

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE PROJECT

“OBSTETRIC VIOLENCE. THE NEW GOAL FOR RESEARCH, POLICIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS ON CHILDBIRTH

Newsletter n.3/ 31 March 2018



OBSTETRIC VIOLENCE
RESEARCH & POLICIES

by Patrizia Quattrocchi

OBSTETRIC VIOLENCE

“The appropriation of women’s body and reproductive process by health personnel, which is expressed by a dehumanising treatment, an abuse of medicalisation and pathologisation of natural processes, resulting in a loss of autonomy and ability to decide freely about their body and sexuality, negatively impacting their quality of life.”

Organic Law on the Right of Women to a Life free of Violence”
Article 15, Venezuela 2007

Summary

Over the last century, pregnancy and childbirth have become increasingly **medicalised** in most parts of the world. The process of childbirth is often conceived of and treated as a medical event, requiring control, risk management and constant monitoring of the woman’s body. In many countries, childbirth still includes a variety of **routine medical interventions**, such as labour-inducing drugs, the lithotomic position, epidurals, manoeuvres, episiotomies and an excess of surgical deliveries. These interventions are also used in women with low-risk pregnancies, despite WHO recommendations and the findings of evidence-based medicine on the topic.

Sometimes women can be **coerced** into accepting medical interventions or these interventions are performed **without their consent**. In some cases, this coercion can be psychological or not explicit, i.e., related to the **authoritativeness** of biomedical knowledge and power issues in the doctor-patient relationship. It represents at times a subtle form of limiting a woman’s fundamental right to **participate** actively in the process of pregnancy and childbirth and to decide in a free and conscious manner in consideration of the woman’s own body.

In Latin America, over the past decade, the term “**obstetric violence**” (OV) has become part of the legal framework. The concept refers to acts in the context of labour and birth categorised as physically or psychologically violent due to **unjustified** use of medical interventions. Specific laws against obstetric violence – a type of **gender-based violence** and **violation of human rights** – exist in Venezuela, Argentina and Mexico.

In Europe, the issue is raised by human rights organisations and social movements fighting for more humane and respectful births. In Spain, Italy and France, observatories on OV were implemented, but no country has passed legislation on the matter yet. The concept is far from receiving sufficient critical examination within biomedical practice and public policy, and it is not seen as a potential tool for rethinking and improving birth care policies and practices.

General Objective

The project objective is transferring Latin American experiences on recognising and preventing OV to the European context in order to provide decision makers with an innovative theoretical and methodological tool for rethinking the quality of birth care services and providing society with new ways to discuss childbirth issues.

Specific Objectives

1) Analysing the historical, social and political processes that led to the legal recognition of OV in some Latin American countries, focusing on Argentina.

VISIT

THE PROJECT WEBSITE!

<https://www.obstetricviolence-project.com>

2) Analysing the **impact** that this recognition has had on birth care services (according to official data) and on the training of the next generation of health providers (fieldwork).



3) Identifying and **transferring** good practice and tools from the Argentinian and Latin American experience and supporting a process of social and political recognition of OV in the European context, especially in countries where medical intervention in child labour and childbirth is common, as in Italy and Spain.

4) Designing and implementing a **platform** on OV, as an innovative point of reference on the matter for decision makers, researchers and training managers in health issues.

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 700946. The first year of research takes place in Argentina (Universidad Nacional de Lanús, Instituto de Salud Colectiva, 2016-2017); the second in Italy (Università degli Studi di Udine, Dipartimento di Lingue e Letterature, Comunicazione, Formazione e Società, 2017-2018)



ACTIVITIES (March 2017 - September 2018)

- Processing and analysing data.
- Participating in conferences (as a speaker/lecturer) and conducting seminars and workshops.
- Participating in training activities.
- Disseminating information from the project in public events/social media/journals/papers

FOCUS ON SOME ACTIVITIES

- **2-3 November. Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. Project dissemination.**
 - Patrizia Quattrocchi gave a lecture on obstetric violence at the “Primer Seminario Internacional: Diálogo de saberes, puentes de encuentro, salud género, sociedad y cultura”. The lecture was intitled “Violencia Obstétrica.” aportes y potencialidades de un concepto innovador para repensar la atención al parto, al nacimiento y la formación de los profesionales de la salud”



▪ **27 November 2017. Merida, Mexico. Project dissemination.**

- Patrizia Quattrocchi gave a lecture on obstetric violence at the “Unidad de Ciencias Sociales del Centro de Investigaciones regionales Dr. Hideyo Noguchi” (University of Yucatan, Mexico). She was also interviewed on the lecture topic by the Yucatecan newspapers “El diario de Yucatán” and “Por Esto!”.



▪ **28 November 2017. Merida, Mexico.**

- Patrizia Quattrocchi was invited as a commentator to the presentation of the book “Cánceres en mujeres mayas de Yucatán. Pobreza, género y comunicación social.” She is author of the chapter “La demanda de Papanicolau por parte de las mujeres de Peto, Yucatán. Sugerencias para mejorar la calidad de los programas de detección oportuna desde las perspectivas de género, la interculturalidad y los derechos humanos”.



Programma

- 15.30 introduzione presentazione dei lavori
- 16.00 workshop multidisciplinare a numero chiuso
- 17.00 Restituzione dei lavori
- 18.00 Lectio magistralis Patrizia Quattrocchi, antropologa medica dell'Università di Udine, studiosa delle politiche sulla nascita in diversi paesi del mondo

Ingresso gratuito.
Per partecipare è necessario iscriversi compilando il seguente modulo ENTRO Venerdì 2 MARZO 2018

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScVbxxvRoinbAh7zXdy4Czsk8jmm7BmY2D8tKGvPhgnVw/viewform>

Non è necessario avere competenze professionali specifiche per partecipare, ma è di particolare interesse per gli operatori sanitari che ruotano attorno alla nascita, operatori sociali, legali, madri e padri.

Non sarà possibile partecipare a lavori inziali

Illustrazione di Francesco Conte



NASCERE SEGNA

Confronto tra vari sguardi intorno al parto e alla nascita, sollecitando luoghi comuni e dando voce al proprio sentire

Workshop sul tema della **Violenza Ostetrica** e cura dell'associazione **L'arte di crescere** in collaborazione con l'Ordine degli Ostetrici di Palermo e con **In braccio alla luna, Millecolori Onlus e People help the people**

7 marzo 2018, dalle 15.30 alle 19.30
Centro anti violenza "Lia Pipitone", via Ammiraglio Persano 46-52, Palermo
per info (dalle 15.30 alle 18.30) 3283177911

7 March 2018. Palermo, Italy.

Patrizia Quattrocchi was invited to participate at the workshop "Nascere segna". She gave a conference on obstetric violence and reproductive rights at the end of the event.



Ordine Ostetrici Palermo

SYRIO HCRM

"I TRATTAMENTI NON NECESSARI ALLA NASCITA, EFFETTI SUL VISSUTO DELLE DONNE E DELLA FAMIGLIA."

08 MARZO

Centrale Palace Hotel - PALERMO

8 March 2018. Palermo, Italy.

Patrizia Quattrocchi was invited to give the lecture "Resistere alla medicalizzazione non necessaria" at the event "I trattamenti non necessari alla nascita. Effetti sul vissuto delle donne e della famiglia". The conference was organized by the "Ordine degli Ostetrici" of Palermo.

13 March 2018. Gorizia, Italy. Project dissemination

- Patrizia Quattrocchi at the "Cossar High School". The anthropologist was invited to conduct a workshop on childbirth with 36 scholars attending their last year in social-health career and to give a lecture on respectful childbirth and reproductive rights.





SEE YOU IN SALAMANCA!!!!

15-20 JULY 2018

**Patrizia Quattrocchi and Natalia Magnone's
symposium proposal**

*"Derechos y violencias en la atención del embarazo,
parto y nacimiento: alcances y desafíos en la
investigación y la política de salud"*

**was accepted at the 56th International Congress of
Americanists.**

**Experts from different Latin American countries will
come to discuss obstetric violence topic!**

See you in Salamanca!!!

See you in September 2018 with the next newsletter

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project website: <https://www.obstetricviolence-project.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/Violenza-Ostetrica-OBSTETRICVIOLENCE-project-245659555925500/>

