

Ribbon-cutting Ceremony Celebrates Free Menstrual, Wellness Products in City Hall



Ribbon-cutting ceremony commemorating the installation of the new S.O.S. vending machines at City Hall. Photo courtesy of the Office of Mayor Wu.

SUBMITTED BY
OFFICE OF MAYOR WU

The Mayor's Office of Women's Advancement (MOWA) and Property Management cut the ribbon on two SOS smart vending machines which offer free menstrual products and wellness products for purchase in City Hall. This launch was celebrated with a ribbon cutting event last February.

"Ensuring that residents have equitable access to menstrual products is critical for their health and well-being," said Mayor Michelle

Wu. "As we work to make Boston a city for everyone, we are excited to increase menstrual equity through access to free products at City Hall."

The SOS vending machines, located in City Hall on the 2nd floor near the City of Boston Credit Union and the 8th floor near south elevators, dispense free pads and tampons. Other wellness products including deodorant, sunscreen, and more are also available for purchase.

"I am thrilled to celebrate the opening of two SOS vending ma-

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OPINION

Policing abortion in the name of God

REV. IRENE MONROE
Contributing Writer

France has just enshrined abortion rights in its Constitution. What's wrong with the U.S.?

It's its collapse of the church into the affairs of the state. For example, the recent Alabama Supreme Court theology-ridden ruling (*LePage v. Mobile Infirmary Clinic, Inc.*) con-

ferred personhood status to frozen IVF embryos as doing God's will. Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice Thomas Parker wrote in the ruling that "human life cannot be wrongfully destroyed without incurring the wrath of a holy God."

With this ruling, reproductive

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SPRING THEATER

An overthrowing *Thirst*

Thirst, Lyric Stage
Company of Boston, through
March 17. 617-585-5678 or
LyricStage.com

JULES BECKER,
Contributing Writer

Sometimes a modern playwright focuses on seemingly minor characters in a classic play with major results. So it was with Tom Stoppard's sublime "Hamlet"-inspired play "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead." The same goes

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Michael Kaye (Jack), Kate Fitzgerald (Cathleen) and Aimee Doherty (Bridget) in "Thirst" at the Lyric Stage Company. Photo courtesy of Mark S. Howard.

The view from *Golda's Balcony*

Golda's Balcony, Shakespeare & Company, Jackie Liebergott Black Box Theatre at Emerson
Paramount Center, through March 10. 617-824-8400 or <https://emersontheatres.org/Online/default.asp>

JULES BECKER,
Contributing Writer

"Golda's Balcony" and Annette Miller's powerful performance as the title fourth (and so far only woman) Prime Minister of Israel are

more timely than ever. Last summer Shakespeare & Company returned to the William Gibson one-woman play it world premiered in 2002 in Lenox—once again with Daniel Gidron as director and Miller as Golda Meir. Where this 100-minute, no

intermission solo work is set during the 1973 Yom Kippur War—when Egypt and Syria attacked Israel, the current Emerson Paramount Center run follows the October 7 massacre

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A dazzling *Villain*

John Proctor Is the Villain, Huntington Theatre, Wimberly Theatre, Calderwood Pavilion,
Boston Center for the Arts, through March 10. 617-933-8600 or huntingtomtheatre.org

JULES BECKER,
Contributing Writer

Re-reading a classic drama can change a playwright's perception of the male protagonist and the work itself. So it goes for North

Georgia-bred Kimberly Belflower and the 1953 Arthur Miller work "The Crucible." As the Huntington Theatre playbill for the area premiere of her 2018 play "John Proctor Is the Villain" notes, Belflower was taught in high school that "John Proctor is

the beacon of goodness and the girls are hysterical."

With her re-reading, she arrived at the title of her play. Under the driving direction of Margot Bordelon, a

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Annette Green

Mayor Wu, Superintendent Skipper, City Officials Celebrate Carter School Topping Off Ceremony

SUBMITTED BY CITY OF BOSTON

On Tuesday, March 5, Mayor Michelle Wu, BPS Superintendent Mary Skipper, the City's Public Facilities Department, and the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) participated in a topping off ceremony for the new William E. Carter School. The Carter School serves students ages 12-22 with disabilities and complex learning needs. The transformation of the Carter marks a renewed commitment to better serve these students, with more classrooms, a new early childhood program and Pre-K-12 pathway, a therapeutic pool, and sensory garden. The new Carter School, located on the site of the former building in the South End, is included in the five-year capital plan for \$111 million, including design and construction costs. The Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) will reimburse the City of Boston upwards of \$30 million for this investment in the district's students with the highest needs.

"Today's topping off ceremony gets us one step closer to opening the Carter School that our students, families, and BPS staff deserve," said Mayor Michelle Wu. "This new facility will provide the Carter School community with the learning spaces needed for some of our students with the greatest needs. Together we're ensuring every BPS student has the opportunities they need to thrive."

"The topping off of the new Carter School represents a beacon of hope and progress for our students with disabilities and complex learning needs," said BPS Superintendent Mary Skipper. "I'm proud of and grateful for the work School Leader Mark O'Connor and his dedicated team of educators have done in their current space, and the new facility will enable us to provide even more tailored, comprehensive support, ensuring every student has the resources and environment they need to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally."

"The Carter School's topping off ceremony is a testament to the collaborative efforts of our community, city officials, and educational leaders in prioritizing the needs of our most vulnerable students," said Boston School Committee Chairperson Jeri Robinson. "This new facility will serve as a cornerstone for innovative education and empowerment for years to come."

Today's topping off ceremony celebrates the placement of the last beam on the new building, marking the completion of the future school's steel structure. Mayor Wu, City leaders, and Carter School students and staff were at the event to sign the final beam. The design of the new facility will provide a safe, healthy, and inclusive school environment, unlocking each Carter School student's full potential. The new facility is planned to open for the start of the 2025-2026 school year. Carter students have been using a portion of the Lilla Frederick School while their new space is under construction. Public Facilities, in partnership with BPS and the MSBA, began construction on the new facility in the summer of 2022.

At the Carter School, teachers and therapists work on learning objectives together to provide individualized, intensive education

programming for students with the highest needs requiring total personal care. Due to these unique challenges, each classroom is composed of five students, one teacher, and two teaching assistants. The new building will better enable educators to provide an accessible, developmentally appropriate educational environment that includes data driven instruction and individualized services for all students. The new construction will:

- Increase the number of classrooms from 5 to 12 classrooms, (increasing the number of students from 25 to 60).

- Establish a Carter School Early Childhood program and a Pre-K-12 pathway.

- Include a therapeutic pool that is accessible to all students.

- Feature a rooftop outdoor classroom and sensory garden to connect students with the outdoors and provide an engaging environment to support communication development.

A literacy commons when students and visitors first enter the building to enforce the school's mission of developing communication and literacy skills for all students, in alignment with the district goals of equitable literacy instruction for all.

Enforce a whole-school design that views every space from the lens of how it can best increase each student's ability to communicate across all environments.

The Carter School was designed to be a zero net energy building with an emphasis on energy efficiency and green infrastructure to support the City of Boston's carbon neutrality and sustainability goals. The school's rooftop garden is designed to absorb rainwater and slow the burden of storm water surge in a city prone to coastal flooding. The garden also mitigates the urban heat island effect in a neighborhood that is unequally burdened by urban overheating. The building's envelope is designed for increased thermal performance to enhance the energy efficiency of the property.

"We are thrilled to have reached this construction milestone! The Carter community deserves a space that reflects its excellence," said Kerrie Griffin, Director of Public Facilities. "Reaching this step brings us closer to fulfilling our commitment to delivering a contemporary, well-equipped learning environment tailored to the needs of all students."

The MSBA has been a valued partner for the Carter School and BPS. The design process began in the winter of 2020, with participation from the Carter School students, staff, families, and other community partners. The design process allowed the team to partner with the Carter School community to remove the facility barriers to Carter student's education in a way that has never before been possible in the special education field.

"This is an exciting time for students and teachers at the Carter School, and the entire Boston community," said State Treasurer Deborah B. Goldberg, Chair of the Massachusetts School Building Authority. "The MSBA looks forward to our continued partnership and completing this project, not only meeting the needs and supporting the current student population but generations to come."

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ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE KITCHEN WALL
THERE'S A WHOLE OTHER STORY.

Thirst

BY RONÁN NOONE DIRECTED BY COURTNEY O'CONNOR

Michael Kaye, Aimee Doherty
Photo: Mark S. Howard

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NEWS FROM....

Friends of The South End Library

SUBMITTED BY FOSEL

Summary of the second public meeting for a new library on Feb. 12th, from Friends of The South End Library (FOSEL) president Yvette Jarreau:

- The location is in the flood plain and therefore requires a building that is 3 ft above the current floor level.
- While there were slides on the neighborhood characteristics, we did not discuss planning for future branch library needs/size, such as population increase/decrease or demographic changes.
- The program items do not include a café or cooking area. They do include space for the local history collection. Many of the ideas from the first community meeting were included in the feedback and the proposed building program.
- Three test fits were presented—these are not designs but rather concepts for accommodating the square footage that the library program, as presented, requires. All three involved increasing the square footage to over 15,000.
- Only one allows for our park to remain with minimal change to the tree canopy. This was the 2-story new construction

option.

- A third floor was not being considered by BPL, primarily due to staff constraints for monitoring activity in the space and concern about increased costs.
- The height requirement of the South End Landmark Commission is a minimum of 30 ft and can be higher. Most of the buildings surrounding the current building are higher.
- An elevator would appear to be required in any of the options.
- Now is the time for input as BPL and Utile hope to have a decision on the key direction for the new building by the next community meeting in the March/April time frame (date still to be determined).

Request

- In the presentation, Utile stated "It is important to test many different options during the feasibility study phase as a form of due diligence." Given this statement I would like to request a test fit for 3 stories to accomplish the following:
 - Eliminate the using 8 ft from the alley which is already a tight space for servicing the library and residents using the alley.
 - Add a program element allowing for a kitchen/café multi-use space; this aligns

with our community history of events and celebrations with food.

- Build the structure so that it can be increased upward beyond 3 stories, since we want this building to serve us into a 50+ year future.
- Slides from this meeting are available here: www.bpl.org/south-end-project, as well as a form to express your own thoughts on the new library. Note that the BPL and Utile will choose one of the three design strategies by the time of that 3rd meeting; if you agree with FOSEL about the desirability of a 3rd floor, now is the time to let them know.

Ongoing, interim programming

Thursday, March 07, 11:30am–12:30pm, USES 48 Rutland St: English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Conversation Group

Thursdays 10:30am, USES 48 Rutland St: Story time with Librarian Margaret

Mondays & Wednesdays, 10am pickup at the South End Library: Age Strong Shuttle Service to the Parker Hill branch of the BPL

Tue March 12th, 2pm, FOMU 655 Tremont St: The Scoop: Book Club—The Henna Artist by Alka Joshi.

Visit www.bpl.org for a list of all events and further details.

Villain

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strong Huntington cast empowers that provocative conclusion with #MeToo era immediacy.

Inspired by her own experience, Belflower has fittingly set her "John Proctor Is the Villain" in a current day Appalachian Georgia high school classroom. English teacher Carter Smith—explaining that 200 were charged and 20 executed in the 1692 Salem witch trials in a time of mass hysteria—describes the drama unit choice "The Crucible" as an "allegory for McCarthyism."

Smith submits that Proctor is "one of the best characters ever" and considers him a "great hero. Conflicted student Shelby Holcomb counters that married Proctor is a villain and never apologized to Abigail Williams—with whom he had an affair. Tellingly female classmates—whose feminism club has been rejected by the school—find themselves defending Abigail and young girls accused of dancing naked and consorting with the devil.

As Belflower's clever play develops, the class—especially female students—relate the claims about various characters in Miller's frequently staged and very admired play to accusations and suspicions about the people in their own lives. Classmates wonder about the reason why Shelby was away for six months.

Standout student Beth Powell feels that Smith is the best teacher, but troubling questions arise about his own actions outside of class.

Ivy Watkins struggles to cope with accusations brought against her father by his former secretary. At the same time, Raelynn Nix resists efforts by inappropriate ex-boyfriend Lee Turner to persuade her that he has changed.

While a serious play with striking extrapolations to modern day issues—as was true of Miller's own play, "John Proctor Is the Villain" does balance dramatic situations with humorous and lighter moments and embrace the growing independence of its young characters—particularly the female ones. Early on female students speak of Smith as "hot" and comment suggestively about him.

Mason Adams, seemingly sincere, calls Nell Shaw 'cool'—who states "I'm super not cool" and asks her to hang out. There is an amusing confusion of 'sabbatical' and (Jewish) 'Sabbath.' When four of the female classmates scream and jump, entering Lee and Mason facetiously ask if there is "actual witchcraft in here?"

Belflower's play, neither strident nor didactic, does compel attention for the troubling questions it poses. In designer Kristen Robinson's well-detailed classroom, Huntington's stellar cast deliver vivid answers in both dialogue and movement—the latter most notably in a kind of closing dance of empowerment.

Jules Talbot captures Beth's early reticence and eventual openness. Isabel Van Natta is riveting as outspoken yet vulnerable Shelby. Brianna Martinez has all of Ivy's earnestness and insecurity. Haley Wong catches Raelynn's self-validation and inner strength. Victoria Omoregie smartly balances Nell's engaging personality and insightfulness. Benjamin Izaak finds Lee's clueless moments, while Maanav Aryan Goyal captures Mason's growing understanding of fellow female classmates. Olivia Hebert has school counselor Bailey Gallagher's real attempts at guidance. Japhet Balaban has all of Smith's complexity as an admired teacher and an enigmatic personality.

Belflower, in a playbill conversation, speaks of "examining cycles of power, cycles of abuse, how cycles of teaching 'The Crucible' the same way over and over again leads to one rigid interpretation." In his own way Miller was examining cycles in the 1950's, and the play's warning about naming names and guilt by association do relate to Nixon's 1970's enemies list and Trump's ongoing threats to those who oppose his election denial and dictatorship dreams.

Fans of the Miller play will have to decide how the Belflower play responds to "The Crucible." The dazzling staging of "John Proctor Is the Villain" should have all theatergoers studying both plays for their respective timely insights.

Publishers Emeritus:

Jeff Coakley
Sue O'Connell

Editor-in-Chief:

Sue O'Connell
sue.southendnews@gmail.com

Editorial Design Manager:

Julie Walker Palmer

Contributing Writers:

Jules Becker

Letters to the editor:

letters@southendnews.com

Calendar listings:

sencalendar@southendnews.com

Display Advertising:

sales@baywindows.com

Classified Advertising:

sales@southendnews.com

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Boston, MA 02127

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Registration Now Open for Boston's LGBTQ+ Pride Parade and Festivals

Organizers Seek Sponsors for June 8th Celebration

SUBMITTED BY BP4TP

Boston Pride For The People (BP4TP) today announced the opening of registration for the 2024 Pride Parade, as well as the festivals to be held on Saturday, June 8th, 2024 on Boston Common and City Hall Plaza.

The parade will start in Copley Square at 11 A.M. and move through the city's South End, finishing at Boston Common where everyone can enjoy the festival that includes performances from local and national entertainers. City Hall Plaza will host a Block Party for those 21+ that begins later in the afternoon. All BP4TP events are free to attend.

Last year, more than 1 million people attended Pride, the region's largest LGBTQ+ event.

Parade + Festival Registration will be completed online via Eventbrite, where interested parties will reserve their place in the parade and/or space at the festivals. Registration fees and payment options are outlined at <https://www.bostonprideforthepeople.org/>

Several hundred community groups, businesses, schools, government agencies,

employee resource groups, elected officials, and others are expected to march in the parade. Organizers estimate that the number of booths available for vendors at the festivals will be 250 and are likely to sell out.

Sponsorship Opportunities are available, at levels ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000. The cost of producing the parade and festivals is estimated at nearly \$1 million. In addition to registration fees, contributions from community and businesses are an essential source of financing the events.

A Partnership Package is available for corporations and non-profit organizations interested in supporting this year's Pride. It includes the dates for informational sessions for interested sponsors and can be found on the BP4TP website: www.bostonprideforthepeople.org

Boston Pride For The People (BP4TP) is the volunteer and community-run non-profit organization working to empower, celebrate, commemorate, and educate in partnership with Boston's LGBTQ+ communities. In 2023 BP4TP hosted and managed Boston's first Pride parade and festivals in more than three years, bringing New England's largest Pride parade back to its home in Boston. For more information visit:

bostonprideforthepeople.org



Boston Pride Parade 2023. Photo by South End News Staff.

bostonprideforthepeople.org



Thirst

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for Ronan Noone's refreshingly imaginative "Thirst" (2022)—an absorbing look at the fortunes of three workers at Monte Cristo Cottage, the Connecticut summer seaside home of the fictional Tyrone family in Eugene O'Neill's powerful drama "Long Day's Journey into Night" (written 1939-1941; staged on Broadway 1956).

Lovingly helmed by artistic director Courtney O'Connor, the Lyric Stage Company of Boston's latest effort turns the Boston-based playwright's celebration of Irish-Americans and their hopes and dreams into a richly flavored brew.

Early on, "Thirst" alludes to famed explorers Robert Falcon Scott and Roald Amundsen. The allusion is very apt as Noone explores the respective immigrant journeys of cook Bridget Conroy

and second girl or maid Cathleen Mullen and the plans of America-born chauffeur Jack Smythe.

Although only Cathleen actually appears in the O'Neill play—with Bridget and Jack merely referenced, all three receive very full attention in this August, 1912 kitchen-set play.

Right from the start, the chemistry between Bridget and widower Jack is clear. At the same time, Jack candidly credits Bridget with giving new purpose to his life. As for Bridget's Titanic-surviving niece Cathleen, her aunt means to be a kind of guardian-mentor. That intention becomes a tall order as Shakespeare, declaiming Cathleen aspires to be a serious actress. For his part, ambitious Jack wants to start a car rental company but insists that he will not set out without Bridget.

All three Irish workers feel that the dysfunctional Tyrones—on the other side of the

stage left kitchen wall—do not appreciate how exhausting their drudgery is. Kathleen and Bridget repeatedly move back and forth in a kind of domestic rut as they prepare the family's meals. Janie E. Howland's very well-detailed set includes a white icebox refrigerator and a period stove as well as a fitting repertoire of pots and pans—two of which Bridget will brandish weapon-like at a particular moment of frustration.

Designer Karen Perlow turns the play's stage lighting into a poetic barometer of the alternating brightening and dimming of the character's fortunes. There are also moments when the on and off lighting beyond the kitchen leaves Bridget and Kathleen at the beck and call of the Tyrones. This alternation carries over to Mikayla Reid's costume design as attire moves between work clothes and dress wear that

reflects respective attempts to rise above daily routines.

There is nothing routine about the cast members' performances. Aimee Doherty smartly balances Bridget's defensive sarcasm and genuine caring for Kathleen. Kate Fitzgerald finds all of Kathleen's appealing spirit—especially in lively strong-willed exchanges with Doherty's protective Bridget. Michael Kaye captures Jack's lyrical romancing of Bridget and his striking inner strength—most notably giving robust expression to the chauffeur's unflinching quest for self-realization.

Near the close of the play, Kathleen unequivocally calls herself a survivor. Doherty, Fitzgerald and Kay invest their vivid respective characters with the inner reserves of people possessing shining futures. "Thirst" is overflowing with their engaging worthiness.

Golda's Balcony

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of Israelis by Hamas and Israel's ongoing war with the Gaza-based terrorists and efforts to rescue hostages.

Theatergoers at the intimate Jackie Liebergott black box are likely to see parallels between Golda's questions about dealing with the 1973

attack and issues about Israel's pre-October 7 intelligence.

Meir's self-doubts move through both her personal and professional lives in Gibson's insightful play. As Goldie Myerson, the activist wife—for whom "The cause (the independence and survival of Israel) was my life"—wonders if it was a mistake that husband Morris married her, saying "I ruined his life." At the same time,

she continually details the conflicting views of the likes of defense minister Moshe Dayan and deputy prime minister Yigal Allon during cabinet meetings that challenged her own approach to defending Israel.

That approach involves Meir pushing for American military assistance on phone calls with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and resisting the worst case scenario employment of

the Dimona nuclear reactor (constructed in 1967 with French assistance). The play's title actually derives from the nickname for a secret area for observation of activity at the Dimona facility.

By contrast, there are proud moments outlining successes. "We brought our state back into being," she notes. Meir's own efforts in pursuit of that reality raise \$50 million dollars in the United States. There is also a vivid memory of 50,000 Jews

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A photograph of a row of red brick townhouses with white trim and dormer windows. The building features multiple stories with numerous windows and a central entrance with a red door. A black lamppost stands in front of the building.

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City Hall

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chinese in City Hall. This is the city demonstrating commitment to menstrual equity by placing these products in City Hall," said Boston City Councilor Gabriela Coletta, District 1. "I'm committed to working in partnership to ensure Boston is breaking barriers by having menstrual products accessible in all public buildings free of stigma."

This past fall, MOWA partnered with the Boston Public Libraries to pilot a program offering free menstrual products and education at six Boston Public Library branches.

"This is another step towards ending Period Poverty in the city that we hope will expand to making menstrual products accessible in all public buildings," said Alexandra Valdez, Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs. "MOWA is committed to supporting all aspects of women's health and overall well-being by focusing on initiatives that impact women throughout their lives such as menstrual education and product access, reproductive rights, and maternal

health, especially those in communities that are underrepresented."

"This is not only a public health concern but a basic equity issue," said Eamon Shelton, Commissioner of Property Management. "The fact that safe and affordable access to menstrual products disproportionately affects vulnerable communities is why initiatives like this one are so important. With the installation of these vending machines, the City of Boston is setting an example and proving that it is committed to having a fully equitable and participatory society."

"Menstrual products can cost families at least \$216 per person, per year," said Mariangely Solis Cervera, Chief of Equity and Inclusion. "We understand that many families are struggling with the rising cost of living, and it is our belief that essential products, like pads and tampons, should not be a financial burden."

"As a company founded in Boston, introducing SOS™ to City Hall alongside MOWA marks a pivotal milestone for us," said Co-CEO and Co-Founder, Susanna Twarog. "Beyond supporting Mayor Wu's mission to enhance period

care accessibility, our patented design and technology are revolutionizing the built world on a global scale."

SOS™ is pioneering a paradigm shift in how the built world fulfills universal human needs and prioritizes human well-being. Our patented approach combines state-of-the-art design and cutting-edge technology to deliver memorable, relevant, and delightful consumer experiences. In collaboration with esteemed brands, iconic landmarks, entertainment hubs, and retail destinations, SOS™ is shaping a future where every body is served.

"Menstrual products are an essential item just like toilet paper and should be available where menstruators need them, in the bathroom," said Sasha Goodfriend, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Organization for Women (MassNOW). "The City of Boston's menstrual equity initiative is an innovative strategy to meet the needs of people experiencing period poverty. The cost of these products has been passed down to menstruators for generations and it is time that Boston considers menstrual dignity a human right."

Monroe

Continued from page 1

justice is thrown out of the window. Women, girls, and people with the capacity for pregnancy in the state of Alabama have been relegated to human chattel and birthing incubators. And, if you thought Margaret Atwood's "The Handmaid's Tale" was a fictitious dystopian novel, read it now as a survival guide because this ruling will have broader implications in the ongoing anti-abortion war.

"Pro-life" versus "the life of the child"

Women, girls, and people with the capacity to give birth caught up in the pro-life battle need to know their lives don't matter. Neither does that of the child. While Parker's theocratic ruling takes his concepts of "pro-life" to a newer mean-spirited and punitive level, the label "pro-life" has always used religion to cloak the misogyny and transphobia of anti-abortion legislation since Roe v. Wade was ratified in 1973. The care for the fetus doesn't extend beyond birth. Former Massachusetts Democratic gay congressman Barney Frank said for pro-lifers, "Life" begins at conception and ends at birth." Studies have shown that unwanted children born in states or areas where there are abortion restrictions have much more challenging lives and often live in poverty.

The Trump Effect

The precursor for the recent Alabama decision was the landmark Supreme Court decision passing Dobbs v.

Jackson Women's Health Organization (2022), overturning Roe v. Wade, and Planned Parenthood v. Casey (1992). Before Roe was overturned, abortion was a fundamental right under the Constitution. This right afforded women, girls, and people with the capacity for pregnancy under the 14th Amendment full citizenship, the right to privacy, bodily autonomy, and respect for a person's choice without judgment. However, religion drove the Dobbs decision and was influenced by conservative Catholic thinkers, theologians, and Supreme Court justices.

With the overturning of Roe v. Wade, we saw justice wasn't blind but rather biased. This is the effect of Trump's presidency. Trump nominated 274 conservative Republicans to federal benches and three to the Supreme Court: Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh, and Amy Coney Barrett who all sided in overturning Roe v. Wade. Today, as with the Dobb decision to overturn Roe, the Supreme Court comprises six Catholics, accounting for two-thirds of its total number of justices, of which five are pro-lifers.

Abortion rights are queer rights

Before the Dobbs decision and now Alabama's, BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities, due to health disparities, access to a safe abortion was primarily out of their reach. Women and girls, however, are not the only ones who need abortion care. Nonbinary people, intersex individuals, gender non-conforming folks, and trans men need abortion care, too!

"I am a transgender man, which means that although I am a man, I was assigned female at birth, which means that I have a uterus, which means that I could get pregnant. Which means that I could need an abortion," Schuyler Bailar, a transgender athlete and activist, told CBSNews.com in 2021. "I am here to remind you to make it absolutely clear that people of all genders can have abortions, and people of all genders should have safe and legal access to abortions."

According to the 2023 Guttmacher Institute's Abortion Patient Survey, 16 percent of U.S. abortion patients do not identify as heterosexual women. And according to the 2020 survey, 149,000 respondents who do not identify as either straight or cisgendered obtained abortions compared to the total number of abortions that year.

Using religion to codify discrimination against LGBTQ+ Americans began with the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) in 1993 under the guise of religious freedom. In 2018, SCOTUS ruled in "Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission" in favor of the baker who refused to make a wedding cake for a same-sex couple on the grounds of religious freedom. Moreover, anti-abortion and anti-LGBTQ legislation go hand in hand because they both are done in the name of God.

Reproductive justice, however, is essential to a person's right to choose when and whether to have an abortion. SCOTUS shouldn't decide, and neither should the church. Perhaps the U.S. needs to take a page from France's Constitution.

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ORDER FOR SERVICE BY PUBLICATION & MAILING		Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court	
Eprem Zeru Nigussie vs. Saba Girmay Gebetsadkan			
Upon motion of plaintiff for an order directing the defendant to appear, plead, or answer, in accordance with Mass.R.Civ.P./Mass.R.Dom.Rel.P.Rule 4, it appearing to the court that this is an action for Divorce 1B.		Docket No. SU23D2122DR Suffolk Probate and Family Court 24 New Chardon Street Boston, MA 02114 (617) 788-8300	
Pursuant to Supplemental Probate Court Rule 411, an Automatic Restraining Order has been entered against the above named parties. Defendant cannot be found within the Commonwealth and his/her present whereabouts are unknown. Personal service on defendant is therefore not practicable, and defendant has not voluntarily appeared in this action.			
It is Ordered that defendant is directed to appear, plead, answer, or otherwise move with respect to the complaint herein on or before April 04, 2024. If you fail to do so this Court will proceed to a hearing and adjudication of this matter.			
It is further Ordered that the accompanying summons be published once in the South End News a newspaper published in: P.O. Box E14 Boston, MA 02127 the publication to be 20 days at least before said return day. It is further Ordered that a copy of the summons be mailed to the defendant at his/her last known address by registered or certified mail.			
Date: 2/6/2024		Hon. Brian J. Dunn, Justice of Probate and Family Court	

CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN FOR INCAPACITATED PERSON PURSUANT TO G.L.c. 190B, §5-304		Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court
In the matter of: Angel Perez Najera Of: Boston, MA		Docket No. SU24P0442GD RESPONDENT Alleged Incapacitated Person
To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by Boston Medical Center of Boston, MA in the above captioned matter alleging that Angel Perez Najera is in need of a Guardian and requesting that Boston Medical Center of Boston, MA (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve Without Surety on the bond .		Suffolk Probate and Family Court 24 New Chardon Street Boston, MA 02114
The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority.		
You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 1:00 A.M. on the return date of 04/25/2024 . This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.		
IMPORTANT NOTICE The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.		
WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court. Date: February 28, 2024 <i>Stephanie L. Everett, Esq., Register of Probate</i>		

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