Over the past 30 years, selective abortion of female fetuses has become a disturbingly routine form of family planning in India, with expert estimates of the total exceeding half a million. Countless legal and policy measures aim to curb what has widely come to be seen as a public “crisis,” but we know almost nothing about the experiences of families seeking the service or clinicians providing it. Drawing on 18 months of clinic-based fieldwork, anthropologist and physician-in-training Utpal Sandesara shines new light on the lived drama of sex selection. Taking listeners through a secretive black market, the sitting rooms of common households, and the dusty halls of government, Sandesara provocatively challenges longstanding approaches in public health. In the process, he illustrates the potential value of clinical research as a tool for understanding and addressing troubling social problems.

Reception to follow lecture.

The venue is physically accessible.

Please contact socialscience@umbc.edu with any accommodation requests.