

EDITORIAL



Reproduction, Technology and Society - a new section in *RBMO*

This issue sees the launch of Reproduction, Technology and Society (RTS), a new section of *RBMO* fully dedicated, as the name conveys, to issues at the interfaces between reproduction, technology, and society.

Why the new section? Reproductive technologies by their very nature have implications well beyond the laboratory or the clinic, and these are often greatest at the crossroads between technology and society, ethics and patient experience. In recent years it has become clear that discussion at this interface has outgrown social media as the appropriate forum and that there is now a need for a formal academic platform for these issues to be presented, scrutinized and debated. This is evidenced by the growing number of manuscripts being submitted to *RBMO* that discuss ART, laboratory and clinical innovations and practice from societal, end-user and producer perspectives. Examples include the ethical implications of genetic screening for multifactorial conditions and the evolving uses of cryopreservation technologies.

This new section will provide a home for papers addressing these topics that might have been less visible to our readers in the past. It represents a unique platform where those working with reproductive

technology and those from social and ethical disciplines can meet, mingle, discuss, and generate new knowledge. The section will also be home to a new article format entitled *Viewpoint* – brief, cogently argued pieces that will both respond to and set the agenda in this cross-disciplinary arena.

Our inaugural section presents two research papers. The first captures the spirit of the new section, reporting preferences for cryopreservation treatments in oncological treatments in the Danish context (*Bach et al., 2020*). The study investigates factors leading to the preference of one technology over another, and the values that women attach to the technologies. For some the technology is seen not only as a means to achieve pregnancy, but also as a route to reaffirm their female identity through regaining a menstrual cycle. The second paper investigates fertility preservation among transgender men and women in a large clinic in Israel (*Amir et al., 2020*). This study – the first of its kind – showed fertility preservation to be more highly valued by transgender women than trans men. It also reveals that while many patients undergoing hormone reaffirming therapy do so with a clear biological plan of parenthood in mind before commencing therapy, others do not until presented with the option of fertility preservation, a finding similar to that

reported in the companion RTS paper (*Bach et al., 2020*). We also present our first *Viewpoint*, where Dr Giulia Cavaliere discusses the multiplicity of the societal impacts of COVID-19 on fertility treatments from an ethical point of view (*Cavaliere, 2020*).

This first RTS section can therefore be seen to address somewhat 'different' questions such as: What values do people attach to fertility treatments in the context of major life disruptions? What are the ethical implications, and what do fertility preservation technologies offer beyond the prospect of biological parenthood?

Reproduction, Technology and Society will thus bring together pertinent discussions taking place in the bioethics and society community with those articulated by ART practitioners and scientists. We hope that it will facilitate a greater understanding of the implications of ART from broader perspectives than has traditionally been the case. There are no easy answers or fixes in the ART world, as it interlaces with the most intimate values and questions of human life, in a culturally complex and global world.

We invite you to contribute to the new RTS section and start this necessary conversation. Let's talk!

REFERENCES

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