

"PHOTOVOICE: Moment of hope and fear

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Description of a picture taken aboard the R/V Sally Ride, one of the few research vessels named after a women. In the picture an undergraduate and a technician are getting ready to deployed an instrument.

Different forces that influence fertility experiences

Using an integral model that looks into the historical, cultural, personal and social level of each individual, we can discuss what the experiences and choices of each of these women. Historically, in the four examples given, was a default option for sterilization as a birth control, which I assume is due to the history of this procedure in Puerto Rico, the fact that sterilization was so common was surprising for me ¹. In a personal level, each women had a different life story of how and when sterilization was pursue. They had different ideas of how big they wanted their family to be, but three of them mentioned that they already had at least one more child that what they intended to have. It was interesting how Nancy saw sterilization as a way to RESIST sexism, a way to get control over her life that was probably affected by a partner that was not supportive. Culturally this seems to be also very important, if sterilization is view as women trying to break free from the role the church and society has try to impose on her. Sonia, faces something a little different, she does consider sterilization, but does not want it immediately after the birth of her child. The fact that doctors and nurses tried to convince her, exemplifies the constant fighting women had to do to keep their wishes and have control of their lives, from their own partners and doctors. Though sometimes, because a difference in power this does not occurred, like when the doctors performed a hysterectomy on Carmen. The fact that neither of these women mentioned access to other reversible birth control informs us about their social-economic status. Either because there was no information for them and no economic resources to maintain a source of reversible birth control, this pushed them to resort to La operacion, not as victims without a voice, but as someone presented with hard choices. Social justice help us see in context how, because there is a social agenda from the dominant culture to promote eugenics and to stereotype women of color as hyper-fertile, it so easy for this stories to be true. I mean, there is a reason why doctors are ready to perform this operations without speaking of other options, there is reason why this women have no economic resources to have other birth control and that they have to

¹ Recalling from my own history, it was never mention to me as an option, neither from my family or society. I remember sterilization having a negative connotation as being something not a "good woman" would ever want

use this as a way to resist, and is because systematic and institutional oppression.

Feminist Research and Social Justice

To my understanding, Feminist Research aims to bring different perspectives into research, and listens as much as it aims to explain. Feminist Research uses historical and social context to challenge the *status quo* of how research is done and understand how it can impact its results, and consequently impact people's lives. Social justice is about trying to understand the underlying connection between communities, their reality and where they are in the spectrum of power dynamics defined by how far away one is from being the 'norm' (white, male, heterosexual, Christian, able, rich, etc) and Feminist research helps promote research that sheds light on these issues and try to make people give it value. It was challenging for me to understand how I can bring feminist methods into my own research. However, I started to understand how the fact that is hard to even envision how that would look like in the field of oceanography, is telling of how embedded we are in an oppressive system that has labeled this field 'objective', removed from human interactions and interpretations. With no room to even evaluate how our own bias and life experiences could affect how we see our results and who we listen when we collaborate or with whom we work. There was a very good paper about field glaciology² and feminist research that started opening my eyes to this field. They talk about the importance of honoring the relationship between ice and communities that have lived from the ice for centuries, and how science usually does not give room for these voices. They mentioned how a Feminist approach can help close the gap between this field and communities. Å

² Mark Carey, M. Jackson, Alessandro Antonello, and Jaclyn Rushing. Glaciers, gender, and science. *Progress in Human Geography*, 40(6):770–793, 12 2016. ISSN 0309-1325. DOI: 10.1177/0309132515623368. URL <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0309132515623368>

References

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