

Episode: *Author Interview: “What Might It Mean to Have a Right to Bear a Pregnancy Peacefully?”*

Guest: Julia Feinstein, MD, MA

Host: Tim Hoff

Transcript: Cheryl Green

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[bright theme music]

[00:00:03] TIM HOFF: Welcome to another episode of the Author Interview series from the *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics*. I’m your host, Tim Hoff. This series provides an alternative way to access the interesting and important work being done by Journal contributors each month. Joining me on this episode is Dr Julia Feinstein, a resident physician in Los Angeles, California. She’s here to discuss her article, “*What Might It Mean to Have a Right to Bear a Pregnancy Peacefully?*,” in the November 2024 issue of the Journal, [Peace in Health Care](#). Dr Feinstein, thank you so much for being on the podcast. [music fades]

DR JULIA FEINSTEIN: Thank you so much for having me.

[00:00:39] HOFF: So, what is the main ethics point of your article?

FEINSTEIN: I think the main ethics point of this article is issues of reproductive justice. Reproductive justice is defined by SisterSong as the right for people to have personal, bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities. In my article, I talk about how this goes beyond being able to parent the children in safe and sustainable communities, but also to be able to bear pregnancy in those same sorts of communities. I think that people face so many obstacles throughout pregnancy, and just being able to have the right to do so without those obstacles is essential. And it’s the role of the physician and everyone who’s helping take care of that pregnant person to try to mitigate those obstacles.

[00:01:34] HOFF: And so, what’s the most important thing for health professions students and trainees specifically to take from this article?

FEINSTEIN: I think one of the main things is that when you’re a physician, you’re more than just caring for the physiologic aspects of what’s going on with your patients. You’re also caring for their whole person and everything that happens to them. It’s important that you understand the issues that specifically the community you serve face. Whether that be obstacles to transportation or food insecurity, it’s important to know how you can help them, but also, knowing that it’s not fully your responsibility, but knowing what resources are available to help you to help your patients. What social workers, what other community resources exist? Because you’re not in it alone. You have so many people who are there to help you help patients. But it’s important to know...it’s important to know what needs to be addressed and who can help you address everything.

[00:02:35] HOFF: And finally, if you could add a point to your article that you didn't have the time or space to fully explore, what would that be?

FEINSTEIN: I think one of the biggest things that I would add to my article is just, as physicians, I think there's a lot of things that we can do, but it's also important to acknowledge that we really can't do it all. And in order to be the best physician at the things that we do, we have to make sure to also take care of ourselves. So, while it's important to be an advocate for your patients, whether that means at an individual level advocating in practice or advocating even in government and lobbying for your patients, it's important to see what your barriers and limits are. Because if you're not taking care of yourself, you definitely can't be taking care of others. So it's important to acknowledge that, and just again, reiterate that you can always bring other people on board to help you, and that there are resources to be able to help you help your patients. And having more people on board, the better. [theme music returns]

[00:03:34] HOFF: Dr Feinstein, thank you so much for your time on the podcast today, and thanks for your contribution to the Journal this month.

FEINSTEIN: Thank you so much.

HOFF: To read the full article, as well as the rest of this month's issue for free, visit our site, journalofethics.org. We'll be back soon with more *Ethics Talk* from the *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics*.