**Proposal: Reproductive Justice Reporting Project**

Roe v Wade was settled by the US Supreme Court on January 22, 1973. Yet forty years later, women’s right to choose is highly contested. The battle is being waged by right-wingers at the local and state level through onerous regulations on clinics, pregnant women, and medical providers.

Feminist and independent news outlets have been telling this story. However, because the battle for women’s rights is now local rather than national, it has been difficult for either national or local media to adequately convey the full scope of the threat being posed to reproductive health.

The Reproductive Justice Reporting Project—a joint project of the Media Consortium (TMC) and the Association of Alternative Newsmedia (AAN)--will raise public awareness by creating a partnership between national and local outlets to tell this story.

Local alternative newsmedia including the Boston Phoenix will gather human-interest accounts—including video--of women denied services; national outlets including Ms. Magazine, Bitch magazine, In These Times, the Making Contact radio show, the American Independent, AlterNet, and Mother Jones will knit together these local stories with data-rich infographics. The stories will be scheduled to appear in the SAME WEEK.

Imagine: a week in which story after story detailing barriers to women’s right to choose (and success stories of women fighting back against these barriers) is told in local and national outlets—in print, online, on radio and TV—across the country! Imagine this story is linked to petitions and accompanied by a solutions-oriented campaign by advocacy organizations. Imagine this content is tweeted, facebooked, pinned, and youtubed across the social media sphere by participating outlets AND by others in the two associations.

This is a project that will move the dial of public conversation—and will provide a model for the way media can have a real impact on how we live.

The Media Consortium has organized this kind of collaboration before. On May Day 2012, we organized 42 outlets to share reporting about the Occupy movement. AAN already has developed and implemented the content-sharing backend ([http://altweeklies.cont3nt.com/](http://altweeklies.cont3nt.com/" \t "_blank) ) that we will use to coordinate reporting. The outlets named in this letter have already met, and are ready to begin. We are ready to go. All we need is your support.

**The Media Consortium**

The Media Consortium is a growing network of 64 independent news outlets including Mother Jones, Ms. Magazine, LinkTV, the Laura Flanders Show, Truthout, feministing.com, Bitch, The Nation, and many more. We are dedicated to smart, passionate, accurate journalism.

TMC was founded in 2005 with a mission to support and grow the independent news sector. Our members cross platforms, including print, digital, podcast, broadcast radio and broadcast TV.

* 56% of our outlets employ a woman in a management position; five outlets are focused on feminist issues (Bitch, feministing, Ms., RH Reality Check and Women’s Media Center).
* 23% of our outlets employ a person of color in a managerial position; eight are aimed at issues affecting people of color (Chicago Reporter, City Limits, Colorlines, Feet in 2 Worlds, GW Williams Center, New America Media, News Taco, and Race/Poverty/Environment).

We believe that independent media—media that are not owned by either multinational corporations or the government--play a vital role in democracy. Media Consortium members seek to inform, educate, and engage citizens in creating the world to which we all aspire. Committed to fact-based journalism, Media Consortium members believe words matter and can spur action.

By supporting member outlets, amplifying their many voices, and leveraging their collective audiences, the Media Consortium aims to take back the media from a handful of corporate oligopolies, and restore healthy and vibrant debate to this country.

**Jo Ellen Green Kaiser, Reproductive Justice Reporting Project Manager**

Jo Ellen Green Kaiser is Executive Director of the Media Consortium.

Passionate about mission-driven independent media, Jo Ellen has worked for a succession of independent magazines, including stints as Managing Editor and Associate Publisher of *Tikkun*, Publisher of *LiP: Informed Revolt*, and Executive Director and Editor-in-Chief of *Zeek*. She is driven by a belief that democratic societies thrive only when their members have access to accurate information and informed opinion.

Kaiser has spoken at numerous conferences on independent media, and has appeared on FSTV, CNBC, and elsewhere. She is the co-editor of *Righteous Indignation: A Jewish Call to Justice* (Jewish Lights). She holds a BA from Yale and a Ph.D. from UC Berkeley.

**The Association of Alternative Newsmedia**

The Association of Alternative Newsmedia (AAN) is a diverse group of [127 alternative news organizations](http://www.altweeklies.com/aan/directories/Newsweeklies" \t "_blank) covering every major metropolitan area and other less-populated regions of North America. AAN member organizations reach more than 25 million active, educated and influential adults in the U.S. and Canada in print, on the web and on mobile.  
  
AAN was founded in Seattle, Wash., in 1978. It began with 30 newspapers, including *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, *Creative Loafing*, *Phoenix New Times*, *Willamette Week* and the *Chicago Reader*. To meet the association's rigorous membership standards, weekly newspapers must demonstrate that they produce high-quality journalism that offers a valuable alternative to the mainstream media in their area. As a result, only 30 percent of the papers that apply for membership are admitted to the organization. The 127 publications that now make up the association publish in 42 states and the District of Columbia in the United States, and in four Canadian provinces.   
  
There are a wide range of publications in AAN. What ties them together are a strong focus on local news, culture and the arts; an informal and sometimes profane style; an emphasis on point-of-view reporting and narrative journalism; a tolerance for individual freedoms and social differences; and an eagerness to report on issues and communities that many mainstream media outlets ignore.

**Tiffany Shackleford, Reproductive Justice Reporting Project Partnership Director**

Tiffany Shackelford joined AAN as executive director in November, 2010.   
  
Previously, she was the director of communications and marketing at Phase2 Technology in Virginia, where she also oversaw the publishing practice, working with clients such as The New Republic, the Nation, PBS Newshour and The White House. She also served until recently as Executive Director of Capitolbeat, the Association of Capitol Reporters and Editors, a group she helped create in 1999.  In 2008 she co-chaired the ONA annual conference.   
  
She is a certified meeting planner and grant-writer and a published poet.