**Application**

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Outlet Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_\_Bitch Media\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Making Contact \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Feministing\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Topic(s) for Story/Stories

The central focus of this partnership is “Media Narratives Around Reproductive Rights.” As laws restricting abortion access spread around the country and businesses tussle with the federal government over the Affordable Care Act’s expansion of birth control coverage, there is a strong need for relevant, in-depth analysis of the way media discusses reproductive rights. Each partner will choose a specific angle within that larger story for the focus of their work, digging into how discussions of reproductive rights in news media, film, and television affect politics, perspectives, and personal decisions.

These two articles and two audio stories will form crucial media analysis of aspects of pop culture that sorely need more examination. For example, potential research topics for each of the outlets include:

   • Exploring the history of portrayals of abortion in American films.

   • The role of race and class in the framing of the debate over the Affordable Care Act’s contraception expansion.

   • A profile of a specific women's health clinic and how their reality compares to news coverage of laws restricting abortion in their state.

   • An analysis of the changes in pro-choice political messaging from 20 years ago to now.

These three outlets are ideally equipped to report on these topics. Bitch and Feministing have a long history of covering reproductive rights and pop culture from feminist perspectives, but have never before collaborated on a project, making this grant an exciting first-time opportunity. Making Contact’s involvement is a great opportunity to bring this social justice-centric analysis onto national radio. Once the organizations receive the grant, we will discuss and decide upon the specific story each outlet will research and publish. This will be a cohesive, coordinated effort that nonetheless allows each outlet the independence to pursue the stories that best match their mission.

Proposed Publication Schedule (if you plan more than one story, when will the stories come out, and from which outlets):

We will aim to publish these stories over the second week of June. That timeline will give reporters and editors time to do in-depth research on their chosen topic, but will also land as numerous legislative sessions wrap up. For this project, Feministing will publish one article on their site, Bitch will publish both an article and a podcast episode, and Making Contact will produce an original radio segment. Outlets will promote each other’s work on their social media networks and potentially cross-publishing each other’s stories if they’re a good fit.

Total Amount Requested: \_\_\_\_\_\_$6,000\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please attach a budget showing how this money will be spent.

**BUDGET**

All of this grant will be spent on staff time researching, creating, and publishing original articles about reproductive rights. Each partner will be paid equally for their time at a rate of $30/hour.

Since Bitch is coordinating this grant and because we’ll be doing an audio *and* written piece, we’ll be spending more time on the project than the other members. Bitch will be in charge of maintaining contact between grant partners, coordinating the publication of finished articles, and providing guidance on promotion.

**Feministing:** $1,500

Research — 20 hours

Writing  — 10 hours

Editing and Publication — 10 hours

Promotion — 5 hours

Communication with grant partners — 5 hours

Total: 50 hours

**Making Contact:** $2,000

Research — 16 hours

Writing  — 10 hours

Recording, Editing, and Publication — 30 hours

Promotion — 5 hours

Communication with grant partners — 5 hours

Total: 66 hours

**Bitch Media:** $2,500

Research — 20 hours

Writing  — 10 hours

Recording, Editing, and Publication — 20 hours

Creating Art and Graphics — 10 hours

Promotion — 5 hours

Grant coordination and communication with grant partners — 18 hours

Total: 83 hours

**IMPACT**

Media narratives shape our society in ways few people rarely stop to analyze. The way movies, television, and news oulets talk about abortion, birth control, and sex education frame individuals’ understanding of these issues, but people typically take these stories for granted. Media narratives are like the air we breathe—we don’t really notice them until they seem outstandingly sweet or foul. For example, instead of taking a step back to explore about why insurance coverage for contraception is seen as a moral issue, rather than a scientific one, fast-moving news outlets are happy to jump on each new detail of the Hobby Lobby’s ongoing legal battle. This grant gives us the chance to do rare, in-depth journalism that can look at this often-overlooked big picture. We estimate that the articles and audio stories we publish will be seen and heard by over 100,000 people—and they’ll make a real difference.

Our stories will make people think about the way our society’s stories around reproductive rights are told, including who’s doing the telling and who is assumed to be the audience. Articles about reproductive rights typically have a heavily political framing. But with this series, readers will come away from each piece not necessarily feeling a fiery call to action to jump into a specific political fight. Instead, our work will compel readers to re-evaluate the way many aspects of our culture discuss reproductive rights and what voices are missing from those narratives. This is journalism that aims to create essential long-term change in the ways individuals think about some of our nation’s crucial social justice and healthcare issues. There is so much political action around reproductive rights in America right now—every week, state legislatures debate bills on abortion access and national politicians talk about reproductive healthcare—that many news outlets’ articles can only keep up by focusing on each small, most up-to-date piece. This grant will create the resources necessary to create work that ties those small pieces together into a coherent vision of what our national conversations around reproductive rights look like right now.

The collaboration also sends a powerful message of independent media outlets working together to create and share the kinds of stories that advance journalism. In an era when cheap headlines and listicles drive traffic at many outlets, this project helps create a successful alternative vision to how can work to make an impact on readers’ lives.

**TIMELINE FOR PUBLICATION**

All of these articles will be published over the course of one week in June. The participating outlets will plan on cross-posting the articles and promoting them over the course of that week and the next. The exact publication date will be decided after we nail down the details of each outlet’s article. Feministing and Bitch will each produce one in-depth article for this project and Making Contact will create one radio segment. Additionally, Bitch will turn their article into the basis for a podcast that will be released during June.

**MARKETING PLAN**

The key of marketing these articles is to link them together in a way that maximizes their impact and readership, while building on the strengths of each outlet to promote their work in a way that works well for their unique audience and editorial voice. We want each outlet to promote these articles to their own channels, but also to collborate to show how powerfully the stories work as a series. Part of this comes from the writing itself; we’ll frame these articles in an engaging way that makes it clear why it’s important to analyze media narratives around reproductive rights. These will be pieces of journalism that people will not only be drawn to read, but want to discuss with their friends. One of our primary goals is to make readers feel compelled to share what they read with their own networks—and to give them the tools to easily do so.

Here are concrete marketing strategies we’ve agreed on:

• Each written article will be cross-posted to Bitch, Feministing, and Truthout. Making Contact’s audio story—or an excerpt of the transcript—will be cross-posted to all other participating sites. This cross-posting massively expands the audience compared to each outlet publishing the stories just on their own site.

• We’ll create a graphic to include in each article that brands it as part of the series and include a line at the end of each piece with explains the collaboration and links to the other articles in the series.

• Each outlet will post every article in the series to their social media channels, including Twitter, Tumblr, and Facebook. This greatly magnifies each article’s social media reach. For example, Bitch and Feministing each have roughly 100,000 Facebook fans. By posting each article to both pages, we’ll double our potential audience. It’s especially important to promote the articles on multiple platforms, since there are many people who primarily use only Tumblr or Twitter for sharing and discussion of articles.

• People love sharing powerful images, so Bitch will create a very shareable infographic for its article that can be posted on social media channels.

• Bitch will also hosting a hashtagged conversation on Twitter and Branch about at least one article in the series, pointing to the joint effort.