A dramatic sunset over a coastal town, likely San Francisco, with a vibrant rainbow arching across the sky. The town's buildings are silhouetted against the bright orange and yellow light of the setting sun. The sky is filled with dark, heavy clouds, and the rainbow is a prominent feature in the upper right quadrant.

An Exploration of Pregnant Couples' Constructions of Routine Ultrasound, Pregnancy, the Foetus and 'Their Baby'.

Jessica Glen
jfglen@gmail.com | @JessdotGlen

Antonia Lyons
A.C.Lyons@Massey.ac.nz | @antoniagl

A pregnant woman with dark curly hair, wearing a white crop top, is holding a large, empty, dark-colored picture frame in front of her belly. She is looking down at the frame with a slight smile. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

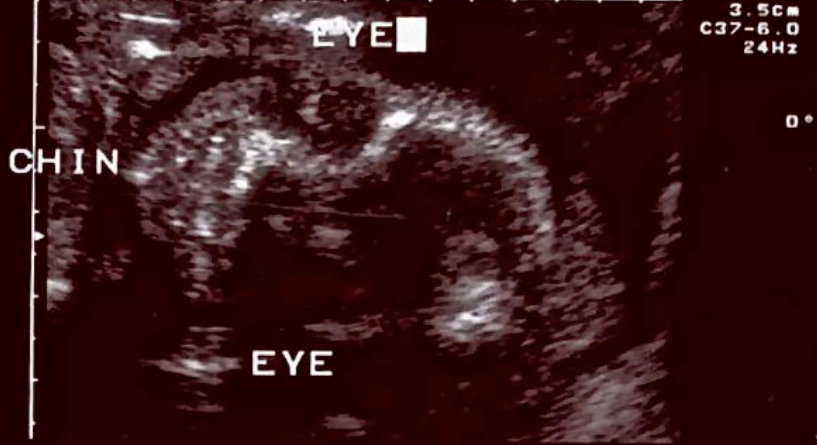
Visualising the Womb: Ultrasound Research as a Field of Study

Primacy of the Visual

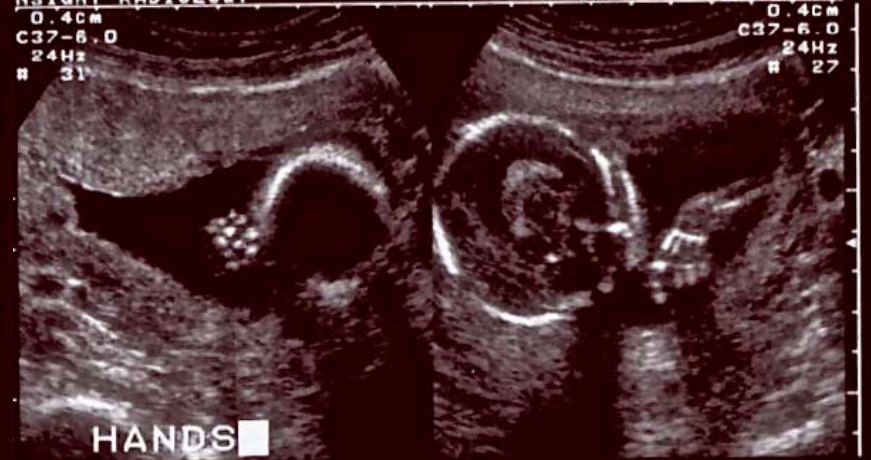
Technological Imperative

Consumption and Choice

ID: 18-9-69AL: 19/08/2004
INSIGHT RADIOLOGY OBST 10:34:29AM

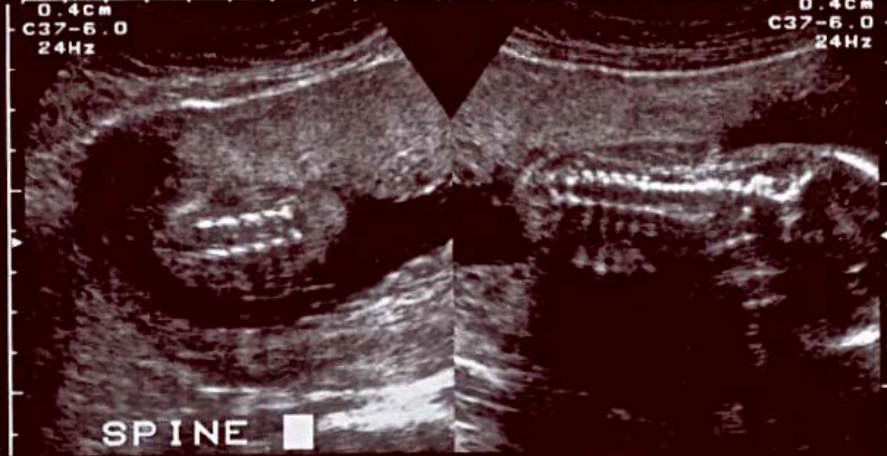


D: 18-9-69AL: 19/08/2004
INSIGHT RADIOLOGY OBST 10:28:40AM

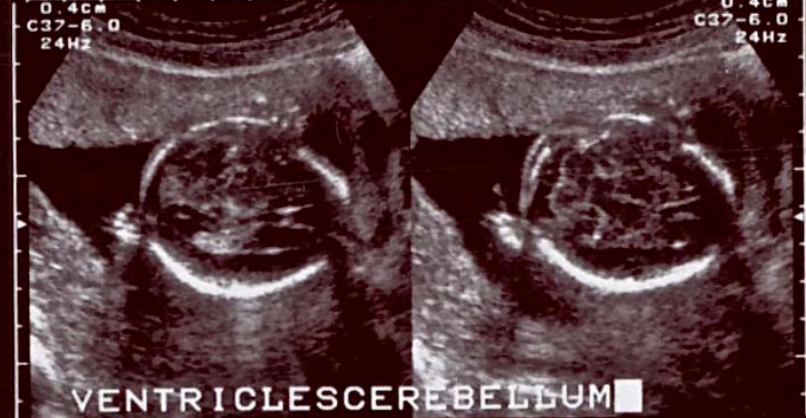


Primacy of the Visual

ID: 18-9-69AL: 19/08/2004
INSIGHT RADIOLOGY OBST 10:29:08AM



ID: 18-9-69AL: 19/08/2004
INSIGHT RADIOLOGY OBST 10:27:53AM



**In Medicine, It's What's On
The Inside That Counts.**



gpsmedical™

State-of-the-art!!!

Technological Imperative

Top-of-the-line!!!

Cutting-edge!!

- Nature is imperfect
- Technology is progress
- If it can be done, it must be tried. If it can be tried then I must try it.



Consumption and Choice

Challenge to biomedical authority.

“Hybrid practice” – medical vs. social?

[Home](#) | [About us](#) | [Pregnancy Scans](#) | [Packages & Prices](#) | [Testimonials](#) | [Competition & Offers](#) | [News](#) | [Locations](#) | [Contact us](#)

Baby Premier
Seeing is believing



3D BabyVision
fetal imaging
...love at first sight

Context/Approach/Method



In-depth,
exploratory
research

Visual
aspect



Socially
constructed
meaning

Discourse
analysis

Copy of recruitment flyer



Participants and Methods



7 couples

Discussing
together



Objects to
share

60-90
minutes
duration

Constructing ultrasound as normal and commonsense.




Constructing the foetus as healthy and normal.

Constructing the pregnancy as legitimate and valid.



Constructing the baby with personhood and gender.

Ultrasound as Normal and Commonsense



Audrey “It’s just always been discussed as being part of the process.”

Tavish “A matter of course, yea, like just with everyone... Why wouldn’t we sort of go for it?”

Couple 1

Lewis “I guess I would always, I mean I guess I’d always, it wouldn’t have been something that we would have discussed, um, not having scans as well. Is that ever an option, not to have them?”

Ali “Well (*long pause*) for us it wasn’t.”

Couple 3

Tom You should do it absolutely. There’s no reason why you wouldn’t.”

Couple 7



Pregnancy as Legitimate and Valid

Kate: “OH MY GOD! I’m pregnant now. There’s a real thing happening here. There’s something there. It’s much more real than two lines, the doctors or a blood test or anything”

Couple 2

Ali “It was also confirmation that there IS something inside you, you know like prior to that um, scan you’ve kind of peed on a stick and (*smiles*) that’s IT, there’s no, there’s no (*laughing*) other confirmation that you are actually pregnant and (*shrugs*) you know”

Couple 3

Garrett “It was actually quite the confirmation as well. Like we, we (*looks at Eva*) we were pretty sure but it’s the first kind of solid thing we had that was (*holds hands out in front of himself*) yea, actually having a baby.”

Eva “Yea apart from the, the two pink lines.”

Couple 6

Normality of the Foetus

Amy “Everything’s where it should be and it’s got all its –

Tom “It’s got all its bits.”

Amy “- as well.”

Tom “Parts and the right parts, the usual one’s –“

Amy “And it’s the right size and yea... And they, and they see that everything’s where it, like it’s got (*holds up hand*) five fingers, four fingers and a thumb (*laughs*) five toes and it’s got full ch-”

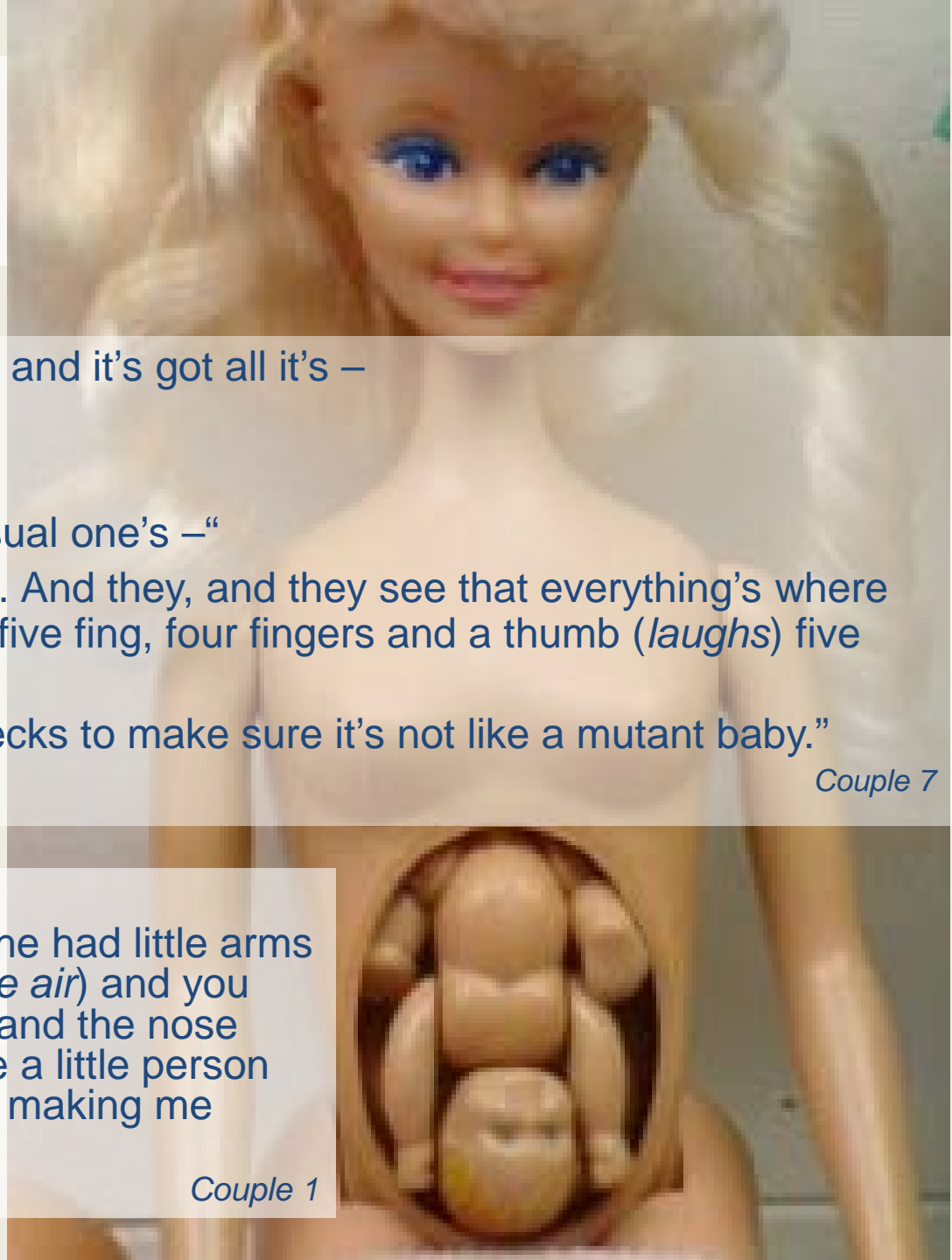
Tom “Yea no, just. Just the basic checks to make sure it’s not like a mutant baby.”

Couple 7


Audrey

“And, and he looked like a person. So he had little arms and legs and you saw (*outlining it in the air*) and you see the little profile shot with the head and the nose and the stuff, so he, yea, he looked like a little person as opposed to just something that was making me constipated.”

Couple 1



Baby with Personhood and Gender



Zac “That kinda, sort of a visual image that’s stayed with me anyway of, of um, the baby at that age.”

Couple 2

Lulu “Like I think its, even thinking it’s a girl and it’s definitely given me more of a connection. Thinking ‘oh my gosh we’re going to be raising a daughter’ and you, you start to think a bit different.”

Couple 5

Eva “(*Points to the images on the coffee table*) Because I’ve seen this visual representation in this way (*takes finger to her temple*) that’s how I kind of (*points finger up in the air*) imagine (*takes hand to stomach*) baby.”

Couple 6

Women's reproductive rights.

Informed decision making.

Regulation of technology.



Implications

Jessica Glen
and Antonia Lyons
Massey University
New Zealand

Email: jfglen@gmail.com
Twitter: [@JessdotGlen](https://twitter.com/JessdotGlen)

