

Seminário História(s) do Presente. A formação do mundo contemporâneo.

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# Spreading ‘the Good News’ Around the World: Family Planning Missionaries at the End of Empire

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In the decades following WWII, rising population growth rates in the decolonizing Global South became a subject of international concern for a variety of actors, ranging from eugenicists to neo-Malthusians to modernizing nationalists. International organizations and donors like the Population Council and USAID sent out a cohort of demographers and other “experts” to advise dwindling colonial empires and emerging nationalist governments on how best to reign in their populations. But the post-WWII global family planning movement also pulled in a more eclectic group of doctors, nurses, social workers, and charity ladies, who saw their work as part of a humanitarian – even spiritual – project to save the lives of women and children around the world.

This talk will explore how these actors attempted to spread “the good news” of family planning internationally, focusing on three fieldworkers for the Pathfinder Fund, an organization created by the wealthy American Gamble family. It will explore the connections between their work and long-standing colonial, maternalist, and missionary traditions of women’s welfare work. Finally, it will consider how the efforts of these actors intersected – or conflicted – with local family planning activism in decolonizing societies, illustrating the complex politics of reproductive control in the mid-20th century.

\*Este seminário decorrerá de forma híbrida. Quem desejar assistir em modalidade online deve enviar email para [historias.do.presente2022@gmail.com](mailto:historias.do.presente2022@gmail.com)

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