



**Fertility and
Reproduction
Studies Group**



INFANT FEEDING: NURTURE AND NOURISHMENT

FERTILITY AND REPRODUCTION STUDIES GROUP SEMINARS
MICHAELMAS/AUTUMN TERM 2014

Infant feeding has become an increasingly important area for research, with public health discourses underscoring declining breastfeeding rates, the dangers of colostrum avoidance, early supplementary feeding and commerciogenic malnutrition. This seminar series will bring together ethnographic and historical case studies to respond to such wider global health concerns related to infant feeding. We seek to explore how care-givers (mothers, fathers, foster- and allo-parents, and wider networks of relations) provide both nurture and nourishment through infant feeding. We aim to consider infant feeding as a learned and embodied capacity, linked to anxieties and satisfaction over the growth of children. Through cross-cultural and historical comparisons, we hope to shed light on how conceptions of the body, self and personhood can be produced and reproduced through infant feeding.

Contributors are invited to consider some of the following questions:

1. How have patterns of infant feeding changed over time and between groups?
2. Is breastfeeding always deemed to be natural?
3. What do milk – and milk substitutes – mean and do as substances?
4. How is breastfeeding linked to constructions of gender and sexuality?
5. What are the contexts of infant weaning?
6. How does infant feeding connect to kinship, relatedness and personhood?
7. How are ideas about tradition, knowledge or science invoked in relation to infant feeding?
8. Have demographic transformations and new technologies influenced infant feeding?

We invite papers from anthropologists, other social scientists and historians who have worked on aspects of infant feeding for presentation at the Fertility and Reproduction Studies Group seminars, to be held in Oxford on Monday mornings during Michaelmas/Autumn term (13th October to 1st December 2014). **Titles and 200-word abstracts should be submitted by 16th May 2014** and the programme will be finalized by 31st May 2014.

The seminars will last an hour and a half and be attended by postgraduate students and staff from the School of Anthropology. The seminars are being convened by Kaveri Qureshi and Elizabeth Rahman. Limited funds are available to assist with travel. It is anticipated that an edited volume or special issue will result from the seminars. At the end of the seminar series we will finalize publication plans. Please send titles, abstracts and enquiries to kaveri.qureshi@anthro.ox.ac.uk and elizabeth.rahman@anthro.ox.ac.uk.