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**Pregnant with Ideas:
Reflections on Pregnancy and Birth in
Ethnographic Knowledge Production**

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10:15h - 11:45h

ONLINE

<https://tinyurl.com/v9hfxv8s>



<https://familieimfeld.org/>

Pregnant with Ideas: Reflections on Pregnancy and Birth in Ethnographic Knowledge Production

Pregnancy is both a deeply personal and a socially regulated phenomenon. It offers a unique perspective for examining themes such as kinship, gender, medicalization, biopower, and reproductive politics across different sociocultural and historical contexts. At the same time, the experience of pregnancy confronts ethnographers conducting fieldwork with critical methodological and epistemological questions. How does pregnancy influence research relationships, access to certain spaces, or the interpretation of data? How do pregnant ethnographers navigate fieldwork in environments where reproductive norms and expectations differ from their own? In this talk, I will engage with feminist theory regarding pregnancy and birth, reflexive ethnography, and embodied research methodologies. I aim to analyze how pregnancy serves both as a subject of study and as a lived experience that shapes knowledge production. By considering pregnancy as a site of negotiation—balancing researcher identities, cultural norms, and structural forces—I will reflect on broader discussions regarding positionality, vulnerability, discrimination, and the politics of representation in ethnographic practice. Additionally, I will discuss how rigid cultural norms and definitions of pregnancy, birth, and postpartum experiences significantly impact the possibilities for ethnographic fieldwork, including funding opportunities at the institutional level.

Sinah Kloß

Sinah Theres Kloß holds a PhD in Social and Cultural Anthropology from Heidelberg University. Since 2020, she has led the research group ‘Marking Power: Embodied Dependencies, Haptic Regimes and Body Modification’ at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies. She recently held a visiting professorship in Anthropology of the Americas at the University of Bonn. Her current research discusses the sensory history of body modification and tattooing and focuses on the interrelation of religion, servitude, memory, and biopower in Hindu Suriname, Guyana, and Trinidad. She is also interested in medical anthropology and the anthropology of reproduction, ethnographic methodology and intersectionality, New Materialist and feminist theory. Her co-edited special issue, “Pregnant Bodies – Embodied Pregnancy,” will be published with *Body & Society* in March 2025 (with A. Villinger).