

Center for Reproductive Science

[Feinberg Home](#) > [CRS Home](#) > [About Us](#) > [News](#) > [2024](#) >

Dr. Rene Almeling Delivers CRS Special Seminar

Anika Schipma and Julia Sprenger, MS-RSM Graduate Students

As part of CRS's special seminar speaker series, trainees and faculty gathered on May 10th, 2024, to hear a thought-provoking talk by [Dr. Rene Almeling, PhD](#). Dr. Almeling, a distinguished Professor of Sociology at Yale University and author of the award-winning books *Sex Cells* and *GUYnecology*, presented her research in a lecture titled "The Politics of 'Male' Reproductive Health."

Dr. Almeling's extensive research focuses on the interactions between biological bodies, cultural norms, scientific knowledge, markets, and individual experiences, employing qualitative, quantitative, and historical methods. Her work has been supported by the NSF, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and Stanford University's Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences. Additionally, her essays have been featured in prominent publications such as The New York Times, the Washington Post, the Boston Globe, and Elle.

In her seminar, Dr. Almeling delved into the underrepresentation of male reproductive health in Western healthcare systems, a theme central to her book *GUYnecology*, which was also the CRS Book Club pick for spring 2024. The book club had previously discussed *GUYnecology: The Missing Science of Men's Reproductive Health* on May 3, 2024. Dr. Lindsey Block, PhD, commended the book for its detailed historical analysis and practical insights, highlighting Dr. Almeling's blend of scholarly rigor and innovative research. "It couldn't have been easy, and it is something that needed to be done," Dr. Block remarked. Emily Shiplett, an MS-RSM student, initially skeptical of some viewpoints, eventually recognized the importance of the book's reframing of reproductive health responsibilities. She noted how the book clarified the discrepancy in research standards, which historically focused on male bodies for general scientific research and female bodies for reproductive research. Shiplett reflected on the importance of understanding how men's health affects their offspring, a significant takeaway from Dr. Almeling's engaging book.

During her talk, Dr. Almeling first reviewed traditional social scientific approaches to reproduction, emphasizing the neglect of the male reproductive system. She then shared her inspiration for writing *GUYnecology*, stemming from her exploration of andrology—the medical specialization focusing on male reproductive health. Dr. Almeling discussed the historical failure of andrology to gain recognition as a respected medical field and the long-standing designation of female bodies as primarily reproductive.

In the final part of her presentation, Dr. Almeling proposed recommendations to address the biases in reproductive medicine that exclude male aspects. She identified three categories of complexities related to her recommendations: social norms, clinical logistics, and political concerns. She assured that these complexities would be thoroughly addressed in the forthcoming edited volume of her novel.

Dr. Almeling's seminar underscored the necessity of inclusive research and comprehensive medical care within historically patriarchal medical frameworks. Her sociological perspective on reproductive health provided CRS faculty and trainees with a deeper understanding of how the historical neglect of male reproductive research adversely affects all populations—Dr. Almeling's insights and advocacy for balanced reproductive health research promise to foster more equitable healthcare practices.

