

Transnational Asia

Speaker Series

September 26, 2019, at 4pm - Mechanical Lab. 209
Free and open to the public.

EMERGENCY IN A TIME OF CRISIS: ETHNONATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS OF CHINESE SPERM DECLINE

Abstract: Over the last 25 years, reports of an environmentally-induced sperm crisis have circulated in academic publications and news media worldwide. Articles describe falling sperm counts and increasing rates of male infertility as a “sperm-pocalypse” that “could make humans extinct.” In China, falling sperm counts have been described as a sperm emergency, and sperm themselves as “ugly” sentinels of environmental decline. This talk analyzes China’s sperm emergency as both an environmentalist and nationalist project and situates scientific efforts to understand sperm decline among Han Chinese living in urban areas into contexts of not only pollution, but also family planning and the potential inheritance of reproductive toxicity.



Janelle Lamoreaux is Assistant Professor of Anthropology with affiliations in East Asian Studies and Social, Cultural & Critical Theory at the University of Arizona. Her research on reproductive and environmental health has been published in *Cultural Anthropology*, *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review*, and funded by the National Science Foundation, Wenner Gren Foundation and Wellcome Trust. She is currently completing her first book on epigenetic understanding of environments, toxic exposures, and reproductive health in China.

FACULTY HOST: ZÖE WOOL

