

**SEXUALITY AND REPRODUCTION ON THE STREETS**  
the spreading of political contentions over abortion in Brazil

Patricia Jimenez Rezende  
University of São Paulo

# Abortion in Brazil

- **LEGAL SITUATION:**
  - Penal Code (1940)
  - Court decision (2012)

## Research Objectives

To investigate the political contention dynamics between groups and social movements that are in favor and against abortion in Brazil, from 2003 to 2012.

# Theoretical Framework

**Contentious Politics Theory (CP)** - Charles Tilly, Doug McAdam and

Sidney Tarrow:

- external influences
- individual and collective perceptions of reality
- social networks

# **Main Research Questions**

1. correlations between the political context and the protest events
2. dynamic between movement and countermovement

## **Research Relevance**

Special attention to the interactional and relational dimensions of collective action, with a multidimensional focus

# Methods

- **CONTEXT**
  - chronology with socio-political events
  - secondary bibliography
- **ACTORS** and how they justify their **PERCEPTIONS**
- **INTERACTIONS** between pro and anti abortion groups
  - Database: **Protest Event Analysis** (PEA)

# Research Hypothesis

Political changes impacted Brazilian political contentions over abortion and pushed the battles to the streets in the fields of sexuality and reproduction before June of 2013.

# Preliminary Results (2003-2007)

- **Context:**

- Workers' Party and Feminist movements relation
- women in government positions
- creation of a Special Secretariat for Women's Policies (2003)
- “Mensalão” (2005): corruption scheme of high-level State administration members
- foundation of the Brazil Without Abortion
- Pro-Life National Campaign (2006 elections)

# Preliminary Results (2003-2007)

- **Protest Events:**

- 7 protest events and 8 episodes: 7 pro-abortion and 1 antiabortion
- 1 event was held in 2003
- 6 events in 2005 and 2006



<b>Pro-Abortion</b>	
<b>Claims</b>	<b>Themes</b>
Gender Equality and Sexual and Reproductive Rights	domestic abuse
	inequality between men and women
	sexual freedom
	abortion
Urban Reform and Social Equality	income distribution
	rights of indigenous populations
	public transportation
	racism
	land reform
Others	criminalization of social movements
	the occupation of Iraq

<b>Antiabortion</b>	
<b>Claims</b>	<b>Themes</b>
"Unborn Children" Rights	research with embryonic stem cell

# Conclusion

Antiabortion events in Brazil are practically non-existent until 2007. The only episode of protest against abortion captured by the database took place in the Chamber of Deputies, a disruptive action, yet directly linked to disputes within the institutional sphere.

# Thank you!

Patricia Jimenez Rezende

PhD candidate in Sociology at University of São Paulo

E-mail: [patijrezende@usp.br](mailto:patijrezende@usp.br)

Participation in the GSSR Summer School 2021 was facilitated by the funding from the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA). Project nr. PPI/PRO/2019/1/00043/U/00001.

