



CAN REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM BE ACHIEVED BY DECOLONIZING WHAT PLEASURE, LOVE, AND RESISTANCE LOOK LIKE? CASES OF WOMXN OF COLOR FACING REPRODUCTIVE INJUSTICES

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Pleasure, love, and resistance are political acts of social liberation. The social construction of pleasure, love, and resistance are often times embedded in western ideals that center whiteness and colonial assimilation while simultaneously othering¹ bodily autonomy and intersectionality. It is necessary for marginalized communities to decolonize and overcome such western socializations in order to achieve reproductive freedom. Reproductive freedom consists of individuals and communities having access to raise their families in safe environments with dignity and respect free from stigma and violence.

This research will unpack the question: Can reproductive freedom be achieved by decolonizing what pleasure, love, and resistance look like? This research is not interested in providing an answer to this question; rather, this research is more interested in addressing the process of proposing and unpacking this question in order to understand the process of achieving reproductive freedom. Using a form of Eve Tuck's² (2009) methodological analysis concerning damage-centered vs. desire-based research I will explore the importance of engaging in desire-based activism to uplift all voices and all lived experiences. Cases of womxn³ of color will be used to make clear and practical recommendations for individuals advocating for reproductive freedom through decolonization.

¹ I will use the term "otherize" or "othering" to refer to making or regarding people or social groups as different or unusual.

² Tuck, E. (2009). Suspending damage: A letter to communities. *Harvard Educational Review*, 79(3), 409-428.

³ I will refer to "women" as womxn as an intentional act of decentering the experiences and existence of men in relation to the experiences and existence of women. Communicating womxn in this way queers the way society has taught individuals to perceive "(wo)men" as a part of men; replacing the "e" with a "x" is also an act of representing all womxn of all gender identities and expressions.