



Giving Birth Behind Bars: Realizing Reproductive Justice for Incarcerated Women and Girls

Wednesday, August 10, 2011

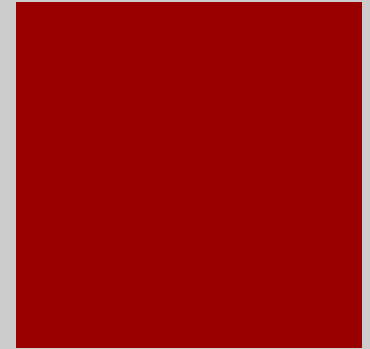
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Why the South Matters: A call to action

- The South has a powerful history of resistance and organizing for power and change, and a legacy of slavery and oppression that has in many ways set the context of how we understand body politics, labor, and reproduction in the US.
- If reproductive justice is to be realized, the South, one of the most conservative regions in the country, will need to be prioritized in order to play a critical role in organizing a movement, shifting the narrative and transforming the policy debate on bodies and reproduction...and the role of the state in perpetuating violence and oppression.



From the community to the capitol: Why we challenge institutions of control and confront power structures



- Oftentimes, our communities are left out of public policy debates yet are subjected to the most draconian, punitive public policies ranging from criminal justice to poverty to the barrage of legislation intended to determine whether and who can parent or not parent.
- Laws have been the vehicle to institutionalize and legitimize oppression that already exists within the social customs and cultures
- Laws have served to institutionalize privilege, disguise oppressive motivations of elites, and oftentimes, disadvantages communities existing on the margins

Realizing Reproductive Justice for incarcerated women: Ending shackling in Georgia's jails and prisons



- "I cannot imagine a place where one might stand and have a clearer view of concentrated disadvantage based on race, class, and gender inequality in the country then from inside the walls of women's prisons."

Beth E. Richie

- Multidimensional campaign to end the practice in Georgia
 - Community based public policy
 - Organizing and movement-building
 - Political Education
 - Leadership development

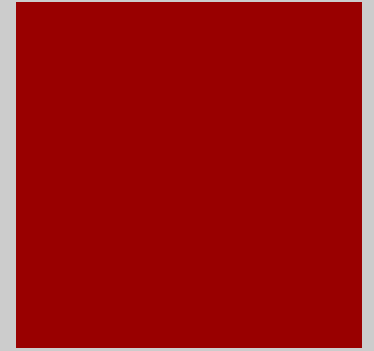
The statewide anti-shackling coalition:

Organizing and Movement Building



- It's more than coalition, it's a movement
- Partners in the coalition:
 - Formerly incarcerated women
 - Ashley and Gwen
 - Doulas, midwives, nurses and birth workers
 - Prisoners Rights Groups
 - Civil liberties and Human Rights Groups
 - Reproductive justice | rights organizations
 - Racial justice organizations
 - LGBTQ rights/justice groups
 - Labor organizers
 - Economic justice groups
 - Community members committed to realizing justice

Giving Birth Behind Bars: A Guide to Achieving Reproductive Justice for Incarcerated Women



- A project conceived by and contributed to by members of the SPARK Core Organizing Team
 - A comprehensive analysis of the national movement and the intersection between RJ and the PIC
 - Model Legislation
 - Statewide Call to Action
 - Petition
 - Organizing Flyer
 - Contact Information
- Available at www.sparkrj.org



On April 14, 2011

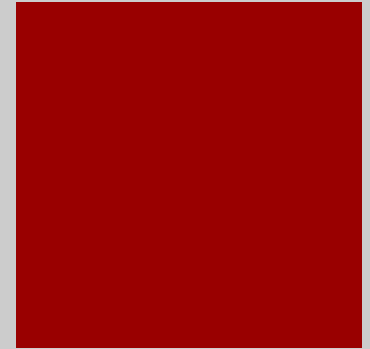
HB 653 – Rep. Stephanie Stuckey Benfield (D-Atlanta)
proposed our version of the anti-shackling bill.

If passed, HB 653 would prohibit the use of restraints on
pregnant female inmates.

This prohibition would apply to use of individual
mechanical restraints such as handcuffs and shackles on
an inmate during such time that she is experiencing labor
or during delivery or post-delivery recovery.

What can you do?

- Understand the issue and the implications of punitive reproductive public policy and the impact on communities of color
 - Participate in the 5th Annual Day of Action in Georgia (February 2011)



Participate in a regional week of Action in February (more details to come)

- Sign and distribute the petition calling for a prohibition on shackling
 - <http://www.PetitionOnline.com/SPARKRJ/petition.html>
- Contact your elected officials & offer solutions
 - Support HB 653
- Make a video | Distribute information through social media
- Deliver testimony at a legislative hearing
- Write an op-ed article in your local newspaper
- Contribute to community based organizations led and informed by the lived experiences of incarcerated women and girls