



# Reproductive Boundaries

Symposium and  
Book launch  
Tuesday 19 May 2026  
14:30 – 17:30 Central European time  
online



# Reproductive Boundaries

## Symposium & Book launch

**Tuesday, 19 May 2026, 2:30-5:30 pm CET, online**

The objective of this event – both a book launch and a symposium – is to explore the analytic potential of the notion of « reproductive boundaries ».

Borders and boundaries have long been a focus of reproductive scholars. The language of borders, boundaries, and limits has been used to examine how reproduction is shaped by geopolitical, legal, ethical, and conceptual boundary-drawing. For example, the different ways in which pregnant and foetal subjects are conceptualized—Are they one? Are they two?—underlie legal, political, ethical, and cultural discussions of pregnancy, abortion, assisted reproduction, and contraception. Cross-culturally and historically, what grows in the womb has not necessarily or immediately been considered a person or a distinct individual, underscoring the importance of identity boundaries. Geopolitical borders have been identified as sites of reproductive injustice. People gain or lose reproductive and parental rights when crossing borders. Facilitating or preventing the reproduction of some groups appears as “a tool for fortifying borders and consolidating territorial dominance, a means of social control and containment, and a practice of deterrence and punishment” (Chaparro-Buitrago 2024, 11). Boundary-drawing and boundary-shifting – be they moral, professional, epistemic, temporal, geographical or power boundaries—shape everyday reproductive experiences.

After an introduction to Edmée Ballif’s book *Reproductive Boundaries: Psycho-social Care and Pregnancy in Switzerland*, we will hear leading reproductive anthropologists and sociologists reflecting on the notion of reproductive boundaries in relation to their past and present research.

### **Registration**

**Register (for free) to receive the link to join the event: [here](#).**

## Organisation

Dr. Edmée Ballif, URPP Human Reproduction Reloaded, University of Zurich

## Chair

Dr. Marie-Hélène Peter-Spiess, URPP Human Reproduction Reloaded and Faculty of Law, University of Zurich

## Hosts

- [URPP Human Reproduction Reloaded](#), University of Zurich
- [SwissRepro – Swiss research network on reproduction](#)

## Programme

2:30-2:40 pm (1:30-1:40 pm BST) (8:30-8:40 am EDT)
<b>Welcome and Introduction</b> <b>Marie-Hélène Peter-Spiess</b> URPP Human Reproduction Reloaded, Faculty of Law, University of Zurich
<b>Sarah Franklin</b> Emerita Professor, Reproductive Sociology Research Group (ReproSoc) Department of Sociology, University of Cambridge
2:40-3:10 pm (1:40-2:10 pm BST) (8:40-9:10am EDT)
<b>“Reproductive Boundaries: Pregnancy and Psychosocial Care in Switzerland”</b> <b>Edmée Ballif</b> Research associate, Department of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies and at the URPP Human Reproduction Reloaded, University of Zurich Coordinator of the Gender Studies Platform, University of Lausanne
3:10-3:30 pm (2:10-2:30 pm BST) (9:10-9:30 am EDT)
Discussion

Break

3:35-3:50 pm (2:35-2:50 pm BST) (9:35-9:50 am EDT)

**“Reproductive boundaries and reproductive politics”**

**Véronique Mottier**

Associate professor, Center of Gender Studies, University of Lausanne  
Fellow and Director of studies, Jesus College, University of Cambridge

3:50-4:05 pm (2:50-3:05 pm BST) (9:50-10:05 am EDT)

**“Reproductive Boundaries and the Anthropology of Care”**

**Sallie Han**

Professor, Department of Anthropology  
Director, Center for Racial Justice and Inclusive Excellence  
SUNY Oneonta

4:05-4:20 pm (3:05-3:20 pm BST) (10:05-10:20 am EDT)

Discussion

Break

4:35-4:50 pm (3:35-3:50 pm BST) (10:35-10:50 am EDT)

**“Reproductive Boundaries in Flux”**

**Norah MacKendrick**

Associate professor, Department of Sociology, Rutgers University

4:50-5:05 pm (3:50-4:05 pm BST) (10:50-11:05 am EDT)

**“The emergence of ‘parenting’ and changing reproductive boundaries”**

**Charlotte Faircloth**

Professor of Family and Society, Social Research Institute, University College  
London

5:05-5:20 pm (4:05-4:20 pm BST) (11:05-11:20 am EDT)

Discussion

5:20-5:30 pm (4:20-4:30 pm BST) (11:20-11:30 am EDT)

Concluding remarks

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