

**WOMEN AND COASTAL MATTERS: LIMITS AND  
POSSIBILITIES.  
MARILYN PORTER**

# STARTING FROM OMISSIONS AND CONNECTIONS

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- ✘ Gender from fisheries research
- ✘ Natural resources from feminist research
- ✘ Is our focus fishery? Coasts? Coastal communities
- ✘ a substantive area of interest

# A FEMINIST APPROACH AND INTERSECTIONALITY

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- × Social
- × Culture
- × Power
- × Household economy
- × Multiple and intersecting identities – class, race, gender, ability, religion

# WOMEN IN DIFFERENT COASTAL AND FISHING COMMUNITIES

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- ✘ Three studies – indicative
- ✘ Explore power, culture and economy in household and community
- ✘ Look at how change in any sector is articulated in gender relations and how it impacts on women
- ✘ What are the possibilities and limitations for women



# TANZANIA

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- ✘ Fishery projects aimed at increasing men's incomes are not reaching women.
- ✘ Women do not live in 'standard' households.
- ✘ Strategies of women headed households including, but not limited to fishery.

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- ‘Nowadays women cannot dare to wait for their husbands to provide each and everything in the house as sometimes they get very little fish to sustain a house. That is why I am currently engaging in different petty businesses and I always provide for my house so I do not depend on him entirely. People sell even green vegetables. That is why we are really busy looking for cash income and at the same time making sure that other things in the households such as cooking, fetching water are also done properly’.







# ATLANTIC CANADA



# ATLANTIC CANADA

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- × Collapse of cod fishery
- × Re-structuring/ consequences for fishing communities
- × Pressure on women, economically and socially
- × Women go fishing
- × The 'patriarchal dividend'



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- ‘A lot of people, idle time, trying to find things to do...Cause everybody around here got little sheds for doing their gear and one thing or another. And they’re always, they go over to this guy’s shed today and they probably be there for four or five days and then they go over to another guy’s shed for another four or five days. I even told them myself, I said they’re going to become alcoholics. “Ah, that don’t hurt. A few beer don’t hurt.” But see, it went from probably half a dozen between two of them per day, now its gone to a dozen or two dozen each per day...

# PROVINCES OF INDONESIA



## THE CLASS STRUCTURE OF RANGAS BARAT

- Ponggawa,
- divided into Ponggawa Pappalele (shore ponggawa) and
- Ponggawa Perahu (boat ponggawa).
- The Ponggawa Pappalele are the fish buyers, processors and sellers.
- The Ponggawa Perahu own, or at least skipper, the boats.
- Pappalele and sawi – labourers.

# CONSEQUENCES FOR WOMEN

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- ✘ Because women are the main owners of the resources, they also control social relations
- ✘ The result is a more equitable relationship within families





## WHAT COULD WE LEARN FROM THE STUDIES?

- ✘ The complex and integrated nature of such communities, and the need to take account of the social context, cultural influences, power relations and economic factors in understanding gender relations and the position of women.

## BUT THIS IS NOT ENOUGH

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- ✘ My argument is that we cannot understand and improve the position of women in aquaculture and fisheries unless we understand the complex 'back story' of the social context in which both women and men live.
- ✘ SPECIFICALLY AND COMPARATIVELY

## WHERE DOES THIS LEAD...

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- ✘ At the GAFF symposium in Shanghai we received dozens of interesting studies of particular fishing communities and women's various roles in the fishery and in aquaculture.
- ✘ So while women and fisheries is still generally neglected we do now have many specific studies.

# BUT....

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- ✘ Such studies are usually focused on women's role in the fishery, and tended not to include consideration of women's economic activities outside the fishery (which is one reason migration/ mobility studies are important)
- ✘ Nor do they include analyses of cultural, social or power dynamics
- ✘ Each study is based on a different theoretical and methodological perspective
- ✘ And thus it is hard to compare such studies and arrive at a global understanding

## SO....WHAT WE NEED

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- ✘ Is a global network (s) that can bring together all the existing studies (e.g. ICSF 'Recasting the Net)
- ✘ Develop a framework to inform future studies so that they are comparable
- ✘ Instigate a multi-national, large scale interdisciplinary, feminist study
- ✘ That would be intersectionally focused and highlight issues of power and culture.

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✘ THANKYOU FOR  
LISTENING

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