



## Chia-Ling Wu

Professor, Department of Sociology, National Taiwan University

Chia-Ling Wu is Professor of Sociology at the National Taiwan University. Her recent publication includes women's risk negotiation of new reproductive technologies, the making of multiple embryo transfer regulation, and architectural design for the post-disaster reconstruction. Her current research projects examine the reproductive governance in Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea. She served as the editor-in-chief of *East Asian Science, Technology and Society* in 2013-2015, and is currently the editor-in-chief for *Women's and Gender Studies* (in Chinese).

### *Evidence-Based Activism and Reproductive Governance for Feminist Health Movement*

Recent trends in feminist health movement have emphasized using scientific evidence to challenge the dominant medical practices and ask for new health care models. In the presentation, I use two cases of advocacy in the fields of childbirth and assisted conception in Taiwan to examine the new relationship between feminist activism and science in reproductive governance.

The first case is how Birth Reform Alliance in Taiwan (BRAT) challenges the authoritative obstetrics by requesting the government and the medical society to provide the guideline on childbirth. BRAT re-organized the data produced by the leaders in obstetrics in Taiwan and then held a press conference in 2015 to show that the mainstream obstetric practices have not followed the international standards. The action shows that the demand for evidence-based medicine may come from the bottom up and work as activists' important strategy. However, even though BRAT offered solid evidence, the government and the medical society did not aim to establish a local guideline. I argue that without strengthening the participation of activist groups in policy-making processes, the new knowledge production is hardly being translated into substantial change of clinical practices.

The second case is the making of alternative statistics for the registry of assisted reproductive technologies (ARTs). The international medical community has been debating on indicators of ART efficacy and safety and proposing alternative health statistics. Some have considered the misleading nature of the pregnancy rate, which tends to overestimate the efficacy of ART. Furthermore, it has been argued that multiple pregnancy/birth should be presented as failure rather than success, since it carries serious health risks for both women and infants. Feminist STS scholars in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan all have taken the opportunity of serving in the governmental advisory committees to request for alternative statistics to improve the health surveillance of ART. Their efforts show that the incorporation of global standardization and alliance with reflexive medical experts play an important role for the new knowledge mobilization.

Overall, I demonstrate the evidence-based activism as an important mode of feminist health movement today. The evolving trend may need further collaboration between activists and experts in order to achieve both epistemic and political transformation in health issues.