# Gravitational Lensing: Feminist Film Dialogues Program 6: Reproductive Health & Justice Shapeshifters Cinema, December 13, 2024

# Menorrhagia by Claire Maske, 2023, 16mm film shown on DV, 5:30 mins

A personal documentary reflecting on shame and menstruation through an experience with a little-researched condition called menorrhagia.

Cycles by Zeinabu Irene Davis, 1989, 16mm shown on DV, 17 mins File provided courtesy of Women Make Movies.

Rasheeda Allen is waiting for her period—a state of anticipation familiar to all women. Drawing on Caribbean folklore, this exuberant experimental drama uses animation and live action to discover a film language unique to African American women. The multilayered soundtrack combines a chorus of women's voices with the music of Africa and the diaspora-including Miriam Makeba, acappella singers from Haiti and trumpetiste Clora Bryant.

# Self-Health by SF Women's Health Collective, 1977, 16mm film shown on DV, 23:26 mins

A group of women are shown how to proactively care for their own bodies.

# Reversal by Diane Nerwen, 2023, DV, 6:35 mins

Reversal combines images and sounds from movies released or broadcast in 1973—the year the Supreme Court decided Roe v. Wade. In the strange new reality ushered in by the Dobbs decision, the slogan "We won't go back" is recalled with bitter irony. This collage piece evokes the spectre of regression and repression that has followed the Court's decision.

# Hemorrhage by Ruth Hayes, 2023, DV, 4:07 mins

Animated agit-prop against the evisceration of American women's reproductive rights. An iterative animation process incorporating rubbings, images, text and voices from the *New York Times* and the Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health arguments before the United States Supreme Court moves the film from formal experimentation to an expression of outrage about the effects of abortion bans on women's health and a eulogy for Roe.

#### \*\*\* INTERMISSION \*\*\*

# The Gallery That Destroys All Shame by Aurora Brachman & Jessie Zinn, 2021, DV, 11 mins

One evening in L.A., a group gathers to learn how to take back the speculum.

# Other Reckless Things by Janis Crystal Lipzin, 1984, 16mm shown on DV, 17:30 mins

The filmmaker's response to a newspaper account of a self-inflicted Caesarian section.

# Light On A Path, Follow by Elliot Montague, 2020, DV, 15 mins

Trans-masculine and pregnant in the mid-1990s, Joaquín moves from the city to the anonymity of a 200-year-old colonial farm house in the hill towns of Western Massachusetts (Pocumtuc territory), working as a customer service operator for a local herbal company. Joaquín discovers a shapeshifting spirit guide in a tree nearby their home. The spirit's presence permeates the old house as Joaquín awaits their due date. Joaquín's water breaks two weeks early and a precipitous labor ensues. Is this spirit haunting or guiding Joaquín as they await their midwife?

Sing, O Barren Woman by Susan Mogul, 2001, SV shown on DV, 11 mins File provided courtesy of Video Data Bank.

Giving voice to ten women who chose not to have children, Mogul's video simultaneously offers a hilarious and poignant meditation on all manner of life choices and the necessity of living with their consequences (David Pagel, *LA Times*).

**Gravitational Lensing: Feminist Film Dialogues** is dedicated to exploring the visions, voices, concerns and lineage of women, non-binary, genderqueer and trans filmmakers through public film screenings, workshops, conversations and presentations.

Curators: Amy Reid and Kathleen Quillian

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