



Discourses on Breastfeeding

Corinna Klingler

**Five Coffin Nails to Informed Consent:
An Autoethnography of Suffering
Complications in Breastfeeding**

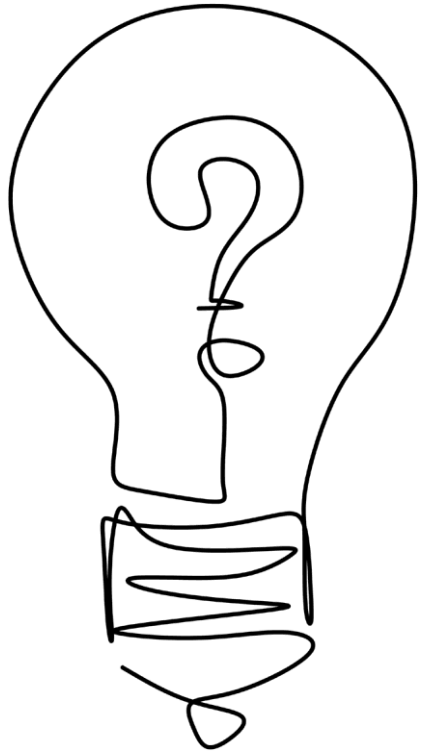
Qualitative Health Research
Online First:
doi:10.1177/1049732323121450

Who should read the paper?



- Medical practitioners (particularly gynecologists, midwives)
- Medical students
- Activists in the context of early parenthood / breastfeeding
- Academics working on issues around reproduction/ breastfeeding or informed consent

What's it about?



What does it mean and feel like not to be able to make truly informed and voluntary decisions in the context of breastfeeding complications?

Aims/Objectives:

- Generate knowledge about barriers to successful informed consent processes in the context of breastfeeding
- Provide access to the emotional dimensions and sense-making processes underlying situations where informed consent processes fail
- Give impulses for „where to go from here“

Study design

What did the
researchers
do?

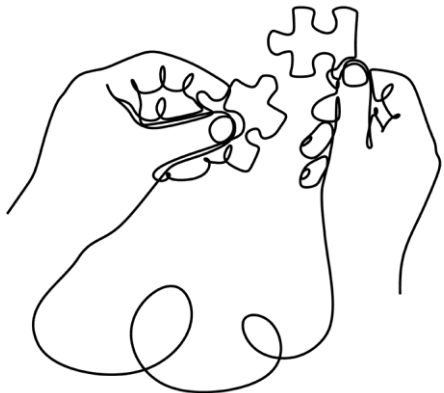
Methodology: Evocative autoethnography
→ The Researcher is the participant

Narrative construction:

- Used emotional recall and diverse personal artifacts to chronicle events
- theoretical perspective chosen based on first text
- theory led choice of five episodes to be developed more fully



What did the researchers find out?



Results of the study

- Five barriers were identified:
 - **Certain pills (with severe side-effects) to suppress breastmilk production** are handed out without adequate information provision (possibly routinely so)
 - **Capacities for understanding information in the sleep-deprived state of early parenthood are limited** and routes for information provision might need to be adapted
 - **Informed consent serves a dual purpose (respecting patient autonomy AND evidence in potential malpractice lawsuits)** possibly impacting how it is implemented in practice
 - **The highly moralized breastfeeding discourse also impacts decision-making** in problematic ways

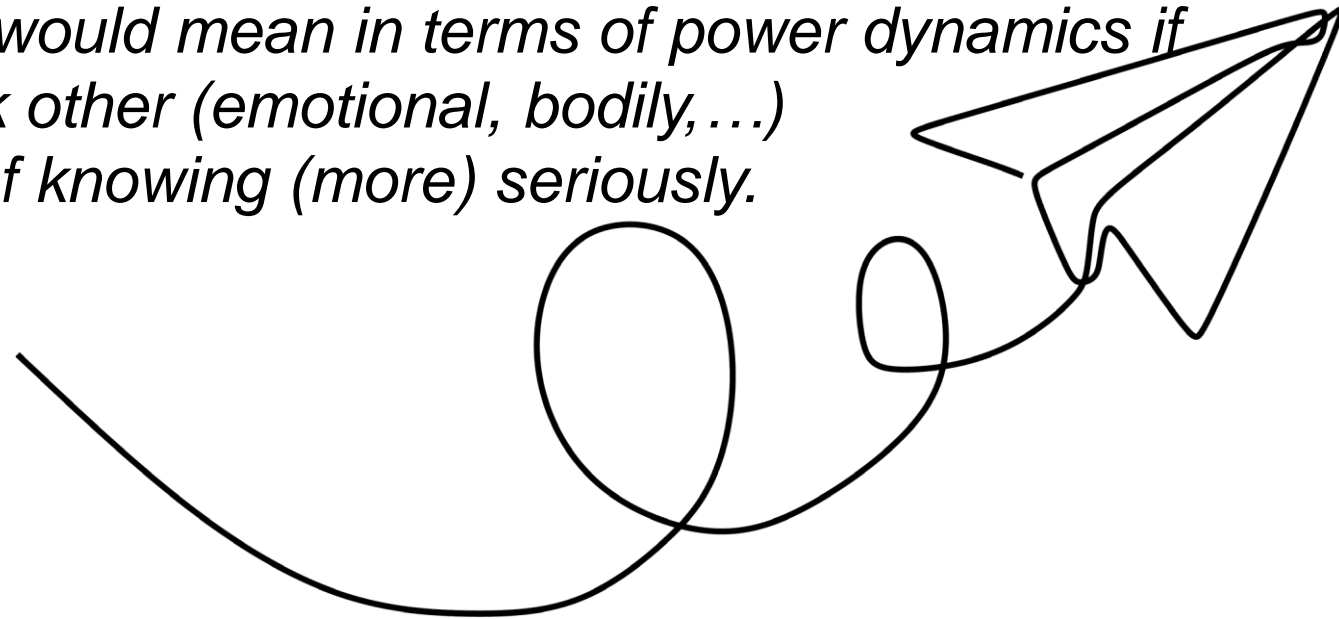
This summary is not sufficient - you need to read the paper to understand the results.

How can the results be used?

- In teaching – to sensitize students for the dimensions of informed consent
- In activism – to fight for women's rights for self-determination
- In thinking about necessary (structural) change – to bring practices closer to ethical ideas.

The method itself prompts debates about why we discard certain ways of knowing as inferior and what it would mean in terms of power dynamics if we took other (emotional, bodily, ...) forms of knowing (more) seriously.

[Klingler C. \(2023\): Five Coffin Nails to Informed Consent: An Autoethnography of Suffering Complications in Breastfeeding.](#)
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