

Systematic inequalities in medically assisted reproduction in Hungary – the patients' perspective

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The proposed paper examines the experiences and interpretations of patients regarding inequalities brought forth by the regulations and practices of medically assisted reproduction in the special Hungarian context.

As infertility and involuntary childlessness is globally perceived as a unique form of tragedy and loss, couples are always seeking the newest treatments available to them. Due to the rapid development of new biomedical technologies, prospects have changed for individuals and couples with fertility problems, who now have the options to live with several technologies in the field of medically assisted reproduction. Yet as with most technological innovations the access is limited and certainly unequal. Systematic inequalities of such life-chances culminate in frustrations expressed in detail on online discussion groups.

My aim is to highlight these systematic inequalities and exclusions as experienced by the subjects themselves and shed light on infertility treatments from a perspective earlier mostly neglected. Material and economic concerns are often paired with speculations of doctor intent and worry about the growing inequalities within the healthcare system. This unique research design permitted studying the discourse of the participants in a natural, non-controlled environment, where the presence of the researcher had no influence on the results, bypassing problems reported by earlier researches regarding occurring biases with individual or couple interviews.