

# ***Social Studies of Reproduction: techniques, methods and reflexive moments***

## ***Call for Abstracts***

**We invite paper abstracts for presentation at a session at the International Sociological Association RC33 Conference: '9th International Conference on Social Science Methodology', Leicester, UK**

**Conference date: 11-16<sup>th</sup> September 2016.**

**Abstract deadline: 21 January, 2016.**

### **Session outline**

In recent years, the social study of human reproduction has developed into a rich and dynamic theme within social science. Emerging at the intersection of medical sociology, science and technology studies, kinship studies, feminism, bioethics and political science, a wide-ranging "reproduction studies" has illuminated the multiple ways in which human procreation can be accomplished. Technological, commercial and political changes have provided a fertile site in which to study the varied and novel ways in which parenthoods, kinships and family formations are made, unmade and remade.

Historically framed as a 'sensitive' topic residing in the private/intimate sphere, high-profile advances such as IVF, and more recent examples such as non-invasive pre-natal testing and mitochondrial transfer techniques, have thrust reproduction in to the public domain, often in the wake of controversy and media interest. The increasing use of practices such as international surrogacy, fertility preservation procedures, and the emergence of 'reproductive tourism' means that the research landscape is constantly evolving in geographical, political and conceptual terms.

Methodological advances, such as those which employ visual methods, or the advent of online communications and a range of 'e-methods', have also modified the field in recent years. However, little systematic consideration has been given to the continually adapting means by which social scientists have approached this area of research using a wide range of methods, and the resulting practical, ethical and conceptual challenges they face.

In order to address these gaps, and to generate discussion and debate, this session aims to:

- Identify significant epistemological and methodological trends within the field and consider their utility;
- Advance sophistication with which reproduction research methods are currently understood and communicated;

- Consider the use of novel and emergent methods and their fit with intimate/sensitive topics.

We therefore invite papers on all aspects of 'researching reproduction' including, but not limited to, the following topics:

- Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed methods
- Reflexivity, subjectivities and intersectionalities
- Epistemological, conceptual and disciplinary tensions
- Ethical dilemmas
- Negotiating access
- Researching organisations
- Managing emotions in research
- Dealing with sensitivity
- Reproductive ethnographies
- Feminist research methods
- Visual methods
- Participative research methods
- Dyadic and relational approaches
- Digital and online methods

**Instructions for submitting an abstract:**

Abstracts are limited to 5000 characters, excluding the title, and should be submitted via the online conference portal:

<http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/sociology/research/rc33-conference>

After landing on the homepage, navigate to 'Abstract Submission', which appears in the top left hand column of the webpage. You will need to select the names of the organisers from the drop-down list ('Nicky Hudson et al'). To check you are submitting to the correct session, you can view a table of sessions and session convenors by clicking the link entitled 'View the list of sessions and session convenors'. Once the form is completed, click submit. *Please do not email your abstract to the session organisers.*

For queries relating to the session or your abstract, please contact:

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For information about the conference, visit the conference website or contact the organisers, via: [jdg3@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:jdg3@leicester.ac.uk)

**Session organisers:**

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