

CFP: Reproducing the Environment
American Anthropological Association Annual Conference
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Organizers: Dr. Katie Dow and Dr. Janelle Lamoreaux, Research Group in Reproductive Sociology, University of Cambridge

In what ways is the environment a context for thinking about reproduction, and reproduction a context for thinking about the environment? Through what overlapping idioms, analogies, and examples are reproduction and the environment connected? This panel aims to encourage dialogue between anthropologists working on the environment and/or reproduction, as well as to reflect on the ways in which many of the people we research implicitly or explicitly speak, think and act on this connection. For instance, concerns about how to manage resources and whether to limit human intervention into nature take on a new poignancy when assisted reproductive technologies are employed to preserve endangered animal and plant species (Friese 2013; Heatherington 2008). Similarly, activists across the world have made the planetary consequences of industrialization salient by drawing attention to the potential impact on future generations, from impaired fertility and cancer caused by toxic exposures, to birth defects and early onset-puberty caused by endocrine disrupting chemicals (Murphy 2008; Roberts 2007). What can we learn from how people investigate environmental deterioration through sexual and reproductive health, as well as how they describe reproductive aspirations for themselves and other human and non-human beings in relation to environmental concerns?

Thinking about the environment and reproduction not only causes us to think about life, death and ways of living. It also raises questions about time, past decisions and the future, like what kind of world we want to leave for future generations (Dow forthcoming) and whether they will be able to solve the problems of climate change. As the extensive literature on infertility and assisted reproduction shows, dilemmas about reproduction are often described as most urgent when the question is whether one can reproduce at all (Strathern 1992a; Strathern 1992b). Many environmentalist campaigners remain concerned about the effects of continued growth in the human population on the natural world and other species, so grapple with their consciences in making decisions about whether and how to have children themselves. The critical work of queer ecologies, on the other hand, reminds us that much of the science and activism on the environment is informed by sex/gender and heteronormative assumptions about reproduction. (Hayward 2012; Mortimer-Sandilands and Erickson 2010; Raffles 2010). The panel, then, also seeks to address how ideas about reproduction, sex/gender and sexuality are themselves reproduced through environmental sciences and activism and to what effects.

Please send abstracts of 250 words to kld52@cam.ac.uk by April 2. Topics might include:

- Environmental health, especially as it relates to sexual development or reproduction
- Reproductive ecology/toxicology; environmental biology/physiology
- Endocrine disrupting chemicals
- Epigenetics
- Maternal risk
- "Sex-specific" cancers
- GMOs and food security
- Endangerment and extinction
- Invasive/native species
- Seed banking

This panel will serve as a preliminary forum for an upcoming conference with a similar theme to be held at University of Cambridge in fall of 2016. Potential participants are invited to send us a message and/or abstract even if they will not be able to attend the 2015 AAA meeting.

Works Cited:

Dow, Katharine

(Forthcoming) *Making a Good Life: An Ethnography of Nature, Ethics and Reproduction*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Friese, Carrie

2013 *Cloning Wild Life: Zoos, Captivity, and the Future of Endangered Animals*. New York: New York University Press.

Hayward, Eva

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Heatherington, Tracey

2008 *Cloning the Wild Mouflon*. *Anthropology Today* 24(1): 9–14.

Mortimer-Sandilands, Catriona, and Bruce Erickson

2010 *Queer Ecologies: Sex, Nature, Politics, Desire*. Bloomington, Ind: Indiana University Press.

Murphy, Michelle

2008 *Chemical Regimes of Living*. *Environmental History* 13(4): 695–703.

Raffles, Hugh

2010 *The Quality of Queerness Is Not Strange Enough*. In *Insectopedia* Pp. 257–263. New York: Pantheon Books.

Roberts, Celia

2007 *Messengers of Sex: Hormones, Biomedicine and Feminism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Strathern, Marilyn

1992a *Reproducing the Future: Essays on Anthropology, Kinship and the New Reproductive Technologies*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

1992b *After Nature: English Kinship in the Late Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, U.K: Cambridge University Press.