

***Call for Papers* | [Feminist Encounters](#) Special Issue on Reproductive Justice
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Guest Editor(s)

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In June 1994, on the eve of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, a group of Black women gathered in Chicago and coined the term ‘reproductive justice’, understood as ‘the human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities’ (SisterSong 2025). Rooted in communities of color’s experiences of reproductive oppression—including forced abortion and sterilizations, harmful contraceptives and child removal – this definition has been expanded over time by numerous activist organizations that have challenged the limitations of dominant reproductive health and rights agendas in the USA, moving beyond their narrow focus on access to abortion and contraception. Reproductive justice now encompasses broader issues such as environmental and disability justice, welfare reforms, housing, indigenous and immigrant rights, incarceration, sexual autonomy, among other topics (Ross et al. 2017).

By offering a theoretical paradigm shift, a model for activist organizing, and a critical lens that brings new areas of inquiry into focus, reproductive justice serves as a vital tool for feminist researchers and activists committed to radical social change. This is especially true in the current historical moment, marked by a global backlash against reproductive and sexual rights, increasingly restrictive migration and border policies, the growing influence of neoliberal regimes and right-wing political forces, and the ongoing genocide in Gaza, including reproductive violence. We continue to live in a world of ‘stratified reproduction’ (Colen 1995), where some lives—and the ability to reproduce or raise children—are systematically valued over others.

Yet, the question of whether—and how—the reproductive justice framework applies, resonates, and is operationalized beyond the U.S. context remains open (Morgan, 2015). Feminist research and movements outside the USA have not simply imported, adopted, or aligned themselves with the reproductive justice framework. Rather, they have challenged, reworked, and expanded it, amplifying its revolutionary and epistemic potential. Engaging with a feminist ‘politics of location’ (Grewal and Kaplan 1994), which calls for critically situating all perspectives—including our own—within global hierarchies of power, this call for papers invites authors to consider the following questions: What happens when the concept of reproductive justice travels across borders and is translated into specific cultural and political settings, shaped by distinct histories of colonialism, imperialism, racism, and reproductive governance? How does it engage with situated experiences and forms of agency, making visible locally embedded mechanisms of reproductive control and resistance? What new insights emerge if we de-centered the US context and instead take Latin American or South Asian perspectives as starting points? How do non-Western feminist traditions and struggles for reproductive autonomy complicate or enrich dominant understandings of reproductive rights and justice? In other words, why—and how—does ‘locality’ matter when thinking from and (re)searching for reproductive justice?

We welcome proposals for articles that raise new, thought-provoking questions from a range of disciplines, including (but not limited to) sociology, anthropology, history, gender and feminist studies, development studies, medical humanities, human geography, public health, law, and feminist economics. While we seek to amplify perspectives outside the US canon, we also welcome contributions that critically engage with US-based contexts. In particular, we are interested in contributions that explore how transnational feminist conversations and encounters between the USA and the Global South have shaped reproductive justice thinking and practice.

Possible topics include (but are not limited to):

- Population control policies and sterilization.
- Feminist campaigns for access to safe contraception.
- Abortion movements and political agency.
- Maternal health inequalities and mortality in marginalized communities.
- Obstetric violence.
- Reproductive struggles of women living with HIV/AIDS, sex workers, and people with disabilities.
- Environmental reproductive justice.
- Queer reproductive justice and non-normative family formations.
- Assisted reproductive technologies (ARTs) from a reproductive justice perspective.
- Reproductive justice movements and solidarities across borders.
- Feminist debates around the definitions of sexual and reproductive health, rights, and justice.
- Reproductive justice as a travelling theory.
- Non-Western concepts and understandings of reproductive autonomy.

Bibliography

Colen, Shellee. 1995. “‘Like a Mother to Them’: Stratified Reproduction and West Indian Childcare Workers and Employers in New York.” In *Conceiving the New World Order: The Global Politics of Reproduction*, edited by Faye D. Ginsburg and Rayna Rapp, 78–102. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Grewal, Inderpal, and Caren Kaplan, eds. 1994. *Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Morgan, Lynn M. 2015. “Reproductive Rights or Reproductive Justice? Lessons from Argentina.” *Health and Human Rights* 17 (1): 136–147.

Ross, Loretta J., Lynn Roberts, Erika Derkas, Whitney Peoples, and Pamela Bridgewater Toure, eds. 2017. *Radical Reproductive Justice: Foundations, Theory, Practice, Critique*. New York: The Feminist Press at CUNY.

SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective. 2025. Reproductive Justice Definition. Accessed June 8, 2025. <https://www.sistersong.net>.

Information for submissions

Abstracts of 500 words (excluding listed sources) and a short biographical note of no more than 100 words should be sent to reprojustice2025@proton.me no later than **15 August 2025**.

Please ensure that your abstract includes a clear description of your methodology and lists at least 8 sources.

We will send notifications of accepted abstracts by **1 September 2025**.

Full articles to be submitted to the journal's online portal by **1 January 2026**.

The expected word length of the full manuscript (including references) is **8,000 words**; other word lengths are to be negotiated with the editors.

Images are welcome but must include relevant copyright permissions and permissions if any research participant is shown.

All articles must be submitted in the journal's house style, details of which are to be found on the *Feminist Encounters* website (<http://www.lectitopublishing.nl/feminist-encounters>). **All articles must be submitted using the downloadable author's pro forma which is available on the website.** This ensures that the correct formatting and house style is used.

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