

# Daughters of the Climate Emergency: Reproduction, Pregnancy, and Parenting in Barcelona



## Editorial Direction:

Beatriz San Román

Irene Salvo Agoglia

## Contents of this issue:

Ana Cerezuela González

Helena Montasell i Punsola

Carolina Remorini

## Images:

Kitagawa Utamaro

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## Coordination:

Victòria Badia

## Layout:

Zenaida-Maria Andreica Gheorghe

## News and agenda:

Ana Cerezuela

## Subscription and contact:

[gr.afin@uab.cat](mailto:gr.afin@uab.cat)

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## Daughters of the Climate Emergency

In recent years, concern has grown about the effects of climate change and pollution on health during pregnancy and early childhood. This concern is especially relevant in urban settings, where the majority of the world's population lives. Various medical studies have shown that some chemicals present in the air, water, or objects we use every day can mimic the action of natural human hormones and even impair their normal functioning, which is why they are commonly known as "endocrine disruptors." These pollutants have been linked to menstrual disorders, fertility problems, and cardiovascular diseases, among other effects on maternal and child health, such as gestational diabetes, preeclampsia, premature births, and even stillbirths. Furthermore, breast milk may contain residues of these pollutants, which affect the immune and digestive systems of newborns and have been linked to allergies or neurodevelopmental disorders. More broadly, exposure to adverse environmental conditions resulting from climate change, such as extreme temperatures, droughts, or extreme weather events, increases the risk of pregnancy complications through various biological mechanisms. For example, increased levels of stress-related hormones during pregnancy affect gene expression, which in turn can influence the baby's brain development.

Science has identified "windows of vulnerability," particularly delicate moments

during pregnancy when the environment can have a decisive impact on the baby's future health.

This type of finding has also been published in various media outlets. In January 2024, the cover of *XL Semanal*, the most widely read Sunday supplement in Spain, featured a striking image: a baby surrounded by garbage and plastic objects, under the headline "Europe intoxicated: The bodies of all Europeans, especially babies, are contaminated by the chemical compounds that surround us". Beyond the striking nature of the photograph, headlines like this reflect a growing sentiment among the general population: fear of the harmful effects that environmental degradation is having on present and future generations.

## The Case of Barcelona

Fear about the effects of pollution and climate change on reproduction and



[Boating Party with Children Swimming](#) [Diptych of woodblock prints; ink and color on paper]. Kitagawa Utamaro. *Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Nueva York. Licencia CC.





"Wife," from the series Connoisseur of Modern Customs (*Tōsei fūzoku tsū*). [Woodblock print; ink and color on paper]. Kitagawa Utamaro. *Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Nueva York. Licencia CC0. (Ca 1790).

human life is neither abstract nor distant, but a reality that permeates the daily lives of many pregnant people living in large cities. In Barcelona, for example, pollution levels have for years exceeded the World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations for substances such as nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter, particularly affecting children and adults with respiratory illnesses. Some of the effects of climate change are already evident in this city, such as the increased frequency of heat waves and a significant increase in nights when temperatures do not drop below 25°C, known as "torrid nights." In June 2025 alone, 12 torrid nights were recorded, a historic record in the country, according to the Meteorological Service of Catalonia (METEOCAT). Climate change brings with it less rainfall, shorter and more intense storms, hail storms, rising sea levels, shrinking beaches, and even a greater risk of forest fires. According to METEOCAT data, the years 2022, 2023, and 2024 in Catalonia saw annual temperature anomalies of 2.7°C, 2.4°C, and 2.2°C, respectively, implying a climate risk higher than that of other cities such as New Delhi, Athens, and Tokyo. 2025 was the year in Catalonia with the most consecutive days of heat above 40°C, and the second warmest on record.

All of this has consequences for reproductive decisions. As in the rest of Spain and Europe, the birth rate has



declined in recent years in Barcelona for socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental reasons. Many people, especially young people, are seriously considering moving out of the city before having children. A 2021 survey by Ajuntament de Barcelona revealed that 30% of residents would like to move elsewhere.

Despite the growing number of scientific studies and news reports on these topics, we still don't know how women face the challenges posed by today's urban environment: what decisions they make, how they seek to protect themselves, and what strategies they deploy to safeguard their health and that of their children from pollution and, also, the extreme heat caused by climate change.

Over the past few decades, public health campaigns have emphasized the importance of women's lifestyle habits for their health during and after pregnancy and throughout childhood. But in this new context of climate crisis and urban pollution, many mothers express doubts and uncertainty: What can they really do to protect themselves? How can they respond to threats that are not always visible or avoidable? In the absence of clear answers, these women are seeking their own ways to adapt, innovate, and challenge decisions that affect their health and that of their children.

### **An anthropological study on the experience of mothers**

To understand how pregnant people



"Woman Holding Up a Parasol," from the series Ten Classes of Women's Physiognomy (Fujo ninsō juppen: Higasa o sasu onna) [Woodblock print; ink and color on paper]. Kitagawa Utamaro. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Nueva York. Licencia CC0. (Ca 1792-93)

experience the effects of climate change and pollution in their daily lives, the AFIN Research Group at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona launched the project *Viure l'embaràs a Barcelona: dones i persones gestants davant l'emergència climàtica* (Living Pregnant Women in Barcelona: Pregnant Women and People in the Climate Emergency). This project was made possible thanks to funding from Ajuntament de Barcelona and has included the collaboration of the Hospital de la Santa Creu i de Sant Pau, the Hospital Sant Joan de Déu, and the Hospital del Mar.





“Hour of the Rat: Mistress,” from the series Women’s Daily Customs (Fuzoku bijin tokei) [Woodblock print; ink and color on paper]. Kitagawa Utamaro. *Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Nueva York. Licencia CC0. 1790.

The study, carried out from 2024 to the present, seeks to understand women's experiences of environmental change and the climate emergency, particularly during pregnancy, and how these influence the reproductive desires, daily decisions, and life plans of those who live in the city. To do so, we focused on the participants' specific experiences: how they navigate the city, what they consume, how they take care of themselves, which spaces they consider safe or dangerous, and what challenges they encounter in their homes or in the urban environment. In this way, we sought to understand how the city is inhabited in a context marked by the climate crisis.

The study was conducted using a mixed methodology, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques. In the first phase, we conducted 35 in-depth interviews with pregnant women or mothers of young children living in the city's 10 districts. Participants were contacted through posters, social media, and the health institutions collaborating in the study. Based on the results obtained, in the second phase, we designed and distributed a survey, which was completed anonymously using an accessible online form. 313 Barcelona residents who had been pregnant in the last three years participated.

### Climate-Related Reasons for Fleeing the City: “It’s Unlivable Right Now”

A large majority of mothers surveyed in Barcelona report that they would like to live in a place with better environmental and living conditions. 15.3% of those surveyed have already moved in search of a healthier environment, 26.8% intend to do so, and 40.6% would like to move but cannot for economic reasons. In-depth interviews support this trend: numerous participants express a desire to move outside the city center or to the outskirts in search of a more suitable environment for parenting.

Their reasons relate to specific expectations about what a healthy environment should be like: they seek to reduce exposure to environmental and noise pollution, improve thermal comfort within the home, and have greater contact with nature and green spaces. In the warmer months, many people have



to forgo the sound insulation provided by windows and open them to combat the sweltering nights. For them, the preference for streets with few crowds, tranquility, and a lack of recurrent noise is a very important expectation.

“When I had the baby, I realized that in Barcelona there's a lot of constant noise everywhere, because in the end you think, wow, such a small baby! And what do you think? How horrible to be in the middle of that, it's horrible! Above all, as I told you, the motorcycles... it's something many mothers comment on, how horrible when you're walking and suddenly you're at a traffic light and the motorcycle starts, it's like you already notice what the baby is doing... right? He jumps. And on top of that, the noise of the cars and everything, everything in general (...). Everyone's habit of honking, the shouting, the people shouting a lot...” (Ester, Les Corts district).

“It's unlivable right now (...). Of course, there's so much noise (...). It's the foreigners on bikes, it's the bars, it's the 'bam, bam, bam' of the blinds going up and down, the gas. I mean, it's very difficult to live now.” (Inés, Ciutat Vella district).

Like Inés, many interviewees mention the difficulty of maintaining an adequate temperature inside the home. The poor or nonexistent thermal insulation in apartments forces them to resort to expensive, self-contained air conditioning

systems or to seek refuge in public spaces, which, they say, are insufficient and have limited hours. In this context, the lack of shaded areas and drinking fountains in streets, parks, and squares represents a significant obstacle to daily life with young children.

“Sometimes I don't understand it, because they are parks that have 'climate shelters.' But it turns out the parks are all sunny, there isn't a single park that's covered. So, of course, where I take my children is a shelter, but I can't leave them under this tree (...). So, I do see that in other cities they've been putting up... well, panels



**Mother and Child** [Woodblock print; ink and color on paper].  
Kitagawa Utamaro. *Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Nueva York.  
Licencia CC0. (Ca. 1800).





**Mother and Child** [Woodblock print; ink and color on paper].  
Kitagawa Utamaro. *Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Nueva York. Licencia CC0. (Ca. 1793).

or fabrics to protect a bit from the sun. But here there's nothing, there's no park that has any... and besides, it's sunny almost all year round.”  
(Isabel, Sant Martí district)

“I've seen that they've started to build a lot of parks for children. But those parks... They build the park, but they don't make a place for the child to drink (...) What child is going to be in a park in 40-degree heat? Or even inside their house that doesn't have air conditioning. So, if you take them to the park, you absolutely have to have a water fountain, at least so they can hydrate their face

every so often or something.”  
(Cristina, Sant Martí district).

### **Barcelona, a city for children?: “Children have no place”**

In the interviews, reflections on temperature, noise, and pollution are intertwined with references to other aspects of the urban environment in which the participants experienced pregnancy and parenting. In her testimony, Cristina pointed to a widespread culture in Barcelona that does not recognize children as part of the city's social life, which consequently limits the possibilities for raising them.

“I've noticed that Barcelona is not family-friendly lately (...). Because young people are uncomfortable with a child's crying, or a child's scream, or a child's tantrum. (...) But, in Barcelona, I don't see many places like that, family-friendly, where you can say, 'Hey, look, I went to this restaurant, they treated my child wonderfully, they didn't give me any face, they didn't make any gestures,' like... I haven't seen that.” (Cristina, Sant Martí district).

The general feeling emerging from the interviewees' conversations is that Barcelona is far from being a child-friendly city. Montse, a resident of Horta-Guinardó, shares a broader perspective: she sees this situation not only as a problem in Barcelona, but as a global trend in large cities, where children and adolescents have limited space in social life.



“Absolutely not. There's no place for children, but it's not because of Barcelona; I think it's a social, global issue. There's a global issue. It's not a hostile city for children either... Look, it's not New York or London, but... it's not my ideal city, honestly, I don't know if it exists either. I don't know them. I'm sure there are some, but no... No, but not because there aren't any facilities for children (...), yes, there are many and it's very good on a socio-educational level, in terms of leisure spaces, but on a logistical level, on the level... of the people, children don't have a place. They have a place to make out, but they don't have a place. It's difficult, yes, it's not nice.” (Montse, Horta-Guinardó).

One of the key conclusions of this study is that a healthy environment for raising children doesn't depend only on clean air or green spaces. It also requires the ability to enjoy that environment with comfort, safety, and tranquility, and even the experiences that less urban environments seem to provide for childhood development. In this regard, people who grew up outside of Barcelona tend to show greater sensitivity to these issues and tend to compare urban upbringing with their own childhoods spent in rural environments, in smaller, greener cities, or less crowded and noisy places.

“I come from [a village in Catalonia], that is, from a village. I was lucky

that in my free time I would watch the goats give birth, and my friend's grandfather and I would go pick up the newly born goats. My son won't have that if I don't move.” (Pilar, L'Eixample).

### **Livable Neighborhoods and Homes: Precarious Urban Landscapes**

Our survey data reveals that 96.5% of participants consider avoiding stress caused by precarious housing conditions (extreme temperatures, water or power outages) to be essential for their health during pregnancy and breastfeeding. A very high percentage also value factors such as good ventilation and access to



*Yamauba Combing Her Hair with Kintarō* [Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper]. Kitagawa Utamaro. *Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Nueva York. Licencia CC0. (Ca. 1801).





[Yamauba and Kintarō Playing with a Cherry](#) [Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper]. Kitagawa Utamaro. *Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Nueva York. Licencia CC0. (Ca. 1795).

the outdoors (96.1%) or the availability of heating and air conditioning (86.6%).

However, access to housing considered suitable for parenting is a major obstacle in the city of Barcelona, where real estate speculation and overcrowding drive many families out of the city. According to a report presented by the Consell Econòmic i Social de Barcelona in 2024, between 20% and 25% of housing changes that have occurred in the Barcelona Metropolitan Region in the last five years have been for economic reasons, in a unilateral movement from the city of Barcelona to the outskirts, which is

expected to increase in the next five years due to the constant rise in rental prices and home sales.

Beyond the housing problem, some interviewees also pointed out the lack of public policies aimed at children. Many women face difficulties accessing childcare places or consider basic infrastructure, such as shaded areas, water fountains, or adequate public spaces for breastfeeding, to be insufficient. 64.8% indicated that these spaces are scarce, and among those who consider them very important, 82.9% expressed dissatisfaction with their availability and quality.

Environmental safety also emerges as a key factor: some mothers mentioned crime, street vending, and the presence of drugs in playgrounds as factors that complicate parenting. Added to this are the risks associated with traffic and the perception of dirty or littered streets. However, they also highlight positive aspects of living in Barcelona, such as the social and family support network, the ability to get around on foot, access to healthcare professionals, and the vitality of the neighborhood's social network. These benefits, however, coexist with challenges that profoundly impact their daily lives.

For these women, the concept of "environment" transcends the physical: it includes barriers of gender, social class, origin, urban structure, and access to resources. In their stories, environmental and climate issues are intertwined with the characteristics of the city model, shaping a complex reality in which raising children in



a healthy environment becomes a daily struggle.

### Care Strategies in an Urban Environment Impacted by the Climate Crisis

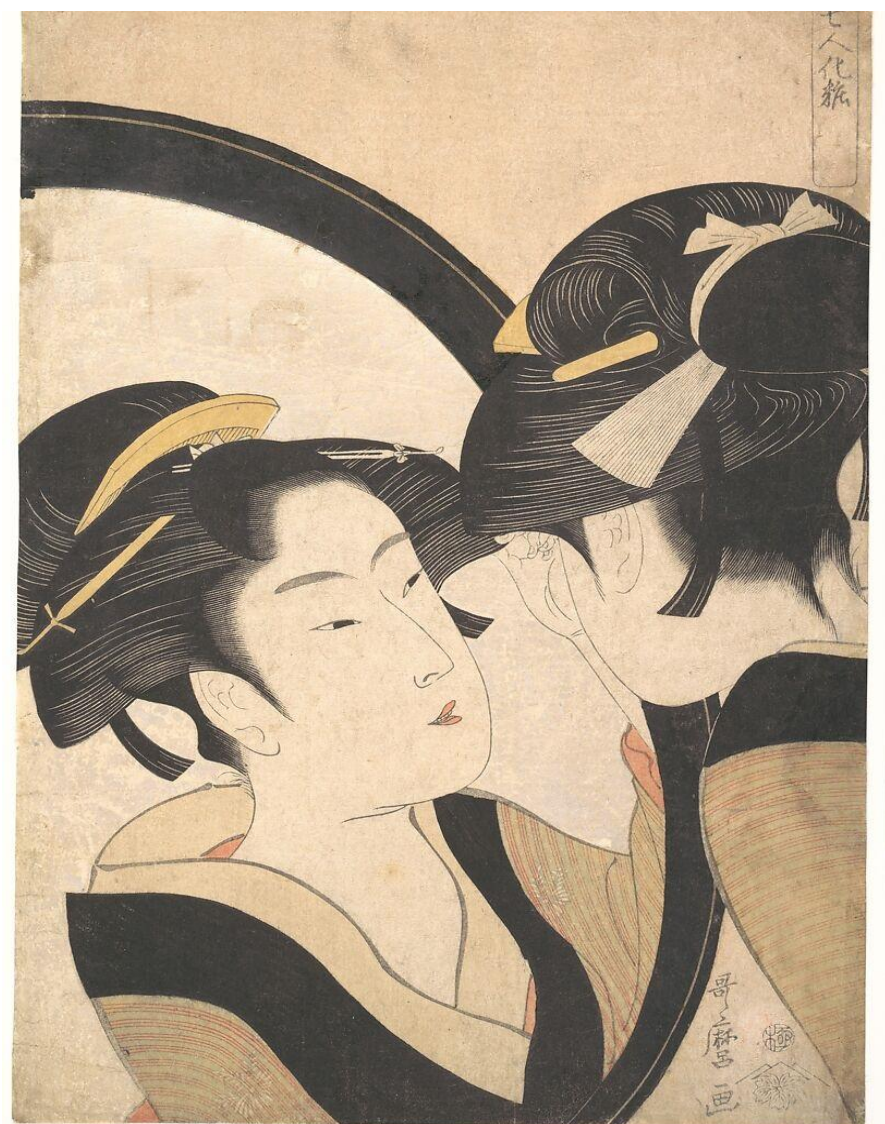
Despite the discomfort and environmental uncertainty, many mothers deploy strategies to protect their health and that of their children, adapting to a context in which caregiving is carried out under highly demanding conditions. Their accounts reveal multiple practices, strongly influenced by each family's economic possibilities. Some resort to temporary mobility—such as getaways to second homes or visiting relatives outside the city during the hottest months—although this option is far from universal: 27.2% of those surveyed stated that they would like to be able to make these types of trips, but are unable to due to financial constraints.

Other strategies are linked to managing daily life in the urban context. Many participants adapt their routes to avoid noisy streets, heavy traffic, or poor shade, and try not to go out during the hottest hours. Some reorganize household chores, adjust family routines, or make small changes in consumption: they opt for more "natural" cleaning products, avoid cosmetics with chemicals, or try to reduce their ecological footprint at home. They also seek to instill environmental awareness in their children—and even, in some cases,

their partners—as a way to collectively prepare for an uncertain future.

While they recognize that these practices cannot always be sustained over time due to a lack of resources or support, many take an active role in the daily care of the environment where they grow up. They do so, however, with full awareness that the responsibility should not fall exclusively on families. The absence of public policies that address the environmental crisis from a care perspective repeatedly appears as a structural limitation in their testimonies.

Thus, economic resources are shown to be a fundamental condition for action. Although most of the participants display a high level of environmental awareness, not all are able to translate it into concrete



[Naniwa Okita Admiring Herself in a Mirror](#) [Woodblock print; ink and color on paper, mica ground]. Kitagawa Utamaro. *Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Nueva York. Licencia CC0. (Ca. 1790-95).



actions. Women with higher incomes tend to deploy more mitigation strategies against environmental risks, while those who define themselves as being in a "very poor" economic situation lack the means to make many of the decisions explored in the survey: avoiding the consumption of harmful products during pregnancy, moving to less polluted areas, improving sleep and exercise habits, reducing stress or sun exposure, or investing in insulation and weatherization of the family home. Evidence indicates that cultural resistance or indifference toward these care strategies is a minority: the main barrier to their adoption lies not in a lack of interest or awareness, but in a lack of material resources to implement the desired changes.

### Reproductive Citizenship and Shared Urban Futures: Some Final Reflections

The results of our study show that motherhood, in the current climate emergency, is perceived not only as an individual responsibility for the immediate well-being of children, but also for their future health and, ultimately, the collective destiny of humanity. In this context, motherhood is experienced as an experience deeply influenced by ethical and moral considerations, which sometimes produces dilemmas about the meaning of bringing life into an environmentally uncertain world. This burden of responsibility can give rise to feelings of guilt or anxiety about the future climate.



"Woman Holding Up a Parasol" from the series Ten Classes of Women's Physiognomy (Fujo ninsō juppen: Higasa o sasu onna) [Woodblock print; ink and color on paper]. Kitagawa Utamaro. *Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Nueva York. Licencia CC0. (ca 1792-93)

Furthermore, there is a tendency in media and health discourses to individualize responsibility for environmental risks, shifting the burden of protecting the future to women through control over their own bodies and avoiding all possible exposure to toxins. This logic is reinforced by certain biomedical approaches, particularly those focused on epigenetics, which highlight how environmental conditions—including cultural practices such as diet—can influence the health of future generations and are, in turn, determined by the experiences of previous generations. However, this





“Hour of the Rat: Mistress,” from the series Women’s Daily Customs (Fuzoku bijin tokei) [Woodblock print; ink and color on paper]. Kitagawa Utamaro. *Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Nueva York. Licencia CC0. 1790.

idea that individuals—and especially women—must assume responsibility for decisions with intergenerational impact, relegating the structural and systemic causes of environmental deterioration to the background.

The study participants clearly express that individual action is not enough. They demand that healthcare professionals and institutions provide them with access to clear, understandable, and useful information on environmental health, as the information they currently receive is often scarce, contradictory, or impractical. This lack of formal guidance

increases the mental burden and caregiving work they assume, forcing them to search for information on their own and make decisions in a context of great uncertainty.

Can Barcelona, in its current conditions, be a city for all motherhoods and children? The demand for greater environmental justice and strong institutional support opens a profound reflection on what makes a city livable and directly challenges the possibility of building shared urban futures.

Our research thus reveals the urgent need to develop environmental health and risk prevention policies and strategies that do not rely exclusively on individual behavioral changes and that recognize social, economic, and territorial inequalities. Caring for maternal and child health in a context of environmental crisis cannot be a task delegated to mothers in isolation, but rather a collective commitment aimed at ensuring healthy, sustainable, and equitable urban environments for all citizens.



## About the authors



### Ana Cerezuela González

Master's Degree in Anthropological Research and its Applications from the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (2024). Graduated in Social and Cultural Anthropology from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid (2020). PhD candidate in Social and Cultural Anthropology in the AFIN Group at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, where she is developing a thesis on the sociocultural experiences of reproductive risk. Researcher at WP 12 of the RICORS-SAMID Network of research groups and maternal and child health services in Spain and in the project *Viure l'embaràs a Barcelona: dones i persones gestants davant l'emergència climàtica* (Ajuntament de Barcelona).



### Helena Montasell i Punsola

Graduated in Sociocultural Gender Studies from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (2023). Currently, she is pursuing a Master's degree in Medical Anthropology and Global Health at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili. She is a qualified Social Integrator with experience in the fields of migration, refuge, and at-risk children and adolescents from a gender perspective. She is a researcher on the project *Viure l'embaràs a Barcelona: dones i persones gestants davant l'emergència climàtica* (Ajuntament de Barcelona).





## Carolina Remorini

She holds a degree in Anthropology and a PhD in Natural Sciences from the Universidad Nacional de La Plata (UNLP), Argentina. She is a postdoctoral researcher at the AFIN Barcelona Group at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB). Her career has focused on the study of child development, perinatal health, and parenting from an ethnographic perspective, in diverse cultural contexts. She coordinates the project *Viure l'embaràs a Barcelona: dones i persones gestants davant l'emergència climàtica* (Ajuntament de Barcelona) and is a researcher at WP 12 of the RICORS-SAMID Network of research groups and maternal and child health services in Spain.



## About the author of the images



### Kitagawa Utamaro

He is one of the most highly regarded designers of ukiyo-e woodblock prints and paintings, and is best known for his *bijin ōkubi-e* "large-headed pictures of beautiful women" of the 1790s. He also produced nature studies, particularly illustrated books of insects. Little is known of Utamaro's life. His work began to appear in the 1770s, and he rose to prominence in the early 1790s with his portraits of beauties with exaggerated, elongated features. He produced over 2000 known prints and was one of the few *ukiyo-e* artists to achieve fame throughout Japan in his lifetime.

In 1804 he was arrested and manacled for fifty days for making illegal prints depicting the 16th-century military ruler Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and died two years later. Utamaro's work reached Europe in the mid-nineteenth century, where it was very popular, enjoying particular acclaim in France. He influenced the European Impressionists, particularly with his use of partial views and his emphasis on light and shade, which they imitated. The reference to the "Japanese influence" among these artists often refers to the work of Utamaro.

(Wikipedia)



# To read

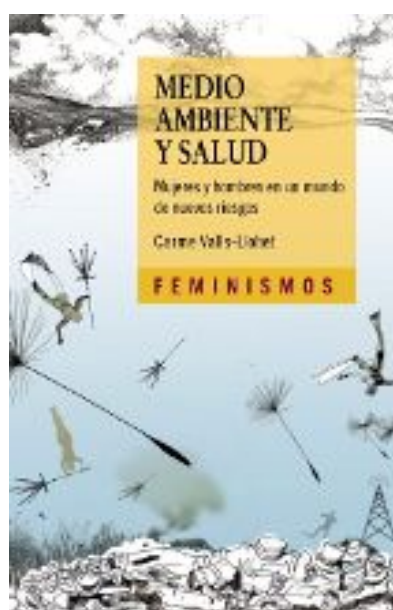


## Silvestre, Elisabet & Codina, Elena (2024)

*Los primeros mil días. Hábitos para un embarazo, una infancia y una vida saludables*

### Integral

This book offers a comprehensive, evidence-based guide to support the crucial period from conception to a baby's second birthday. Throughout its pages, the authors propose simple and sustainable habits that can make a significant difference in children's present and future health: from a balanced diet to strengthening emotional bonds, reducing toxins in the environment, conscious use of screens, and connecting with nature. With an integrative approach, this book invites us to reflect on the power of small, everyday decisions and build a healthier lifestyle for the entire family.



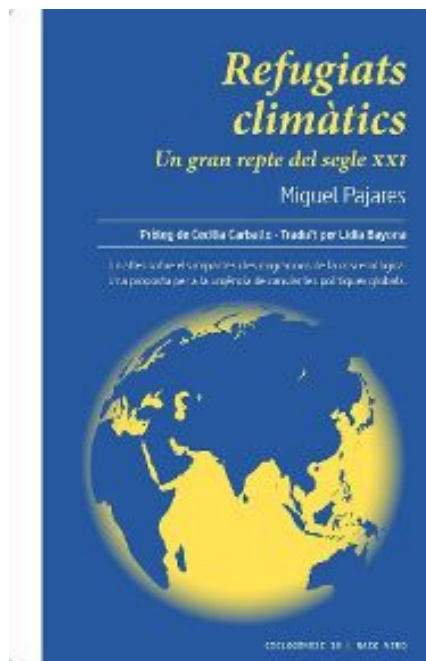
## Valls-Llobet, Carme (2018)

*Medio ambiente y salud. Mujeres y hombres en un mundo de nuevos riesgos*

### Ediciones Cátedra

Currently, numerous diseases and other health disorders affecting women have an environmental cause. While men are also affected, growing scientific evidence shows that women's bodies are even more vulnerable to pollution in the home and workplace. Pollution can reach us through many pathways, primarily air, water, food, cosmetics, electromagnetic fields, etc. In line with the feminist concern for health initiated by the Boston Women's Collective in the last third of the 20th century, renowned endocrinologist Carme Valls-Llobet provides valuable scientific information and concludes each chapter with a series of preventive tips ranging from individual measures we can adopt in our daily lives to public policies that should be implemented.



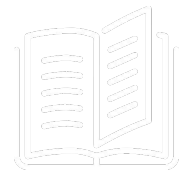


## Pajares, Miguel (2020)

### *Refugiats climàtics. Un gran repte pel segle XXI*

#### Raig Verd

Climate change must be a cross-cutting priority in the design and management of public policies, not only because of its devastating effects on the planet, but also because of its serious human consequences. This book provides an in-depth analysis of climate-related displacement and migration that is already occurring, as well as those that could occur in the coming decades due to desertification, crop failure, drinking water shortages, and rising sea levels. A region-by-region analysis—with special attention to areas in Africa, Asia, and Latin America—offers a rigorous view of the global dimension of the phenomenon. It also raises the debate on the status of people fleeing climate-related displacement and proposes strategies to mitigate climate change and manage its migratory impacts.



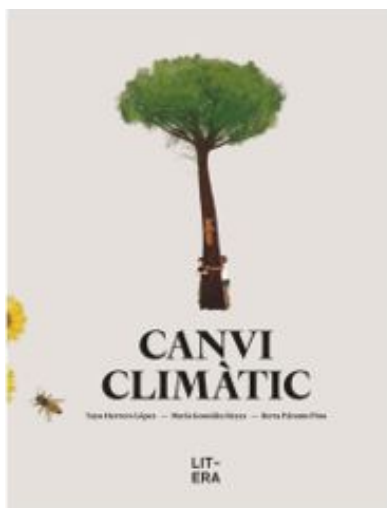
## Loach, Mikaela (2025)

### *No és tan radical*

#### Jande

In this lucid and committed essay, Mikaela Loach debunks the sugarcoated image of climate action promoted by the media and raises the urgency of addressing climate change from an anti-racist, intersectional, and transformative perspective. In the face of a capitalist system that perpetuates inequality and generates eco-anxiety, the author argues that climate justice is not a radical position, but a collective necessity. Through a critical lens, she analyzes issues such as environmental racism, colonialism, economic inequality, and climate migration. With a hopeful tone, the book proposes real paths toward equality and systemic change.





## Herrero, Yayo, González, María & Páramo, Berta (2019)

### *Canvi Climàtic*

#### Litera Libros

This book offers a clear and accessible explanation of the origins, causes, and consequences of climate change. Using accessible language, it reviews the history of human energy use from the Industrial Revolution to the present day, analyzing how the fossil fuel-based economic model has triggered a global ecological crisis. *Canvi climàtic* invites reflection on the environmental impact on forests, water, animals, and people, and proposes concrete actions to address this emergency from an educational, critical, and transformative perspective.



## Cerezuela González, Ana (2024)

### *No deja herederas (in La viuda)*

#### Valparaíso Ediciones

[This poem](#), included in Ana Cerezuela's *La viuda*, reflects on the impossible legacy in a world wounded by collapse. In a bitter and tender voice, it explores scenes of an imagined, intimate, climactic apocalypse intertwined with a renunciation of the future, which is also an act of silent love.



# To watch

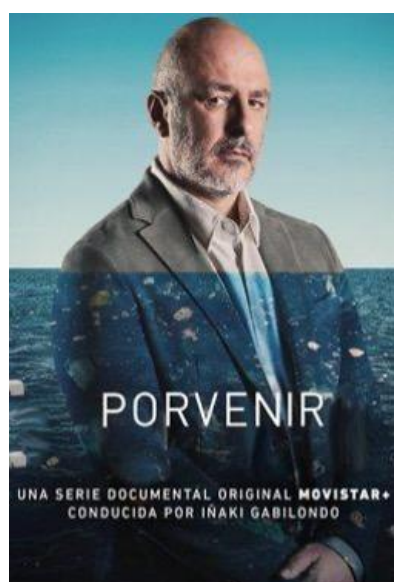


## Collazos Solà Meri (2024)

*Respira, mama* [Documentary]

**Spain, 77 min**

In 2013, Meri became the mother of Nina, a girl with the Alpha1 genetic deficiency, an anomaly that leaves her unprotected against lung diseases and puts her at risk from the invisible threat of polluted air in cities like her own, Barcelona. In her search for answers, Meri meets experts and other families who, like her, are fighting for their children's right to clean air. Her surprising discoveries coexist with the brutal contradictions of everyday life, which, sooner or later, must change for the good of all. The effects of Dieselgate, the discovery of CRISPR gene editing, and the COVID-19 pandemic mark the chronology of the story. Is there hope for a better future for our children?



## Cortés-Cavanillas, Alfonso (2020)

*Porvenir* [TV miniseries]

**Spain**

A three-part documentary series that addresses climate change in Spain for the first time. Hosted by Iñaki Gabilondo, the series spans two universes: a purely documentary one, in which conversations with Spanish scientists and naturalists analyze the ravages that humankind is wreaking on the Spanish landscape (Doñana, the Pyrenees, El Hierro), and a fictional one. The series tells the story of a family embarking on a sentimental, geographical, and temporal journey in which the changes and consequences could be irreparable. As Iñaki Gabilondo says, "It's not what's happening, it's what's happening to us."





## Molas, Anna (2024)

### *Situando el “medio ambiente”: Embarazadas y lactantes frente a la emergencia climática y la contaminación en Barcelona*



#### AFIN Seminars

A growing number of studies point to the irreversible consequences of exposure to adverse environments and pollution during the perinatal period. The incidence of premature births, miscarriages, and stillbirths, for example, has been shown to have a direct correlation with extreme temperatures and environmental pollution. Similarly, it is believed that women's exposure to adverse environments can impact the health of future generations through epigenetic mechanisms. This emerging focus in the health field is combined with the growing media, social, and political attention paid to the future that climate change holds if it cannot be reversed. This presentation focuses on the experiences of pregnant and breastfeeding women in Barcelona in relation to the environment and discourses on climate change. Through their voices, it will be shown how the "environment" in the context of Barcelona becomes a broad concept that encompasses gender, socioeconomic, urban, and tourism factors that intersect and are not easily separated. The results of this exploration reveal the importance of geographically and culturally situating environmental anxieties for the design of specific policies.

[Watch video](#)



# To listen



## Codina, Elena

*El divan: “Abans de canviar el món, fes tres voltes per casa teva”*

**Catalunya Ràdio (02/03/2025)**

In [this interview](#), Dr. Elena Codina, a pediatric nephrologist and environmental health activist, discusses the shift her career took after the pandemic and her involvement in a citizen platform that has already reached the Congreso de los Diputados of Spain. With a practical and relatable approach, she offers advice for reducing daily exposure to toxins: consuming organic and seasonal products, avoiding bottled water, and ventilating the home several times a day. A conversation that proposes starting the change at home to move toward a healthier future.



## Valdez, Natali & Molas, Anna

*Estilo de vida, medio ambiente y embarazo: una perspectiva antropológica de la responsabilidad y el autocuidado*

**Conversaciones AFINes, 2024**

In [this episode](#), researcher Anna Molas speaks with Natali Valdez, an anthropologist at Fordham University and author of *Weighing the Future: Race, Science, and Pregnancy Trials in the Postgenomic Era*, about discourses surrounding lifestyle and pregnancy from a critical and situated perspective. Through the analysis of clinical trials and biomedical narratives, they reflect on how ideas of risk and responsibility are constructed around maternal and child health. In contrast to approaches focused on individual blame, they propose a perspective of collective responsibility that takes into account the social inequalities and environmental exposures that occur during pregnancy.





**Martínez, Rubén, Santiago Muiño, Emilio & Aznar, Laura**

*Qui paga la crisi climàtica?*

**The podcast of CRÍTIC, 2025**

[This episode](#) analyzes how the climate crisis is intertwined with social inequalities and why the ecological transition must be approached from a perspective of social justice. Featuring Rubén Martínez (IDRA) and Emilio Santiago Muiño (CSIC), it addresses key issues such as the unequal distribution of the impacts of climate change and the need to rethink urban, economic, and energy models. Hosted by journalist Laura Aznar, the episode offers a critical and in-depth look at who really bears the cost of the climate emergency.





# AFIN News

## Participate in our study on the professional management of early pregnancy loss

The AFIN Group invites perinatal health professionals in the fields of gynecology, obstetrics, nursing, and midwifery to participate in the questionnaire: Health professionals: management of early pregnancy loss.

This project, funded by the Fundació “la Caixa”, is led by Dr. Diana Marre (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona), Dr. María José Rodríguez Jaume (Universidad de Alicante), and Dr. Elisa Llurba (Institut de Recerca de l’Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau). It is also part of the maternal and child health networks RICORS-SAMID 2021 and 2024, funded by the Instituto de Salud Carlos III.

The aim of the study is to understand how health professionals manage pregnancy losses occurring before 22 weeks of gestation, as well as to identify needs, challenges, and good practices in the care of women and families going through these experiences.

We invite perinatal health professionals to collaborate in the study by completing a completely anonymous questionnaire, available [in this link](#).

For any inquiries, please contact Dr. María José Rodríguez ([mj.rodriguez@ua.es](mailto:mj.rodriguez@ua.es)).



## Registration open for the “Hijas de la emergencia climática” conference organized by AFIN

AFIN Group Barcelona has opened free registration for the public conference “Hijas de la emergencia climática: reconstruir futuros, repensar la maternidad, habitar Barcelona”, which will be held on November 20, 2025, at the Urban Innovation Centre Ca l’Alier in Barcelona.





The event, scheduled from 10:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., is the closing conference of the research project *Viure l'embaràs a Barcelona: dones i persones gestants davant l'emergència climàtica* developed by AFIN with the support of the Ajuntament de Barcelona and in collaboration with the Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau, the Hospital Sant Joan de Déu, and the Hospital del Mar.

The conference will be open to anyone interested and will combine round tables, lectures, research presentations, and participatory activities focused on how women and gestating people experience the climate emergency and pollution in their daily lives in the city of Barcelona.

The program includes two round tables with specialists from various disciplines, a keynote lecture by endocrinologist Carme Valls-Llobet, the presentation of the research project results by the AFIN team, and an interactive activity.

Registration is completely free. Both the full program and the [registration form](#) are available on the AFIN Group website.

### AFIN at the Medical Anthropology Europe Conference 2025, Vienna

From September 16 to 19, 2025, the international Medical Anthropology Europe Conference took place at the University of Vienna, bringing together researchers from around the world. Over four days, the event provided spaces for debate and collective reflection on the contemporary redefinitions of health and well-being, with the aim of critically considering the possibilities and impossibilities of health today, as well as the role of medical anthropology in a global context. Research from the AFIN Group was present in several panels, with contributions addressing issues related to reproductive health, the temporalities of motherhood, and the impact of new technologies in clinical settings.

In the panel “Intersecting frontiers: towards understanding intersections among climate change, culture, gender, and health in the Anthropocene”, organized by Sadiq Bhanbhro and Inayat Ali, Ana Cerezuela, PhD candidate in Social Anthropology with the AFIN Group, presented, in co-authorship

with Anna Molas and Helena Montasell, the paper “Making future in a changing climate: Maternal experiences of environmental risk and strategies for sustaining life in Barcelona”. This presentation shared results from the project *Viure l’embaràs a Barcelona: dones i persones gestants davant l’emergència climàtica*, exploring the perceptions and strategies of 35 pregnant or breastfeeding women in Barcelona regarding environmental risks linked to climate change and pollution and their impact on reproductive health in urban contexts.

The panel “Redefining Reproductive Temporalities: Bodies, Gender, Care, and Contestations in Health and Well-Being”, coordinated by Falia Varelaki, Alessandra Brigo, and Manon M. S. Vialle, brought together research on the temporalities of reproductive life. In this context, Diana Marre, Professor and PhD in Social Anthropology and director of the AFIN Group, presented, together with Hugo Gaggiotti, the paper “Advanced Maternal Age: Reproductive Temporalities in Spain and UK”. Their presentation explored the tensions faced by women who postpone motherhood in Spain and the United Kingdom, analyzing the intersection between career trajectories, neoliberal welfare regimes, and biomedical norms that define advanced maternal age as a risk factor.



Finally, in the panel “The uterus: knowledges, practices, imaginaries”, organized by Leah Eades and Marie de Lutz, Paula Martone, PhD candidate in Social Anthropology with the AFIN Research Group, presented, in co-authorship with Anna Molas, the paper “Just like a real uterus? Insights from health professionals and parents on the promises of the Artificial Placenta”. Their presentation explored the perceptions of health professionals, parents, and project promoters regarding the artificial placenta, highlighting tensions between technological innovation and concerns about emotional bonding, reproductive autonomy, and equitable access.