

**Title: Health Narratives of the Culture of Disadvantaged Women on Depo-Provera**

**Principal Investigator: Dr. Aline Gubrium**

There is a current dearth of literature on women's experiences with reproductive technologies and how these experiences affect their everyday lives. The purpose of this project is to examine the impact and significance of one reproductive technology, Depo-Provera, on women's health, as conveyed by those whose voices on this issue have not been heard before. Depo-Provera (also known as "depo" or "the shot") is a long-term, prescription-controlled synthetic hormonal contraceptive, which has been linked to the risk of infertility for women who use it over long periods of time. It is distributed at disproportionately high rates to poor women and women of color relative to middle- and upper-class, white females. The proposed project aims to investigate: (1) how poor women and women of color view the impact of Depo-Provera on their lives; and, (2) how cultural experiences and understandings of Depo-Provera vary among three groups of women—low income Puerto Rican, African-American, and non-ethnic white women. The broader goal of this project is to reduce health inequities by illuminating the lived experience of those affected by the use of Depo-Provera. The research methods aim to explore women's experiences with Depo-Provera through interviews with 30 women. In addition, I will interview clinical providers in order to examine their own perceptions of Depo Provera and the women to whom they prescribe it. This project will contribute to my broader program of research by focusing on the health narratives of women from diverse cultural groups, including the social construction of teenaged motherhood and related identity construction. Future plans also involve the development of audio narratives and digital stories, which may be used as community outreach materials, and as a means for the researcher to give back the research results to the participants in a non-technical format for use in their communities. These outreach materials are envisioned as potential intervention materials for a future expansion of the project as participatory-action research.

**Title: Using photovoice to investigate cultural resilience: A pilot and feasibility study**

**Principal Investigator: Dr. Lisa Wexler**

The proposed pilot study will use an innovative research method, called photovoice, to study how Native Inupiat (Eskimo) young people call on and appropriate their personal and collective understandings of culture to promote resilience and reduce the risk of suicide. The pilot study will be conducted in Kotzebue, Alaska. The results will be used to develop a National Institute of Child and Human Development (NICHD) proposal that will implement an expanded study design in a regional research project set in Northwest Alaska.