The Medical Anthropology Forum presents

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Childbirth
and the rise of expertise on women’s health
in medieval Japan

The organization of childbirth in elite households of medieval Japan (1185–1336) required serious planning and decisive orchestration. Although the initial preparations for an imperial consort’s labour could take several months, what were to unfold inside the secluded birth chamber could easily escalate into both medical and ritual emergencies and necessitate a swift response from the consort’s female and male relatives, ritual specialists, physicians, and midwives. Based on recently discovered medieval Buddhist manuscripts, visual sources, diaries, and court protocols, this talk will focus on the rise of expert knowledge on women’s health in medieval Japan and the actions of various experts taking place inside and outside the birth chamber during the tense moments of royal consort’s labour.

All are cordially invited

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CATS, Room 110.02.05