



“In Our Perfect World”: The Empathetic Rhetoric of Dorothy Roudebush

By Olivia Steely

I should like to say at the outset that none of us advocates abortion. We wish there never any necessity for a woman to feel she needs to have one. In our perfect world - where there is an infallible contraceptive widely available and faithfully employed - there will not be such a thing as an unplanned, unwanted pregnancy.

—Roudebush 1

In this excerpt from a speech on April 16, 1972, at the Manchester Christian Church in St. Louis, Missouri, Dorothy Roudebush expressed to her audience of conservative Christian citizens an idea of a world in which all women have access to family planning education as well as effective birth control. Roudebush saw a society in which women planned their families according to their desires and in which they would have control of their reproductive choices. However, she recognized that increasing women’s rights was a process for which she would have to reason with society and work with the limitations of United States law. Far from pessimistic, Roudebush often expressed her goal of helping women and their families lead happier, healthier lives by providing them with the means to terminate unplanned and unwanted pregnancies. She understood that United States law did not come close to the ideal, especially in her home state of Missouri, so she used her education and passion for advocacy to increase women’s access to family planning services and toward the aim of legalizing abortion.

Issues regarding female birth control, abortion, and other family planning services and health care are still highly debated today. By looking at past women's rhetoric, researchers can learn from their oratory technique and gain insight into how they affected policy and public opinion. Abortion was a crucial topic during second-wave feminism, and women, such as Roudebush, used oral rhetoric to seek common ground between opposing viewpoints.

Roudebush was a St. Louis native who taught in numerous secondary and post-secondary schools while concurrently working with city officials and organizations to provide citizens with greater access to family planning services, such as reproductive education, health screenings, birth control, and abortion. Through these connections, she became an advocate for and a committed member of Planned Parenthood. In 1963, she teamed up with an associate, social worker Julian Hall, to organize the "Citizen's Committee for Family Planning Through Public Health Services" and served as committee chairperson until, less than a decade later, the group disbanded (Roudebush 1). The committee was made up of a group of individuals who were passionate about providing family planning services to St. Louis families through public health institutions in the area. After Roudebush's involvement with the committee, she narrowed her focus to abortion activism. In 1969, Roudebush helped found the Committee for Legal Abortion in Missouri, for which she served as president and through which she became active in politics and law-making (Roudebush 1-2).

Her education, committee work, and nationwide connections led her grassroots movement forward. She delivered speeches relating to birth control and the legalization of abortion since the mid-1960s. Many documents can be found in the Missouri State Historical Society archives that Roudebush donated including correspondence, records associated with numerous organizations in which she was involved, and distributed press releases and brochures from various groups during the time. Among these documents were copies of the oral

speeches she wrote and delivered to audiences around the country.

One such document was the speech she delivered to the Manchester Christian Church. Roudebush addresses her audience who were against abortion with the aim of persuading them to understand the importance of legalizing abortion. She achieved this persuasion by using personal language and empathetic rhetoric that included her audience in the conversation, validated their opinions, and guided them to understanding the common ground between their viewpoints and her ideas. This strategy worked to form a relationship between herself and the audience that surpassed the typical audience-speaker dynamic. In many ways, her speech exemplified how abortion rhetoric can be empathetic. Her work offers us an opportunity to analyze how empathetic rhetoric functions in a debated and often emotional issue, such as abortion. We will examine the context of the birth control movement during the 1960s and 1970s, and how abortion rhetoric is commonly defined. Then, we will define empathetic rhetoric and how researchers have studied the topic thus far, including how Roudebush's work has unprecedentedly built these frameworks. Finally, we will analyze Roudebush's Manchester Christian Church speech as well as some of her other fascinating work.

Bringing Empathetic Rhetoric and Abortion Rhetoric Together

During the birth control movement of the 1960s, many individuals, like Roudebush, formed grassroots movements to enact the change they had waited years to see. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the subject of birth control was not openly discussed. Not only was there a severe social stigma surrounding this topic, but laws, such as the federal Cornstock law and anti-obscenity laws, banned dissemination of contraceptives and family planning information through the mail or across state lines. These laws were not declared unconstitutional until 1972, a year before legalized abortion (Institute of Medicine par. 25). Between the early 20th century and 1972, little

related to the birth control movement occurred. Many women received “back-alley abortions” because access to and public discussion of birth control did not make serious gains until the release of the birth control pill in 1960 (National Abortion Federation par. 10). Margaret Sanger, one of the most well-known abortion advocates of the twentieth century and founder of Planned Parenthood, an organization that was created in response to the Cornstock law, also used a rhetorical strategy of appealing to women and children’s needs and happiness: “At the national level, Sanger viewed contraception as the means of addressing a country’s social ills: she urged citizens to adopt birth control practices as a means of curbing national poverty, unemployment, hunger, child labor, and other troublesome elements of modern life” (Stearns par. 29). A common thread that connects humans is that we all require our basic bodily needs to be met. By acknowledging how abortion helps these “ills” of modern life, both Sanger and Roudebush appealed to the audience’s most primal needs. Roudebush directly used empathetic rhetoric as a strategy to convince her audience of the importance and beneficence of legalizing abortion.

By 1970, President Nixon had established the Title X Family Planning Program, a program that “provides grants for family planning services, training, research, and informational and educational materials” (Institute of Medicine par. 34). While this enactment must have thrilled Roudebush, she realized the program banned national abortion funding, banned the discussion of abortion as a method of family planning, and denied patients the opportunity to access abortion information about or be referred to abortion services. During this period prior to *Roe vs. Wade*, more than thirty states rejected liberal abortion laws. From 1967-1972, seventeen states legalized abortion; however, thirteen of those states were only able to keep the laws for a brief period of time (Cole par. 9). Unwavered by these outcomes, many women joined the movement to advocate for access to family planning services.

During the early 1970s, abortion became a more prevalent topic of discussion compared to previous decades, as shown through the abundant records available from this time. Joseph Dellapenna argues that, during this period, abortion debate was polarized and uncertainty was “produced by the continually changing medical technologies relating to birth processes” (360). In other words, as abortion procedures and reproductive medicines developed, individuals grew wary of trusting those changes. During the time Roudebush spoke, vacuum aspiration procedures replaced dilation and curettage during abortions prior to the twelfth week of pregnancy. Additionally, after the sixteenth week of pregnancy, saline amniocentesis hysterectomies took the place of older treatments. These procedures became widely-used after 1960 as they served to make abortions safer, simpler, and less painful (Dellapenna 413). Advances in birth control treatments initiated the beginning of the medical community treating abortions similar to a minor surgery. Moreover, medicine began to distinguish the health of the fetus from the health of the mother, encouraged by the invention of the field of fetology (Dellapenna 414). New practices along with a change in the perspective of fetal gestation contributed to some physicians opposing abortion. A decade before Roudebush spoke at Manchester Christian Church, women had begun to gain access to the birth control pill, and many American families were beginning to attain agency by questioning and implementing family planning strategies. As these advancements became more prevalent, public discussion of these policies followed, and abortion rhetoric flourished. Currently, abortion policy is being debated in Missouri, as legislation passed that outlaws abortions after detection of a fetal heartbeat. Once again, we see abortion rhetoric in the news.

Abortion rhetoric is rhetoric used to promote arguments related to abortion by following common strategies that engage with the public audiences, yet research relating to abortion rhetoric fails to mention the role that empathetic rhetoric has with making those engagement strategies effective. Eliza-

both Kuechenmeister writes that pro-life rhetoric tends to focus on the act of abortion: "Familiar pro-life arguments use graphic descriptions of the act and images of bloody, mangled fetuses to gain support. These images remind viewers of the act of abortion, in terms of reminding them what is lost when the act is performed" (par. 13). When mentioning the woman who chose to have an abortion procedure, pro-life rhetoric focuses on how the woman relates to the act (i.e., that she is a murderer and selfish) rather than addressing her agency. Pro-life rhetoric often uses direct statements to draw "correlations between fetus and human" (Kuechenmeister par. 14). Examples of these statements could be "the fetus is a human" or "abortion is murder" (par. 14). Randall Lake writes that anti-abortion rhetoric focuses on guilt and aims to viscerally expose that guilt: "Women, anti-abortionists claim, know that the unborn are persons. This intuitive certain knowledge is available to men as well through the widespread anti-abortionist display of fetal photographs" (432). Pro-life rhetoric tends to visually and descriptively showcase the act of abortion and focus on the decision to end a life.

On the other hand, pro-choice rhetoric tends to focus on the politics and purpose underlying abortion. For example, Kuechenmeister writes that "purpose is emphasized above all other pentadic elements, highlighting political injustice and the oppressive conservative social system in order to achieve its mission of keeping abortion legal and providing women a legal right to choose" (par. 6). Larry R. Churchill and José Jorge Simán argue that both pro-life and pro-choice rhetoric focus on individual rights; however, pro-life rhetoric focuses on the rights of the fetus and pro-choice rhetoric centers on the rights of the woman. Churchill and Simán write, "For proponents of abortion, the cardinal right in question is the right of privacy, or self-determination. It is thought to be overriding, either because a fetus is not a person and has no right to life, or because the right to life itself is less basic than freedom of choice" (10). Therefore, pro-choice rhetoric shifts focus from the act of abortion to the mother's right to in choose what happens to her

body. Taking a step back from abortion rhetoric provides view of the broader field of empathetic rhetoric.

Empathetic rhetoric, compendiously named, functions by applying narrative and emotional elements that engage with socially identified differences, build connections, and develop agreements by shifting power dynamics between the audience and rhetor. In other words, empathetic rhetoric effectively relays the message by appealing to and building upon human connections that cross ideologies and reach the audiences' heart. Kenneth Burke writes that theories of identification and connection are central to one's rhetorical argument: "You persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his" (Leake 3). Empathetic rhetoric is not only a strategy used by a rhetor to further their argument, but a stratagem that engages the audience through a variety of ways and invites a more personal, humanistic relationship.

In regard to Roudebush's work with rhetorical empathy, little work has been done to analyze her use of empathetic rhetoric in oratory and abortion advocacy during the twentieth century birth control movement, yet many researchers have discussed rhetorical empathy in terms of its significance to pedagogy and education institutions. For example, Eric Leake writes, "Empathy in general seems to bring together many of the so-called 'turns' in the field—the turns 'affective,' 'social,' and 'material'—as ways of more fully understanding persuasion beyond the well-established limitations of appeals to pity and formal logic" (3). Leake is concerned with how to incorporate empathy in to the classroom to teach students rhetoric and how to use empathetic rhetoric as an argumentative tool for research, writing, and conversation.

Many researchers have studied the use of empathetic rhetoric in well-known political figures. Colleen Shogan states the importance of studying this type of rhetoric in politics: "A democratic leader in a large republic cannot understand the hardships of all of the citizens he governs. But the ability

to empathize enables him to acknowledge and consider the problems of others” (860). Shogan contributes to this field significantly by researching numerous genres of rhetorical communication, such as letters, debates, and speeches. Shogan argues that researchers have paid little attention to the use of empathetic rhetoric in politics and the importance of this rhetoric in the skillset of politicians. I would further argue that little attention has been given to empathetic rhetoric in most masculinized fields, such as politics. Research of rhetorical empathy in relation to literature and narratives has also been considered, but further investigation of this rhetoric across all fields and genres is warranted to explore the depths of such a valuable and intersectional framework.

Roudebush is set apart as she utilized empathy in her pro-choice speech to negotiate difficult ground with the strategy of identifying common goals and finding mutual agreement between opposing views, a rhetorical strategy that requires more research. By analyzing Roudebush, we find that pro-choice abortion rhetoric is predicated on the relationship the speaker has with her audience and showing how empathetic relationship can be rhetorically effective. Roudebush fills the gap between abortion rhetoric and empathetic rhetoric, and proves her archived speeches are a valuable resource in analyzing the importance of forming a relationship between rhetor and audience.

Empathetic Engagement

Through the 1960s and 1970s, Roudebush faced an audience with opposing views that were emotionally charged by the federal legalization of abortion. While much of Roudebush’s activism was centered around the advocacy of family planning services and legalization of abortion, once those goals were accomplished, she continued working to build a bridge between people with vehemently different views. Roudebush’s speech to the Manchester Christian Church serves as an example of the empathetic rhetoric she utilized during her career.

Roudebush began her speech by presenting the audience with her credibility as an abortion advocate. Interestingly, she does not start with a question, statistic, or an anecdote, but by simply stating the purpose of her presence along with her thesis. She states, "What permits me to speak on this difficult subject of abortion is that I have worked for a generation in the field of family planning, committed to the ideal that every child should be born wanted, to gleefully expectant parents, ready to provide the physical and emotional nurture essential to his fullest development" (Roudebush 1). Roudebush not only established her experience by informing her audience that she has worked many years in the family planning field, but she also initiates a relationship with her audience by offering that they share similar goals.

Roudebush's effort to connect with her audience's goals is a different approach than common abortion rhetoric used during that decade. As discussed previously, Lake argues that anti-abortion rhetoric appeals to the fetus' innocence. He states that "the nostalgic appeal to innocence is particularly powerful in the abortion context because, according to anti-abortionists, the fetus, completely and utterly innocent, is the 'perfect' child. Therefore, the symbolic state that appeals to the state of the innocent childhood also leads one to identify with the unborn" (438). While Roudebush does not explicitly use the word innocent, there are parallels in her beginning sentence that are illuminated through the lens of 1970s abortion rhetoric. By engaging the audience with words such as "ideal" and "gleefully," Roudebush develops a mutual nostalgia for the birthing process and for wanting a child who can be nurtured and shaped to "his fullest development" (Roudebush 1). The child can be shaped, molded, and formed in its innocence. Through this strategy, Roudebush connects with her audience's empathy by expressing her desire for all children to be born wanted, an ideal that few were likely to counter, and appeals to the anti-abortion rhetoric of the decade by identifying with the unborn fetus. As such,

Roudebush simultaneously establishes her credibility and aligns herself with her audience's emotional position.

Roudebush continues her introduction by specifically addressing the reason she came to speak to this audience of conservative Americans – the desire to speak to their virtue. Her objective is as follows:

My purpose is not now, however, to present to you the legislative and legal processes in which we have been engaged – a process which seemed to have been brought to a brilliant climax with the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court on January 22, in which the court upheld the constitutional right of a woman to seek and obtain a medically safe abortion. Rather, I think we are to discuss the *morality* of a woman's choosing to terminate an undesired pregnancy."

–Roudebush 1

Roudebush used the rhetorical strategy of *paralepsis* by mentioning the political and legal processes she is attempting to change, yet along with informing her audience that she has not come to make those topics the focus of her argument. Use of this tactic indicates that Roudebush may have been aware that for her to be rhetorically effective, she must not use logical argumentation to advocate laws for which the audience do not agree. Instead, speaking to the emotion and morality of the audience would more effectively build a bridge between opposite viewpoints. We are left to ask: What morality is Roudebush trying to engage with her audience? The diction Roudebush used implies that she would like to shift the conversation from identifying with the fetus and the "ideal that every child should be born wanted," to identifying with the woman who must endure the pregnancy or abortion (Roudebush 1). In other words, Roudebush appealed to the audience's rhetoric of empathizing with the fetus, and then used that connection to lead them to empathize with the mother. Rather than saying that she came to

discuss the morality of terminating a fetus, she asked them to consider “the constitutional right of a woman to seek a medically safe abortion” and the morality of a “woman’s choosing”; thereby omitting use of the word “fetus” or “child” from her statement (Roudebush 1).

Later in the speech, Roudebush describes a common ground to her audience and presents a society so idealized that neither side would refute. Roudebush declares, “I should like to say at the outset that none of us advocates abortion. We wish there was never any necessity for a woman to feel she needs to have one. In our perfect world - where there is an infallible contraceptive available and faithfully employed - there will not be such a thing as an unplanned, unwanted pregnancy” (1). Roudebush states that her goal is for all women to have access to effective birth control and family planning education. However, she recognized this objective cannot become reality. By presenting the goal as a common ideal that both parties share, in that abortion ought not be necessary, she solidifies a common ground between them. Additionally, she unites parties by identifying an agreement in their humanity early in her speech, a textbook example of utilizing empathy. Lisa Ede quotes Suzanne Clark regarding alternative discourse, writing of a “dialogic rhetoric,” by which one bases their argument “not on oppositions or conquest but on collaboration, rationality, and mutuality, one that ‘can interrupt the rigidities of language and open it to a subject in process’” (62). She suggests this rhetoric as an alternative to the combative, masculinized rhetoric that is pervasive in modern discourse. Before continuing her speech, Roudebush addressed that the base for both sides’ arguments is formed on common ground and mutual understanding, a technique similar to empathetic rhetoric that “relies upon some recognition of self-other overlap for the possibility of understanding each other” (Leake par. 5).

What also should be considered is her use of pronouns. She uses words like “us” and “we”, and conversationally engages in a “universal” language that we will discuss later. She

said, "We do not see abortion as a method of contraception - obviously it is not. Nor do we see it in the context of population stabilization...We do see it as a fall-back, when there has been a contraceptive or human failure" (Roudebush 2). These statements serve to distance Roudebush from the women who choose to have abortions. By using unifying language, Roudebush is not unifying herself with the women who receive abortions, but with the crowd. She tells the crowd, "We wish there was never any necessity for a woman to feel she needs to have one", including herself alongside the emotions of the audience (Roudebush 1). This type of empathetic engagement was first described as a psychological concept by philosopher Robert Vischer. He fused the subject and object, using art as an example: "Because a work of art can affect muscular and emotional attitudes in a viewing subject, the subject thereby experiences those feelings as qualities of the object" and "'feel-ing-in' is at the basis of empathy as a concept" (Shogan 861). Roudebush aligns herself with her audience making them the "subject," and the woman who chose to have an abortion as the "object." If this "object" feels a certain way, like if she "feels she needs to have one [abortion]," the subject can empathize and more fully understand the predicament of the object by feeling alongside them. Roudebush clearly advocated for abortion and understood the situations of the woman who may choose to have an abortion. By grouping herself with the audience, she is able to invite them into a space where they can "feel-in" as well.

As mentioned previously, Roudebush used a "universal," pronoun rich language when describing herself, her audience, and women who receive abortions throughout her speech. This language may be considered as a theoretical strategy one can employ when his or her audience is of a different or diverse perspective. The technique aimed to appeal to logic and is not interested in the self (Midiri par. 7). The act of using unifying language that is based in logic can be an effective rhetorical strategy when attempting to mutually empathize with an audience.

A prime example of Roudebush employing this strategy can be seen when she tells her audience, "In such a highly personal matter, we see no place for the state to enact or continue to enforce a law which compels her to continue an unwanted pregnancy. Should not our laws provide the latitude for diverse points of view on this highly personal matter?" (2-3). She assumed that her audience is highly logical and understood that abortion is not only personal but has room to be debated and discussed with an understanding about the point-of-view of the women. Using a rhetorical question only emphasizes her point and draws her audience to the notion that there is a place for more than one view, but logic must prevail. Leake writes that a main aspect of empathy is "maintaining a clear self-other differentiation" (par. 5). By Roudebush acknowledging that diverse points-of-view can exist, she asks her audience to not forfeit their "self" but to see the "other" and allow for coexistence through empathy.

In contrast to the universal audience to which Roudebush speaks, she writes of the women who choose to receive an abortion as "woman" or "a woman." By singling out one woman, Roudebush enables her audience to empathize with one person rather than millions. She claims that "it is only the individual woman who can make the decision to terminate a pregnancy. It is her conscience, her judgement, her moral choice which is the touchstone" (Roudebush 3). By speaking of one woman and her personal decision, Roudebush is asking her audience to engage in "affective empathy", in which a "cognitive recognition of another person's situation must occur" (Shogan 862). Repeating that "it is her conscience, her judgement, her moral choice," Roudebush emphasizes her point that to truly understand abortion and the arguments for legalizing it, one must recognize the other person's situation. And, the personability and rationality of using "woman" instead of "women" allowed the audience to relate the messages to individual women, perhaps those they know and love.

Roudebush also presented statistics to substantiate her claims and assist the audience in understanding the context surrounding abortion. Keeping with her empathetic rhetoric strategy, each statistic presented is precluded with an appeal to pathos. Her first statistic is offered halfway through her speech and she introduces the data by saying, "When a woman seeks an abortion and is denied one of the psychological effects may be much more severe. Not only she, but the child suffers. He then becomes the embodiment of society's punitive posture – what a diabolical use of a child" (Roudebush 3). Again, Roudebush focused the attention upon the subject of the event, the woman.

Roudebush then shifted her focus to how a child suffers from familial and societal structures that do not benefit the child and his or her development. As she presented the data, Roudebush calls attention to the humanity and reality behind the numbers:

A study rather recently in Sweden points up to this truth. A group of 193 women were denied abortions and went on to deliver unwanted children. Those children were followed for roughly 20 years, and matched against a control group. The results showed that those whose mothers would have aborted if permitted were registered more often with psychiatric services; engages in more anti-social and criminal behaviors; were more dependent on public assistance; and were more often rejected for military duty (a certain measure of psychological and physical fitness.

– Roudebush 3

By appealing to her audiences' empathy as well as presenting data, Roudebush worked to have her audience understand the other side of the debate.

Moreover, Roudebush built a bridge between the two sides by appealing to her audience's religious interests. Roudebush

was aware of her audience's view and use of religion to justify anti-abortion means: "I think one of the reasons why the efforts to humanize abortion laws in this country has met such resistance is that we have had inculcated in us over the ages that to procreate is to achieve fulfillment in the eyes of God... It is therefore difficult for us to acknowledge that perhaps this woman at this stage of her life does not want to bear a child" (4). She used this "universal" language of "we" and "us" to include herself in the mindset of religious fulfillment through procreation. With sensitivity to her audience's beliefs and by addressing religion, she not only empathizes with them, she invites them to do the same.

Roudebush's strategic use of religion helped to overcome the defamation of which pro-life supporters and pro-choice supporters sometimes engage. For example, Martha Vanderford wrote an article about the vilification of the abortion rhetoric in the 1970s. She states that "according to the MCCL [Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life], pro-choicers wanted to destroy justice in America by discriminating against the poor. Allegedly unwilling to foot the bill for increasing numbers of welfare children" (174). While such a claim is beyond the scope of this paper, the importance of the statement lies in how it offers a glimpse of what Roudebush's audience may have thought, showing her awareness of the opposition's context and arguments. Through the use of empathetic rhetoric, Roudebush engaged with her audience and their religious beliefs and drew attention to the individual woman and child, as well as what the lack of abortion accessibility could cause. She invited the audience to empathize with her regardless of their initial beliefs.

Interestingly, Roudebush ended her speech by telling her audience that the legalization of abortion is inevitable and must be accepted regardless. She stated that her hope is for the law to be implemented fairly and responsibly, and asserted, "So, we see, women are making the decision for themselves not to go on with undesired pregnancies. It is really a

question of whether we will make abortion legal in Missouri, available to women at varying income levels and therefore safe" (Roudebush 5). She concluded with, "To liberalize Missouri's law will restore to a woman the right and the responsibility to make this decision, and to effectuate it with dignity" (Roudebush 5). This statement is Roudebush's call to action before she handed responsibility over to her audience and urged them to not only accept the inevitability of abortion, but to liberalize Missouri's abortion law to ensure the safety and dignity of women who make that choice. Her last few lines are not an appeal to rhetorical empathy, however, by basing her speech on empathy she was able to conclude with an effective moral demand. Shogan argues that empathy contributes to one's moral activity. She writes that biologically "empathy can provide the moral motivation for action or judgement. Although it is typically thought of as a stimulus for moral behavior or choice, empathy can also aid in the development of moral principles, such as justice and equality" (862). Roudebush strategically structured her speech to, in various ways, empathize with her audience and request that they empathize with her in return. By developing her argument upon the foundation of empathy, Roudebush could end her speech with a call to action, using built-up empathy as a stimulus for her audience's future moral principles and actions.

Conclusion

The tense discussion surrounding abortion during second-wave feminism did not end with *Roe v. Wade*. Abortion laws were conservative, the act was stigmatized, and access was not granted to many individuals. In the midst of the debate, Dorothy Roudebush, a St. Louis native, took action by addressing numerous crowds and advocating for abortion. Her speech to the Manchester Church in St. Louis, utilized empathetic rhetoric as a strategy to educate, persuade, and build a relationship with her audience. By studying Roudebush, we not only examine an important time in women's history but analyze

a courageous woman who used her knowledge, environment, and skills to affect change. Studying Roudebush's rhetoric of empathy has shown how it can be used as a compelling strategy to persuade an audience with opposing views and build a relationship between the rhetor and audience based upon understanding, consideration, and connection. Almost fifty years later, we do not live in a society that Roudebush described in her speech, yet the United States continues to fight for fair, effective, and affordable access to reproductive health-care and family planning services. By understanding women like Roudebush, perhaps we may get one step closer to "our perfect world."

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