—if they could figure out a way to do it, they'd send limousines to take us to the clinic and fully fund them. But it really has always been about manipulating the fertility of White women as part of the Native American genocide and Manifest Destiny, the creation of the scientific racism, of eugenics and on and on. So it's like the same old B.S. sandwich and they want us to take bigger bites. But the reality is that they're not at all original.

What I'm mostly concerned about, though, is those of us on our side who don't use an intersection of analysis and understand how these things are all connected, because that is going to be a fault line where we're very, very vulnerable as we practice, what some people call the Oppression Olympics, and illustrate a lot of horizontal hostility towards each other, instead of uniting under the banner of human rights and fighting these people as the neo-fascists

that they're in. Carol Mason, by the way, has done an amazing job documenting how many anti-abortionists were involved in the January 6th insurrection. So I would recommend people look at her work. Lynn Paltrow has also done a lot of work on that and stuff. I should shut up there, but...there....For a Black woman who monitors the Right, I always saw the attack on civil rights, women's rights, human rights, gay rights, the environment, as always connected, and it's been hard to convince people who oppose the Right to understand these connections. Suzanne Farr has done an amazing job, starting in the 1990s as well, showing these interconnections. So it's really important that we go forward with the united analysis so that we can understand the magnitude of the threat we face and not just base it on one particular issue or one particular campaign, that is their flavor of the month.

**Koki Mendis:** Thank you, Loretta. I think I speak for everyone when I say no one wants you to shut up. But I appreciate the perfect transition into a follow up question I have, especially for you, Adaku, and Tara, where does racial justice intersect with your work on reproductive freedom? How do you embody that call that Loretta just made, for that intersectional Left approach to countering what is an intersectional Right?

**Adaku Utah:** I want to offer a lot of gratitude to you, Loretta, for your offering in this moment, and your offering through time in helping shape precise framework and strategy, and keeping us accountable, and moving in integrity with how we do this work. And thank you all for the invitation to be here.

So I currently work with a National Network of Abortion Funds. We've been around for 26 years and it was only four years ago where we started to shift our strategies around how we support abortion care. For 24 years we specifically focused on direct service. And we have 84 organizations in 41 states that create ecosystems of care that offer transportation, housing. I was about to say transformation, which is also true. Part of what we offer, lodging, child care. And you know, we have to ask ourselves, like, is this the path to freedom that we want to keep going on. If we keep only focusing and centering direct service, will this shift the conditions that are impacting and making reproductive oppression a reality? And with the leadership of Yamani Hernandez, Black, queer, powerful woman, and also the increased leadership of Black, indigenous, and folks of color, and also listening to our base. Most of the folks who call our abortion funds are Black folks, queer folks, trans folks, folks who are undocumented, and saying to us again and again and again that direct service is not enough. Our people are still suffering, our people are hungry, our people are being imprisoned. Which impacts reproductive coercion, reproductive control,

and is killing our people. And so we had to...we had to make a concerted shift to really centering organizing and movement building inside of our work and strategies. And really bolstering all of that work with racial justice.

We actually even completely threw out our mission, and vision, and our values and adopted new ones. And our four core values right now are compassion, bodily autonomy, intersectionality and collective power. The... saying and talking about racial justice is one thing, embodying it is a completely different thing. Obviously, it's a lifelong practice and a place that we have been beginning is taking a look at what are the...what are the systems, practices, policies of how we are structured as a network, how we're structured as organizations that fall into White supremacist rhetoric. Whether it's not believing Black women when we say that actually we've been harmed by clinics where we've gone to access abortion care. Not supporting trans folks because of not believing in an expansive universe of gender. Choosing not to fund some people because they've been incarcerated. And, you know, these are things that still show up under the guise of liberation that we have to continually take a look at. Of what are the ways that we keep practicing and buying into the rhetoric, the framework, the hypocrisy of racial justice. And simultaneously asking ourselves how we hold ourselves accountable when we have caused harm, because we know that in this work, harm has also occurred in how we have chosen to serve and work with our communities. What are the ways that we have gaslit Black, indigenous and people of color from actually being at the center of leadership inside of our work? And where can we reorient? So these are some of the questions that we're asking ourselves.

Also asking ourselves what does it mean to be a member? So if you're saying that you're a member of an ecosystem of care, can you commit to reproductive justice? And if you can't commit to that, you no longer can be a member here. And really breaking apart what it means to say yes to being a part of a formation that is moving forward this vision.

**Koki Mendis:** Thank you, Adaku. It's really fascinating to hear exactly how the National Network has been really thinking this through and to hear your approach, and your organization's approach to humility and accountability. I think that's so important in the work that we do. Tara, I'd love to hear from you on this question with NARAL.

**Tara Romano:** Thank you. So NARAL Pro-Choice North Carolina, it was founded, of course, as a White feminist organization, so we consider that we do reproductive rights and healthcare work with wanting to use a reproductive justice lens and working with reproductive justice partners. But wanting

to—and one of the things that we see, a role that we play is like working with partners and trying to really make sure that we're centering the people who are most impacted. That's the thing with the restrictions is like they always fall heaviest on communities of color and communities that have been marginalized. And I think it's taken a long time for folks in the justice movement to understand, like that's how the chipping away keeps happening. And it's going to you know—it just...it just impacts all of us in so many ways. But really, it falls heaviest on those communities that are already struggling with like...and, you know, people who have struggled to access abortion care, traditionally also struggled to access any kind of healthcare because we have these systems in place, these racist institutions in place, that have kept people from accessing the care that they need. And that includes abortion care.

And so one of the things that we—NARAL in North Carolina, we're a small organization. There are a number of clinics, independent abortion clinics in (and Planned Parenthood) North Carolina. They're clustered in urban centers. And one thing that we have in North Carolina, were the robust anti-abortion presence. And so they have really...they spend a lot of time in front of clinics. And it's definitely been escalating, including over this past year. And one of the things that we have been working with our partners, committing to racial justice, committing to supporting our partners, doing the racial justice work, and making sure that we are using that lens and making those commitments as well. One of the things that we've been working with some of our racial justice partners on, is around creating safety. Reimagining safety at the clinics, because we know that actually there has been...like it's not that...we don't want to be calling law enforcement when things are going on in front of clinics. We want to figure out how to create safety. But we're also aware that, you know, I mean, the anti-abortion movement will bring in people of color, of course, but it is at its heart, as it has already been mentioned, like a White supremacist movement.

And so, you know, figuring out how is it that we are dealing with the fact that there's a lot of White people and White men outside of clinics threatening harm? And then how do we also figure out...like it's the clinic escorting space for a long time, been also White feminist space as well, and trying to help people get that reproductive justice lens. How do we bring in more people from different communities, from communities of color who want to be doing this work with us, to create to really reimagine what it looks like to be accessing care at a clinic, that doesn't even feel like we have to...There's all the security, and there's people who are undocumented don't feel comfortable with that. And all of these things. They're trying to really...I mean, that's one of the things that we—I spend a lot of time thinking about, in North Carolina because the violence in front of clinics has escalated so much. And we feel really aware

of that with a Biden administration, as Loretta mentioned, like, you know, typically when there's a so-called prochoice administration in the White House, like we've seen violence really escalate. And so that's one off the things we're thinking about and how do we...how do we take these principles and apply to White....What does community safety look like in front of a clinic that doesn't involve getting...having the state or having law enforcement, these kind of things involved? So that's one of the things that we're trying to work through now in North Carolina.

**Koki Mendis:** That's great, Tara, thank you. I think it's also interesting to think, just as you said, sort of the ways in which a lot of movement spaces did originate in White feminism, and what does it look like to rethink that origin story today. I'd like to, before we move on, also take an opportunity to ask you all to talk a little bit about the sort of the intersections between the anti-immigrant movement and reproductive injustice. And, you know, both Tara and Loretta, you both talk about sort of, the adverse impact, the disproportionate impact on communities of color and the anti-immigrant, or the immigrant community in the U.S as a community that suffered as a direct result of anti-reproductive justice organizing. So Cloee, or Loretta or Adaku or Tara, would somebody like to take us through that conversation a little bit?

**Loretta Ross:** I'm going to defer to Cloee because that's been her specialty for as long as I've known you.

**Cloee Cooper:** Well, I wanted to mention this earlier because I feel like Loretta brought up this important tension earlier on also, that on the one hand, you have these White Christian groups doing every single thing they can to limit abortion, to criminalize abortion, to literally try to send anybody involved in an abortion to their death. But on the other hand, you have the professional White nationalist movement, like the anti-immigrant movement, and the Tanton network and others, that have this long history of being deeply concerned with the reproduction of women of color. And it's deeply embedded in this kind of nationalist question, right? And we are all a form of reproduction. And, of course, White supremacists care about who is actually reproducing. So anyways, there is this long history of White nationalists working closely with Planned Parenthood and of ongoing ties, unfortunately, with, you know, the Tanton network and FAIR and unfortunately, Planned Parenthood, I believe, in Washington, D.C. But also there's deep overlap of trying to work within the environmental movement and basically push for people to blame environmental catastrophe on overpopulation, which inevitably falls on

women of color. And I think we've seen this over the years, and there's been amazing work done around this by many other people than me. And I think what we've seen most recently in terms of, you know, ongoing issues of forced sterilization in ICE detention facilities, with amazing reporting by Tina Vasquez around that, is just like a symbol of how they're...this is multitiered and how this kind of tension continues to exist, and is like flanking both sides of the question of bodily autonomy right now.

**Loretta Ross:** And I'll just add one of the things that we need to call attention to, that the reproductive justice framework does, and I'm writing a book with Marlene Fried and Namrata Jacobs on this, is that reproductive justice actually decolonizes the prochoice movement. To insist that it deal with White supremacy, neoliberal capitalism, settler colonialism, and all of these issues that are embodied on people, but at the same time speak to a larger framework of trying a world domination and piracy politics. And so I just wanted to say reproductive justice is not just expanding to talk about the right to have a child, not to have a child, as I described, but it's demanding accountability within our own movement to use a decolonizing and abundance framework. And that's the question that I think reproductive justice works hard at. It's not just this novel new thing created by Black women and used by women of color, it's demanding accountability, not only by our opponents, but within our own ranks as well. I think that needed to be said.

**Koki Mendis:** Thank you, Loretta, Cloee, I think that's a great way to conclude our conversation and move on to the next of thinking through alternatives, right? Thinking through future action. A through line of dismantling the White supremacist state, and Tara you touched on this with thinking through alternatives to policing, in thinking through viable community alternatives that provide necessary services in lieu of state support. We have this conversation primarily related to disengaging with the carceral state, and in providing the economic safety net necessary to basic human survival, which has seen a recent resurgence with mutual aid networks during the pandemic. As we know, a significant amount of reproductive care is provided through informal community networks from child care arrangements that exist outside of the formal economy, to abortion funds that reduce the costs and logistical barriers to obtaining abortions, to non-nuclear families that depend on non-kin and multigenerational support to bear and raise children. And Adaku when you're talking through the National Network of Abortion Funds, the organization really embodies a lot of this community network building. Can you talk us through the role that community plays in reproductive care and the limits, if

any, to working outside the state to achieve reproductive justice?

Adaku Utah: I love this question. So for us, community really is at the core. I mean, community is the antidote, it is the alchemy that helps to not only have our heart and ears to the ground of what our people need, but also getting aligned with the strategies that are necessary, both short and long term, to win and also cultivate communities where people are thriving. And a lot of our work, particularly around the work that we're doing around movement building and organizing right now, is really focused in our community, whether it's building the leadership of specifically Black, indigenous, folks of color to be able to organize, teach, lead, fundraise across our network, and across movements. Or cultivating spaces like regional spaces. Right after the last two elections, the first thing that we did was gather our folks together. And our membership immediately said we need to gather regionally to really understand what are...what's the specificity of what's happening geographically, and what are ways that we can really gather and harvest assets, community assets that are happening right now that really support how our people are getting access to resources where there are gaps. What are the places of relationship tending that we need to be doing right now? Because everything that we do is in coordination with one another. And coordination requires trust. Coordination requires organizational infrastructure that can that can withhold pressure, pressure that's coming from the state, pressure that's coming from internally. Given that a lot of our abortion funds are mostly volunteer run. So people are holding this powerful body of work with the rest of their lives, and trying to figure out how to hold labor in the midst of pandemics, taking care of children, other jobs, and that can create friction. So are there ways that we can support how conflict might arise so that when the moment arises, where we need to be moving in coordination together, that we can we can do that really well?

I want to highlight two things. One is we just, two and a half years ago, not just, two and a half years ago, developed what's called a Network Movement Building Lab. And it is a container of folks within our network who have been doing organizing and really experimenting with what does it look like to actually hold building power at the core of the work. And recognizing that prior to two years ago, a lot of these—a lot of folks have been doing and experimenting in isolation with one another. And so bringing folks together to build up skill sets. I think actually one of the barriers in doing work outside of the state is not being able to match our vision with the necessary skills, competence, and relationships necessary to make those visions real. And so having collective spaces where people are coming together to really build up their skill set, build



up strategy that's connected to what's happening geographically, connected to what's happening with the base of callers, who are calling into abortion funds, with clinics, with folks who are doing practical support, really help us in outlining a much more serious strategy that our community can actually buy into because they see themselves reflected inside of it.

The other thing, the last thing that I want to say in here is that it's not just about building out campaigns and strategies to win. It's also about how do we celebrate and support the sustainability of our organizers over time, because we know that this work is long term. And there's a variety of different strategies doing that. Like really thinking about what is a sustainability plan long term that can support how people rest and engage in work, that is not creating labor inequity across gender, across race, across class, but figuring out how to hold this work collectively together that really supports how people's bodies are showing up right now, given the pandemic, and so many of our people dying at the hands of...at the state and reproductive coercion.

**Koki Mendis:** Thank you, Adaku. I love that idea that we need to take that moment to celebrate and also care for one another within the movement. I think that's easy to ignore when everything feels urgent and important. Would anyone else like to chime in on this question of community alternatives before I move on?

So, Loretta, you mentioned this a little bit, and really...the relationship between reproductive justice and restructuring, rethinking, reimagining the sort of social organization, and I want to continue with this idea, borrowing from Nancy Fraser and others. I want to take a few minutes to apply a Marxist labor theory of value analysis to the question of advocating for reproductive justice. If we understand that gestation, child rearing, familial care and socialization function, in large part, as an undervalued uncompensated process of producing socialized workers for capitalist production, is there an argument for reproductive justice as a form of due compensation for labor for work? Is there a strategic value in this framing within the bounds of capitalism, or rather in your activism, is it important to separate the value of reproduction from capitalism, to articulate the standard of access and care that requires an economic justice predicated on the dismantling of capitalism? I hope you all indulge me in this brief consideration of political economy for a few minutes. I find this tension between operating within the status quo versus radically envisioning a break from it, one that provides us with a necessary understanding of what we hope to accomplish in the broader movement. So if anyone feels like diving into political theory, this is your moment.

**Loretta Ross:** Well, I always love invitations to dive into political theory. My worst critics say I live in a theoretical playground and I try to do practical work with it.

Well, for me, the whole concept of reproductive labor has a particular poignancy and irony, because as a descendent of kidnapped Africans for our reproductive and labor capacity, there's no way of even constructing a version of American racialized capitalism without understanding the power and the exploitation of reproductive labor. Now, in the post slavery moment, if there is such a thing, that question is still out there, it's been seen more through a Marxist lens, of course, than as foundational to capitalism. I mean, that's—you know, obviously reproducing workers for the system of exploitation and extraction is foundational to capitalism, whether it was in the 1800s when Marx was first writing about it, to where people are talking about it now.

What's interesting, though, is that too many, in my mind, people who try to take that radical analysis, underperform the role of race, underperform the role of citizenship, underperform the role of gender identity and all of those other things, in presenting a coherently broad analysis because....We could fix, you know—we could work on class and we still have all those other problems, you know. And one key question and I'll shut up and give others a chance, I would like people who are radical, and into imagining a post democratic future imagine what that would look like. Because the whole concept of liberal democracy is under attack from outside and within. And yet those of us who are concerned about that need to have more conversations with the liberal world order of neoliberalism collapsing, we need to be clear on what's next. And I'm not sure that the theories of dead White men that haven't worked for the last two hundred years is the pathway forward, no matter how radical or anti-capitalist they are. I think we need to search for something new, which may in fact be something quite ancient, which is pre-European philosophy about human interdependence. How we can build a global caring society based on values like, you know, Mbutu or Confucianism or Buddhism or something like that. We're going to have to go away from your European philosophical foundation. Like we said with the U.S Social Forum, if a new world is coming, a new America is necessary for it to come.

**Koki Mendis:** Thank you. I love that critique, starting with Marxist labor and thinking through, sort of, the barriers to using class analysis as inadequate. Would anyone else like to like to jump in on this question? I could talk theory all day, but I will also move on, if that is preference.

**Tara Romano:** I can just...I can't necessarily speak maybe to what Loretta was

speaking about with capitalism. But what I think about a lot, when I sort of think about moving reproductive justice forward. One thing I think about is sort of how our healthcare system is set up in terms of like...it was set up to be like not really a caring system. It's set up to be generating profits. And so...and like, we work with a lot of wonderful healthcare professionals to advocate for abortion access. But I also think about challenging, like the idea that the doctor has to be involved in some way, you know. Because I think about self-managed abortion. I think about...you know, because we still have this language of, you know, between the patient and the doctor and what the doctor actually isn't needed, right? And they can provide a service, but it's not really like...the doctor doesn't really know a lot about the healthcare, or maybe the things going on in terms of what's happening to that pregnant person, but doesn't know all those things. And so I think also sort of challenging—and we...I've worked with a lot of great physicians who I think, do see a future like some self-managed abortion. But I think about like sometimes hitting up against those...like we've got these advocates and then suddenly—

Like even with clinics and of course, clinics...I mean, you know, clinics struggle a lot. And they have a long way to go in terms of how they really are part of this sort of reproductive justice. You know, like they just have always operated in a certain way. And there's a lot of challenges that either they have been unwilling to meet or they haven't been able to meet. But I think about like, you know, at some point also like that maybe feels like to them again, like, well, we don't need clinics then, because we have self-managed abortions. That is not the case. And like we really should have abortion and reproductive healthcare integrated more into this much more holistic movement. Not being sort of centered like here's the abortion clinic. It's completely outside of reproductive healthcare, like all these things.

And that was really...it was allowed to happen. OBGYNs after *Roe* where like, I don't want to get into it. So they...feminists would set up their own clinics and it just wasn't—the lens wasn't enough—radical enough to really...I mean, it was at the time, of course, setting up those clinics, but it wasn't sort of radical enough to be like we really want to center the people who are accessing the care, who need this care. And so that's some of the things that I think about sort of challenging—how we can sort of challenge some of these ideas that have gotten us to a point where they're no longer serving us.

**Koki Mendis:** Thank you, Tara. I really appreciate the point, too on healthcare, the U.S healthcare system not being about care, but profit. I think that's really important to foreground and really interesting to hear how you're thinking it through with really practical application on the ground. Cloee, did you want to

jump in on this question?

**Cloee Cooper:** Yes, I just wanted to say that, I just think that we basically can't think of anything well, without also thinking of the relations of production and reproduction in every part of society. And when I start going down the hole of thinking about, okay, what are the relations of reproduction you think of, like how deeply misogyny and White supremacy have and are shaping those types of things. And then if you flip it on its head, if we really had healthy relations of production and reproduction, what a different kind of society we would have. So in my mind, I'm like, you can say class and it kind of you think just certain things are Marx or poverty versus people who have and have not. But in my mind, like the analysis of the relations of production and how essential that is to shaping our society is very important in how we analyze where we are and where we need to be.

**Koki Mendis:** Thank you, Cloee. That's a good counterfactual to think about. What would alternative labor relations look like, or what would reproductive justice look like with a different relationship to capital. Returning to the immediate course of action, and to close our conversation today, I'd like to hear from each of you, where should we focus our attention, organizing efforts, and coalition building in the months and years to come? Where is the potential for movement action, solidarity, which we've touched on a little on this conversation? Who are potential constituencies for mobilization, and who and what, in opposition, should we be monitoring and countering at every turn? I'd like to leave our audience with some places to focus their attention, PRA included in that, and so I'd love to hear from each of you.

**Loretta Ross:** Shall we go in alphabetical order?

**Koki Mendis:** Sure, Adaku, take us away.

**Adaku Utah:** I'm going to keep coming back to the people. And a lot of our work and what I feel like is so essential inside of reproductive justice is how we are centering our base. Folks who are most impacted by reproductive oppression and not just the listening, but really cultivating the leadership and co-creating strategy alongside with our folks. I really appreciated the nerdy political theory question earlier. And I think we actually also need to create more spaciousness for political study, and principled struggle that can fortify and enhance some of our strategic thinking.

Over the last year and a half with the increase in abortion bans, we saw an

increase in membership and folks who had like very powerful intentions in wanting to join us in our fight. Yet their values and also analysis were lacking and we had to cultivate a political education series. Over the last year and a half, we've had over 30 sessions, like really studying things like the intersections of abolition and reproductive justice, gender justice and reproductive justice, the intersections between abortion access and White nationalism. And creating some level setting around our network that can support us as we build the world that we desire. And also as we all find our lanes inside of it, whether it's as an organizer, as someone who's doing practical support, whether it's someone who's teaching. And so I want to lift that up as a necessary component.

Right before this panel, a couple of us on staff, with some members were talking about SCOTUS strategy and what we might do there. And I think that everything that's happening politically feels very strategically aligned. Like what's happening in Texas will probably trigger in other places. So what are some of the scenario planning that we can start to do with states that we know might follow Texas? Like some of the patterns of behavior that have been played out over the last years are things that we can actually map out and figure out strategies around, like how might we both interrupt the the legal terrain and then also cultivate the necessary systems of care that we know will need to be fortified and amplified in this particular moment.

And I think this is also a really critical moment, because we're obviously, as we've been saying, like reproductive justice does not sit in this island. Like it is held within an intersection of so many different...so many different visions of justice that we need to consider consistently in an intersectional lens. And how might we hold this moment where the pandemic is unveiling itself in ways that we understand and do not understand, and really look at how is it impacting the ways that we typically organize, and what are new formations that we need to cultivate in this time that we've never seen before?

**Koki Mendis:** Thank you, Adaku. I am always here for calls for more nerdy rumination and really appreciate how you are calling on us to reevaluate contemporary strategies and formations and really think through restructuring internally. I think what National Network of Abortion Funds has recently done internally is a great model for embracing humility as part of learning and maybe in concert with a nerdy rumination. Cloee, you are next alphabetically.

**Cloee Cooper:** Well, on the one hand, I think this could be a really tough year and, you know, *Roe v. Wade* might actually be overturned. And all of the preparation that has been happening at the state and local level from both the abortion abolitionists could actually go from being like, "oh, they've introduced

these bills in six states” to them actually moving, which is a bit a bit scary and terrifying to some degree. Just imagining that, like, potentially people could be tried for murder for undergoing abortion, for being the partner of somebody who undergoes an abortion. And so that that is even potentially a near possibility is quite frightening.

In that regard I think that, like continuing to track groups like Free the States, End Abortion Now and some of the coalitions that they’re creating in their legislative strategy will be important. I also see the possibility of greater opportunity for the intersectional analysis, that people in this call have been trying to build, for a broader kind of push around reproductive justice to encompass a lot more than what *Roe v. Wade* has.

And I just kind of like want to be involved in that movement going forward. And just briefly, like on the intersectional approach, from the wormhole that I’ve been going down, it’s so clear that the kind of Christian theocrats that are at the forefront of pushing these abortion abolitionist bills, for example, they really also would want to put like anybody who engages—anybody involved in the LGBTQ community, also on trial. Many, many women who aren’t like traditional women, people who exist outside of the gender binaries, all these types of things. Like Fred Clarkson has some amazing writing on this. But their goal with what they are pushing for, which is gaining some kind of legitimacy in some areas, is such a narrow vision of what this is, what our society should be, that I do think there are a lot of opportunities for greater intersection also in terms of...not just pushing back against them, because that’s not the point, but pushing for a society where we would actually want to, you know, live, love and work free from fear. So thank you.

**Koki Mendis:** Thank you, Cloee. Acknowledging my bias here, I’m so grateful for the work that you do to monitor these groups, I think it’s hard work, but so important. And I think we as a movement benefit from having our ears close to the ground, especially where these intersections are occurring. Loretta, you are next in the alphabet.

**Loretta Ross:** I think that the flip side of decreasing abortion access in some states is going to mean we’re going to have abortion tourism states as well. And so they need to prepare. Because if we end up with a patchwork of access, the states like Massachusetts and New York, for example, are going to be just like Clergy and Laity Concerned did in the 60s and 70s, help us get people to the places. And the network of abortion funds is going to play a heavy role in that. So we’re going to have to prepare in that kind of granular way as well, where we see the access disappearing. We also have to make sure that we beef up the

capacity of those destination locations as well, or otherwise women will still be overwhelmed.

So I want to start with the particular and kind of go large. I think that women will always take care of themselves no matter what the law, church or state, says. That's what we always do. And so I am very deeply concerned about the increasing criminality of everything that is pro-democratic in this country. Everything. Whether it's protesting, or seeking an abortion or teaching critical race theory. I mean, we're dealing with the criminalization of everything. But people still are going to do what they need to do to save their lives. I mean, I represent a people who could be put to death for learning to read. So fighting against the law is what we do when the law is unjust. We understand that in all of our hearts and souls. It's getting the newly woke to understand that as well, that if you put all your hope in the law, the law will only be as strong as we make it be. It doesn't lead. It follows. And that's something we have to have a shift of perspective on.

Because that's going to be what I think is going to happen. We're going to have to close the gap between direct services and political mobilization. For example, as women try to take care of themselves and seek the services that they need and provide them for themselves through self-managed abortions and stuff, where's our building up our legal muscle to defend them? Where's our building up of our underground muscle, our transportation, where is the Underground Railroad we're going to obviously need? Those are the kinds of things we need to put into place to close the gap between fighting at the legislative or legal level, and making sure people don't die.

And my last comment is around how we use the concept of intersectionality, because I've said this from the minute we created reproductive justice. Intersectionality is our process. Human rights is our goal. You use intersectionality to expose vulnerability. What are the oppressive forces based on someone's identity that will keep them from enjoying their full human rights? So reproductive justice uses intersectionality as a determiner of vulnerability. But we're not working just to get everybody's intersectional identity acknowledged. We're working so everybody has full and undivided human rights. That's the goal. And so I don't want us to get that wrong, just substitute process for outcome.

**Koki Mendis:** Thank you, Loretta. Really appreciate that deeply practical suggestion and planning, and if this isn't a call to reallocate resources to abortion funds, I don't know what is. But it's....You know, it's really interesting to think through what the community alternatives really are going to need to be and how to prepare. Tara, would you like to take us out?

Tara Romano: Sure. I appreciate everything that has been said. Very honored to be on this panel with all of you. And I just want to...I think speaking for the work we're doing in North Carolina, I think one of the things to be talking about...for us to look at is helping...like in North Carolina helping our partners understand, like gender justice is part of this broader social justice. And that abortion access is part of that gender justice. Even just a couple of years ago, like abortion access was still being sort of sidelined in the movement. And there's still lot of talk about really. It's controversial. It felt like it would bring out these people with these signs. Like and...and we want to...we always wanted to be really sensitive to that. But helping people understand, like in....And so with this in this past year in North Carolina...North Carolina has a lot of not just anti-abortion politics, but a lot of really very White supremacist politics. Like it's just since 2010 has just been really sort of a lab of some of those really terrible policies.

And so helping... And we also knew, like in 2020, that North Carolina was considered by the Trump campaign, like one of the key states he had to win. And so we were working with a lot of our partners, our racial justice partners to talk about, like how do we keep people safe? How do we make sure voters are safe? How do we protect election workers? Like all of these things, knowing that there was going to be a focus from this very White supremacist campaign on our state for that big election. And so we had done a lot of work around protecting the vote, Count Every Vote, those kind of things. And so...and when...and one of the things we, of course, were coming across, was that a lot of White supremacists were oftentimes organizing right where we were. Like in the same spaces, you know, physically in the same spaces when we would be out there trying to rally around Count Every Vote. And so we formed we... we started talking about like...we formed like sort of a safety team, which I was a part of at that time, to really try and follow what the heck was going on so that we knew, like if we were going to have a rally here, like were we going to be trying to cross it right over through where White supremacist were rallying.

And so after that all happened, like after...past November, we...some of us kept together to be like, let's talk about how these people are acting in our state. Who went...and of course, then who was there on January 6th and then who is connected to the anti-abortion movement. And so it really was...I appreciate those folks in that space hearing about like how a lot of these tactics that we've seen White supremacists on January 6th, we've seen them do in front of abortion clinics. We've seen them...how they sort of moralized violence in a way. And so we were just like...I...It really has been an opportunity for us to bring to these other partners, who are always...sort of felt like the anti-abortion



movement was not really something that's going to be a threat to the work that they were doing around social justice, that it wasn't going to be getting in their way, like it was just a difference of religious opinion, but helping people understand, like, how these movements really are connected. And so I feel like it's a real opportunity that we've had to do and also to help people within the reproductive rights movement understand how racial justice and how anti-immigrant work has also impacted, like the rights that we're trying to secure for reproductive freedom.

So it's really—and of course, we all had the Moral Monday Movement in North Carolina that helped us also come together. That was 2013 under Reverend Barber. Helped people start to really understand these intersectional movements. But I think even more in this last year, helping people understand, like the people that we've been sort of...for a lot of people who are just like, what the heck happened on January 6th, there are a lot of people like there are ways to track these people. We can figure out what they're doing. And they're certainly talking to each other. Like we definitely saw the anti—the White supremacists trying to recruit from the anti-abortion movement. Like we noticed that in North Carolina because they saw the power that the anti-abortion movement had in terms of political power. And so they wanted to sort of legitimize what they were doing with the power and trying to recruit. That was kind of a lot of stuff all over. But I think really the idea is that we are unified and we're really working on, like, how we sort of reimagine safety and what we reimagine for justice, and how all these movements are connected to that.

**Koki Mendis:** Thank you. I appreciate you bringing electoral politics into it too, which we didn't touch much on today. But the importance of mobilizing the vote is part and parcel of fighting for reproductive freedom. And it's...you know, I think it's so valuable to hear your frontline experience as someone in a state watching in real time as abortion access is under fire. Loretta, you came off mute. Did you have something to add?

**Loretta Ross:** No, I just had some noise in the background, I was trying to silence.

**Koki Mendis:** No problem. Well, thank you all. I think I speak for our audience when I say this conversation exceeded expectations. I thoroughly enjoyed all of your contributions and having you all in conversation with one another. This really was an amazing learning opportunity, both in a very realistic, sobering, but also empowering and motivating, and in ways that I think we all need, especially in this hard year to come.

And I want to thank all of you in our audience today for joining us for the final webinar in our [It's Not Over Yet](#) series. As I mentioned at the top, we will be distributing the recording and a transcript of today's webinar by email and on our website next week. We will be resuming our webinars in the fall, looking at PRA's special projects in particular. And in the meantime, please visit [politicalresearch.org](http://politicalresearch.org) for the latest in in-depth analysis of trends and actors of the Right. We are about to publish our summer edition of [The Public Eye](#) magazine in the coming weeks with long-form pieces on the Incel movement and trad wives to mention a few. Some really interesting work coming out in that area.

Thank you again to our wonderful panelists, Cloee, Loretta, Tara, Adaku. You guys were wonderful. Amazing. I really appreciated this conversation, and I hope our audience did, too. And thank you to all who joined us today on this hopefully sunny July afternoon. Thank you.

