

Medicalization of Reproduction: New Reproductive Technologies, Images of the Child and the Family Among a Group of Women from the City of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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ABSTRACT The present study is in continuity with a previous one that discusses the new forms of medical intervention in human reproduction, known as new reproductive technologies or assisted reproduction. They are viewed as the last stage in a continuous and historically constructed process of medicalization of sexuality and reproduction, responsible for the emergence of notions which took on the role of social normalization in regard to the body, sexuality, man, women, pregnancy, delivery, lactation, childhood, in short, the whole reproductive sequence. Having already become more “technological” as a result of modern forms of birth control, the process now brings the possibility of producing babies on demand. In Brazil, paradoxal aspects of assisted reproduction were obscured by the strong investment of the media on these medical phenomena, with the consequence of overshadowing their dubious effects and the limited evaluation of the new reproductive technologies in the scientific field itself. Moreover, the introduction and diffusion of these technological reproduces, with its specificities, the same logic of exclusion that characterizes the overall scenario of healthcare in Brazil, and reproductive healthcare, in particular. In this context, the present study discusses images of motherhood, fatherhood, children, and family through the analysis of in-depth interviews with a group of women who have had pregnancy impairments.