

Ep #222: Join Me in Fighting for Women's Rights



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Tobi Fairley

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You are listening to *The Design You Podcast* with Tobi Fairley, episode number 222.

Welcome to *The Design You Podcast*. A show where interior designers and creatives learn to say no to busy and say yes to more health, wealth and joy, here's your host, Tobi Fairley.

Hey friends, I hope you're doing well. If I'm being honest, I'm kind of frustrated this week. My feelings have oscillated, vacillated, whatever the word is between sad and angry really the last few days since the overturning of *Roe vs. Wade*. And I had another podcast planned for this week but it just didn't feel aligned for me. And you know how I am. I'm always honest and direct as our values of our company say. And it just didn't feel right to do anything but be personal and transparent in this episode. So here goes.

There's so much going on in our country right now of course. We haven't fully recovered from a pandemic. We're currently watching the January 6th hearings about the insurrection against our country, voting rights are being either taken away or challenged in many states. And now women's rights are being taken away nationally or at least left to the states, which in my state means they're taken away because the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* immediately triggered a law that made abortion illegal in Arkansas within just hours of the Supreme Court's ruling.

We also have a situation where we have, I mean thankfully we have somewhat of a gun law that just passed finally. But in reality guns are really still the main thing with rights in our country. And they have more rights than humans in a lot of ways. And that continues to be the case even though we have witnessed shooting, after shooting, after shooting and so many lives have been taken.

And if all of that weren't enough, many people including myself and a whole lot of my friends who are women, who are people of color, who are gay, who hold all kinds of other identities that are historically and continually marginalized by our country are worried about what the Supreme Court may do next. And that they may overturn other rights, rights to

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contraception, to same sex marriage, to other laws that protect same sex relationships, I mean who knows what we're really facing.

So, what's really most confusing to me I think is when you look at the statistics of what the greater American population, the populous, the largest popular vote, what they think, what they feel, and this includes me and probably many of you, really the court, the Supreme Court and congress are not representing the majority of us. I mean I just saw a lot of stats with this Roe v. Wade situation. And 70% of Americans reportedly want to leave abortion decisions between a woman and her doctor. I fully want to leave it between a woman and her doctor.

And 58% of Americans believe that abortion should be legal in all or most cases. At the very least for me I don't believe that women's bodies should be controlled by the government. And I'm very disheartened that my daughter is now going to grow up in a country where she has fewer rights to her own body and health decisions than I've had for all of my 50 years. I think that is really impacting me. Her future, the future of so many people who are in poverty, who are in identities that our culture and our country marginalizes every day. That's what has me feeling so heavy this week.

And it really makes me angry to think about the fact that old men and maybe even some younger men, but especially old men who are mostly white are deciding what my own daughter and all of these other women and young women, and girls in our country can and cannot do with their own bodies and their own lives. That just doesn't work for me. It doesn't sit with me. It makes me really, really mad. And here's the thing. Let's not ignore the fact that if women were guaranteed a whole lot of things by this country this would be a totally different conversation.

If women were guaranteed universal healthcare, including access to birth control and I mean we're talking about contraception potentially being taken away. If women were guaranteed and girls were guaranteed sex education for teens, for adolescents, if they were guaranteed early reproductive education and care which is related but not exactly the same thing. If they had exceptional maternity care, if we had US maternity laws and paid

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family leave laws that protected women. If we had equality in pay that women get based on gender.

That if we weren't having such a wage gap between genders. And if people were paid a living wage in their jobs and their cities, if people could get childcare funding and early childhood education, and paid time off for parents and caregivers when they needed it. And affordable housing and affordable food and work assistance programs, and if we had really serious prosecution for rape, and incest, and domestic abuse. And protection for all of those people being abused. And if we enforced child support. If we had those things this would be a completely different conversation.

Because the more resources and rights afforded to women the healthier our society can become. It can be one where women don't have to choose between motherhood and survival. They don't have to choose between motherhood and feeding their other children. We could have a country where abortion numbers go down because women can afford to bring more children into the world and not drive themselves and their other children deeper into poverty and despair.

And let's also not forget that just the patriarchal society we live in, in general creates not just the wage gap but the unpaid labor gap that requires women to hold the bulk of responsibilities in the home which if they have a partner or a spouse they still have up to four hours a day that's added to their workload to care for their families. And it creates so much fatigue and so much responsibility. And that's if they have a partner. Child rearing is viewed as a woman's job and it takes a toll on women when attempting to balance it with work and with home.

And again, this is when there are two parents. Imagine single mothers who are raising children and they have all the responsibilities. So, it's far more than four hours a day that they are dealing with. We have so much work to do, to create a country and a world where women can truly thrive. And forcing pregnancies on women and on girls derails the work that we have done to create more progress in the workforce, and gender equality, and the gains that we have made in workforce diversity.

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Forced pregnancy removes many, many women from the workforce altogether between the ages of 15 and 44 because without paid leave they lose jobs or they'll be passed over for promotions. Or they can't afford to work and pay for childcare. They're unable to maintain both their families and their careers at the same time. And it's so sad that this statistic, I didn't make this up. This statistic calls a 15 year old a woman in this context. And if you know anything about racial discrimination, girls of color, in particular Black girls are treated as if they are much older than they actually are.

And so, a lot of times they are considered to not be girls and to not even have the same pain levels or emotional response as white girls of the same age. So here we are having people who live in marginalized identities or identities that are marginalized by our country. And we're talking about 15 year old's having to leave the workforce because they have forced pregnancy, especially if we get to a place where there's no contraception. So where do we go from here?

I happen to think that one of the most important things that we can do as women is become financially successful beyond our imaginations. And as my friend, Amber Lilyestrom said in a quote just after the overturning of Roe vs. Wade, she said, "There has never been a more urgent moment for women to go all in on generating legacy wealth and creating our own revenue streams." And I could not agree with her more because money is power. And all of these decisions the court and the government are making are always about money and power.

They're not about babies, they're not about the life of babies. It's about money and power, it's about controlling women, power over women and our bodies, and our rights, and our futures. And so forced pregnancy keeps many women locked in poverty which is the exact opposite of creating more wealth for women. As you can imagine, across the board women have far less wealth than men. There are only 2% of women owned businesses that ever create a million dollars or more in revenue a year.

In 2022 only 44 women led Fortune 500 companies, that's 8.8%. And you all, that's progress and it's still only 8.8% of the Fortune 500 companies

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were led by women. Yet women and mothers are not a niche market. They are the market. Women represent 51% of our population. They make up half the labor force. Women hold 85% of consumer buying power. And there are two billion mothers in the world, 85 million of which are in the United States.

90% of all women owned businesses, of these women the ones that own businesses, 90% of them make less 100,000 in revenues a year. But the more money women make the better our world becomes. Women play a huge role in the growth, the innovation, the vitality of our businesses, of our world, they create community. The best women leaders have more compassion and empathy when making decisions than their male counterparts. They are better listeners.

When women have more money not only can we better care for ourselves, and our children, and our communities, we also have a much greater impact on the world, creating change takes a lot of money. And women use that money differently when it's in their hands to change the world. The more women owned companies there are the more women we will be able to employ as the owners and founders of those companies. The more women owned companies make the more we can pay our female team members and the more opportunities and benefits we can offer them.

And our impact can go beyond women, to other people in marginalized identities in our society, including people with other racial and ethnic identities. We can support gay and trans members of our community and others that hold multiple marginalized identities. We can help people that are in differently abled bodies. There is so much we can do.

And really we can support so many people to thriving by giving them job opportunities that they might not otherwise have if we are in charge, if we are making money, if we are committed to be the change that we want to see in the world. And I am definitely committed to that. But let me be clear, this is not white saviorism in any sort of way. What my team and I have learned is that when we welcome a diverse group of people onto our team

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and into our communities, into our, you know, the roles, and the needs, and the leadership of our company we all benefit.

The creativity, the genius, the innovation, the joy, the talent, the ideas, the solutions, the perspective from different identities and different lived experiences, makes our company, and our company culture, and the work we do in the world in both our free and paid community so much richer, so much more impactful and so much more fun. And that is going to be true across the board. When we get money in the hands of women and we have women creating more diverse landscapes in the workforce and paying people more so that they can have a living wage, so they can have options.

It really matters, you all, so how do we start to get more money in the hands of more women who are here to make a difference in their lives and the lives of other people? Well, I'm going to be breaking this down in the coming episodes and really digging into what we can do. But just to give you kind of a synopsis let me tell you some of the things we can do. We have to learn first to fully show up and claim our greatness, and tell the truth about who we are and what we stand for.

We've also got to do the personal work to unlearn the cultural, and patriarchal, and white supremacist, internalized beliefs that have been fed to us our entire lives. And it's uncomfortable work you all, but it matters. Internalized misogyny lives in all women and internalized racism lives in all races. And we must unlearn it but also have compassion for ourselves and others through the process of unlearning because it's not our faults that we have these beliefs, and even unconscious beliefs. It's not our faults but it is our responsibility to change it.

We also have to work on our money beliefs in order to be willing and believe we are worthy of making a lot of money because believe it or not, the internalized patriarchal beliefs have us struggling to create and claim the money that we're capable of creating as women. I have struggled with this and I even come from a lot of privilege and a lot of financial privilege. And it has still been so hard for me to really create, and claim, and believe

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I'm worth making the money that I'm absolutely capable of making. And I know that so many other women struggle with this too.

We also can't allow our rights to be taken away like we are seeing right now. So, we have to vote for sure. But some of us live in places where voting, even though we're for sure going to do it, doesn't make a whole lot of difference. I live in a very conservative state. So, I will continually vote and work to register to get other people to vote. And work to elect candidates that can create change here but it's going to be a long slow process.

So, we've also got to band together as women and not just sit behind a podcast mic like I'm doing today or not just sit behind a social media account. But rather get our boots on the ground and get our money to those fighting the fight and to put our efforts where we can see the most change the most quickly. We have to be able to work together strategically too because we have to simultaneously fight for a lot of things at once.

We're right now up against fighting for women's rights that are being taken away as we speak and voting rights and gay rights. And we don't have the luxury of taking these issues on one at a time. So, we've got to be strategic and organized. And we have to center those people that are most at risk this time. There is no room for the white feminism of the 60s and the 70s that prioritized white women with the promise that if we got there then we would bring everyone else along with us later. It didn't work then, it definitely will not work now.

And if you haven't read the book, Hood Feminism by Mikki Kendall, that needs to be your next purchase and your next read because truly understanding what didn't work about the white feminist movement is going to really matter this time. When we come together and we have all kinds of different intersectionalities of our identities amongst women and we definitely have to start, as I said, a minute ago, with centering and working to help those first that are most at risk at this time.

We also need to know who our allies are, especially when it comes to men who support equality, and who support feminism, and who support equity,

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and who are antiracist. Remember you all, patriarchy, the patriarchy when I say that, that isn't men. Patriarchy or the patriarchy is the system that prioritizes men but not all men believe this way.

We definitely have allies in men and we need them just like Black and people of color, Black and Brown people need white people to stand up and speak, white women, white people because we have power for change. The same thing has to happen with women's rights. We have to have men that are our allies who believe the way we do, who support equity and rights for their wives, and their daughters, and their sisters, and their mothers who are fighting this fight with us and we have to know who they are.

And we have to elect congresspeople, governors, especially state politicians right now because all of these issues are being sent to the state level. And we've got to elect the people in those positions nationally and locally who are for the rights of those historically marginalized by our society. Women, people of color, gay people, people who are differently abled or who are not in able bodies. And so, this matters and we've got to get serious about getting the right people in these positions that want to create equity and create equality for genders and for races.

And we have to work hard, and again that doesn't look like sitting behind a podcast mic or sitting behind a social media feed. So, for this podcast in particular and in the next few episodes I am going to address a lot of things. I'm going to address the impending recession that we may go through and how that impacts our money and our futures as women and our money and futures as creatives.

I'm going to address in an episode soon how the patriarchal society we live in, especially as women, how it holds us back in ways that we don't even realize, how we're upholding it and perpetuating it and really understanding what's happening there. I'm also going to continue our Inspiring Women episodes with a slew of remarkable female guests coming up. If you've missed the three previous Inspiring Women episodes, go back and listen. I really encourage you to.

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I've gotten so much amazing feedback on these but we had Julie Solomon, we had Victoria Albina, we had Judith Gatton, these women are blazing trails especially in these times when in many ways our country is heading backwards with regard to women's right. And these women are moving forwards full speed ahead. And the women that I'm going to be bringing in the coming weeks, include two creatives who are making waves in the design industry while holding identities that have typically been marginalized by our society.

I'm also bringing another person in that's working in ethical online marketing, the antithesis of the white male created and led marketing tactics that are known as bro marketing. So, someone fighting against that patriarchal kind of approach to marketing and sales. I'm also bringing in a woman who's making more than five million dollars a year in a company that she's created in only three or four years. And she's helping women show up fully and claim what's possible for them through this work.

And I'm also going to bring others who are working in diversity, and inclusion, and equity, I'm going to bring a Black coach that is helping other Black women create success and wealth by being their complete badass self. And I'm bringing back my coach, Trudi who has created the equity centered coaching certification to really help coaches and people in the online space, create more equity and diversity, and create change.

And I'm after that going to bring in one other woman who is amazing. She is, I don't know, middle aged or so and owning her authentic self in every way. And showing us how it's done by becoming a TikTok star literally. So, everything about these women is incredible, is unusual, is challenging status quo, pushing the envelope, doing things differently. And I know you will be inspired. And this is what we have to do to change the world.

I think as a woman entrepreneur, a mom, a social justice advocate, all of those things that I am and a lot of you are too, that one of the things that we need the most is examples of other successful female CEOs like these people I'm talking about. Women who aren't afraid to make money. Women who aren't afraid to speak to their truth, to be authentic, to show up fully, to

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be seen, to blaze trails, to make others get uncomfortable. Because we're doing things that the world isn't used to us doing, that the world doesn't like us doing.

Making money, taking charge of our lives in a whole new way, rising up in the ranks of business, challenging so many things, including the patriarchy and white supremacy in the process.

Okay friends, I thank you for listening. Thank you for hearing what's on my heart. I know it's on a lot of your hearts too. And remember, I am the real person behind my DMs on Instagram. I am the real person on TikTok. I am here every week on the podcast for you. I'm the real person in these places. So, if you need support, if you have questions, if you want to continue this conversation with me, reach out.

If you're just trying to change my mind about something, or shame me, or call me a murderer like a few people have done, okay, don't bother. Don't reach out for that. But if you truly want to engage in serious conversations that can create change in the world I am here, I'm behind my DMs on Instagram and I want to hear from you. My team and I, we value life, not just birth but life. We're especially committed to helping creative women thrive and create more than enough money to raise their families and make a difference.

We also have scholarships for our programs and we put a ton of free content out like this podcast to help people who can't even quite make the scholarships for our programs work. We've got you. We're going to keep bringing you free content. And just reach out anyway whether you can afford our programs yet or not, we are there for you. We are there to support you. And we also use a portion of our proceeds from all our programs to impact organizations that support girls, that support LGBTQ teens, that support the ACLU.

So, we are putting money in places that make a difference. And we're going to take some of our funds and put them into specifically some of the organizations that are supporting women's reproductive rights now that this change has come down from the Supreme Court. Okay, friends, stay

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strong, stay in hope. I'll be back to see you next week with another important episode of *The Design You Podcast*.

And for those of you living in America, let me just quickly say also, the upcoming July 4th holiday, I want to wish you and send you good vibes and the ability to hold space for yourself and others with compassion. This holiday holds a lot of mixed emotions, especially with everything that's been going on in the world. And we have recently celebrated Juneteenth finally as a national holiday which we know now to be the, you know, essentially the official Independence Day when all people were free from slavery in America.

So that helps a little bit I guess with our thoughts about Independence Day. But now that it's time to celebrate the original Independence Day, that was only independence afforded to some people, freedom to some people in our country. I know it brings a lot of emotions with it, a lot of polarizing beliefs and conversations around the idea. A lot of stuff comes up about patriotism and I know it can be very politically charged and uncomfortable. So please take care of yourself.

Know if some of the celebrations are too much for you or too much for your nervous system, aren't aligned with your beliefs or put you in spaces with other people that feel threatening to you. It's totally okay and important to create boundaries to care for yourself. We live in a complicated world. We live in a complicated country, with a complicated history, much of which is whitewashed, if not completely hidden. And you have the absolute right to feel whatever feelings come up for you in this time. They are valid, they're okay.

So, feel how you need to feel and just know that I'm sending you love as I also sit over here and deal with my own mixed feelings about our nation, about the holidays, about all the things that are happening in the world. I am feeling it too but I'm also here for you. Okay, friends, I love you all so much, I am so glad you're here, take care of yourself, I'm going to take care of me and I'll see you real soon. Bye for now.

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Thank you so much for listening to *The Design You Podcast*, and if you are ready to dig deep and do the important work we talk about here on the podcast of transforming your mindset and creating a scalable online business model, there has never been a more important time than right now. So, join me and the incredible creative entrepreneurs in my *Design You* coaching program today. You can get all the details at TobiFairley.com.