

Humanitarian Femtech: Reproductive Governance and the Politics of Naming

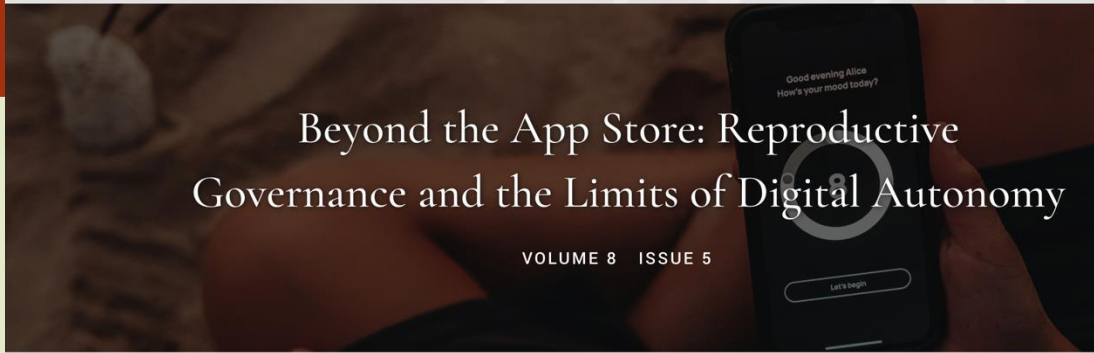
Marika Jeziorek, Wilfrid Laurier & Balsillie School of International Affairs

Natasha Tusikov, York University & Balsillie School of International Affairs

Digital Regulation in the Public Interest, Brock University – 13 March 2026



BALSILLIE PAPERS



Beyond the App Store: Reproductive Governance and the Limits of Digital Autonomy

VOLUME 8 ISSUE 5

Marika Jeziorek and Natasha Tusikov
February 3, 2026

<https://balsilliepapers.ca/bsia-paper/beyond-the-app-store-reproductive-governance-and-the-limits-of-digital-autonomy/>

Global Health Systems Aren't Ready for the Rise of Humanitarian "Femtech"

Humanitarian femtech is reshaping global reproductive health, but weak governance and privacy risks expose gaps in global health and feminist policy frameworks.

Marika Jeziorek, Natasha Tusikov

November 11, 2025

<https://www.cigionline.org/articles/global-health-systems-arent-ready-for-the-rise-of-humanitarian-femtech/>



BALSILLIE CASE STUDIES

Too Fast, Too Fragile? The Governance Dilemmas of Digital Contraception in Canada

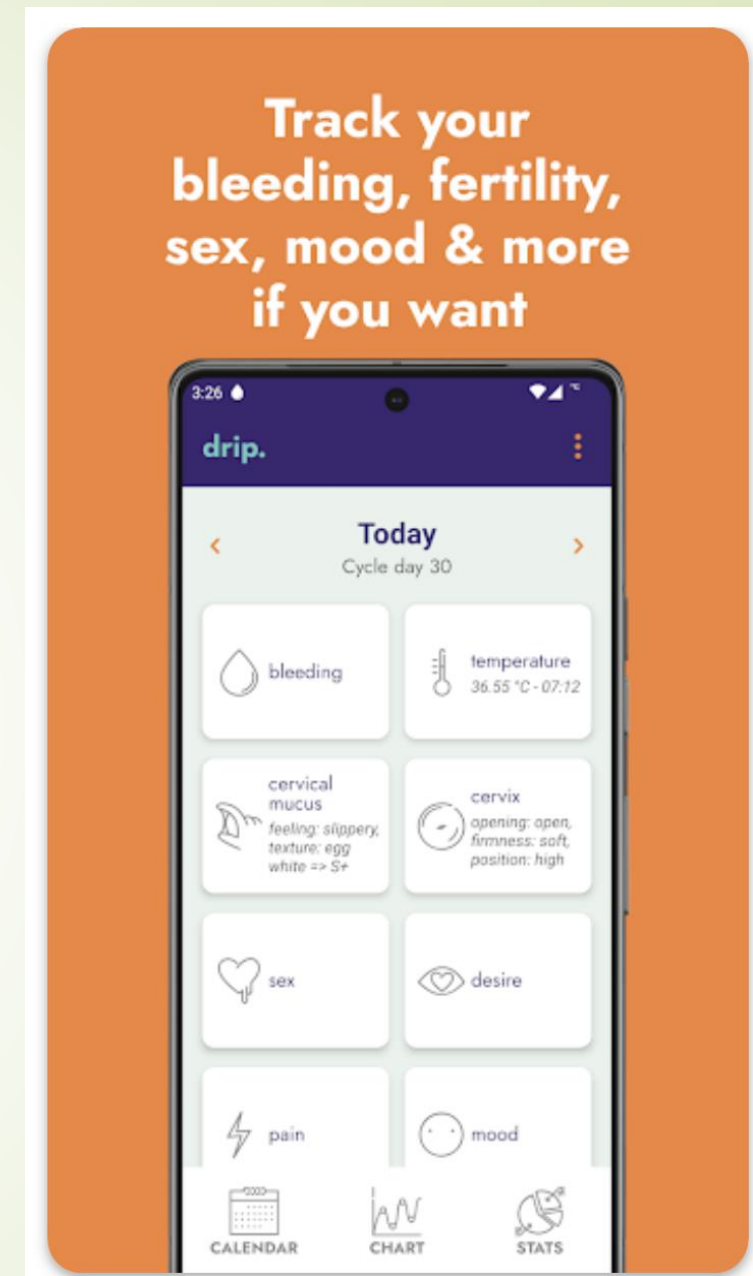
OCTOBER 27, 2025

<https://balsilliecases.ca/case-study/too-fast-too-fragile-the-governance-dilemmas-of-digital-contraception-in-canada/>

- SSHRC IDG "Governance Challenges of Digital Contraceptive Apps"
- Survey with Nanos of period-tracking apps
- 2 policy papers, oped, & article under review

‘Humanitarian femtech’

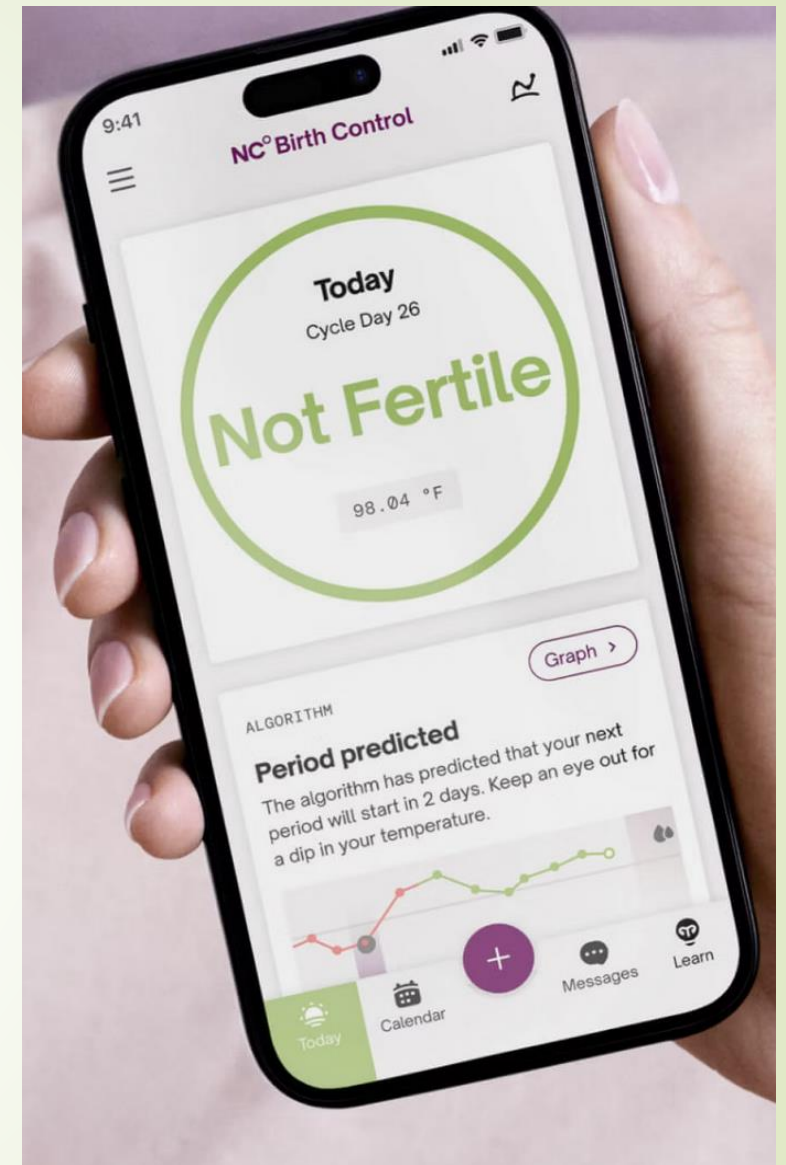
- Claimed moral authority
- Comparative case study of apps
- Health tech developed in non-profit, activist, or aid-sector contexts
- Framed as public goods
- Vulnerable populations
- Multiple vulnerabilities



Drip app

Argument

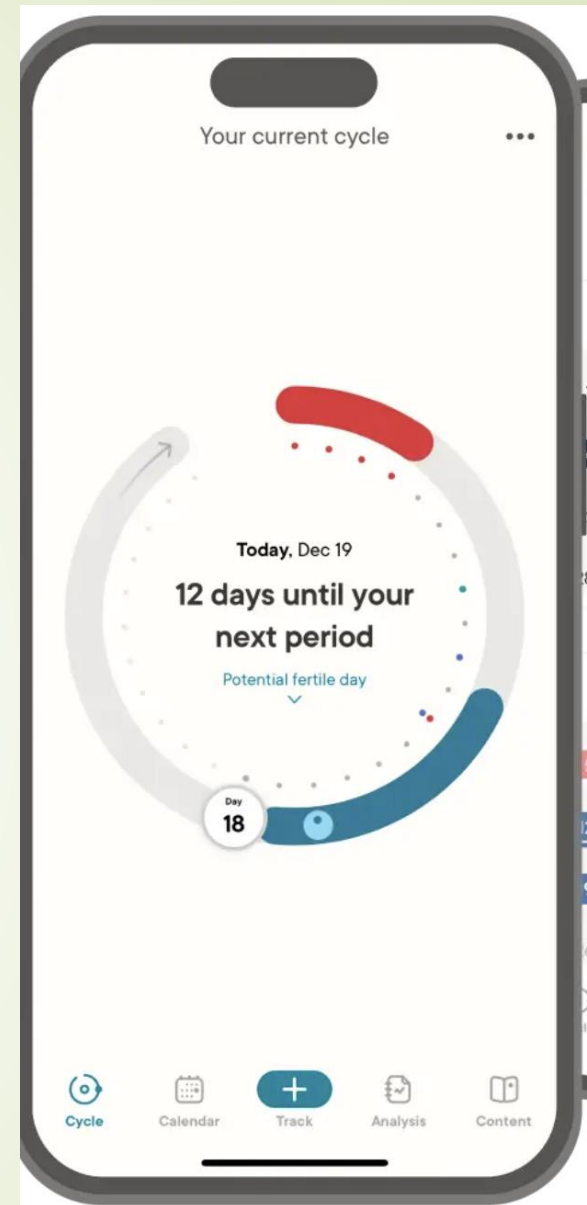
- Digital humanitarianism + femtech lit
- Humanitarian logics
- Fragile infrastructure
- Intimate data + reproductive decision-making
- Critical test case
- Naming matters



Natural Cycles app

Femtech

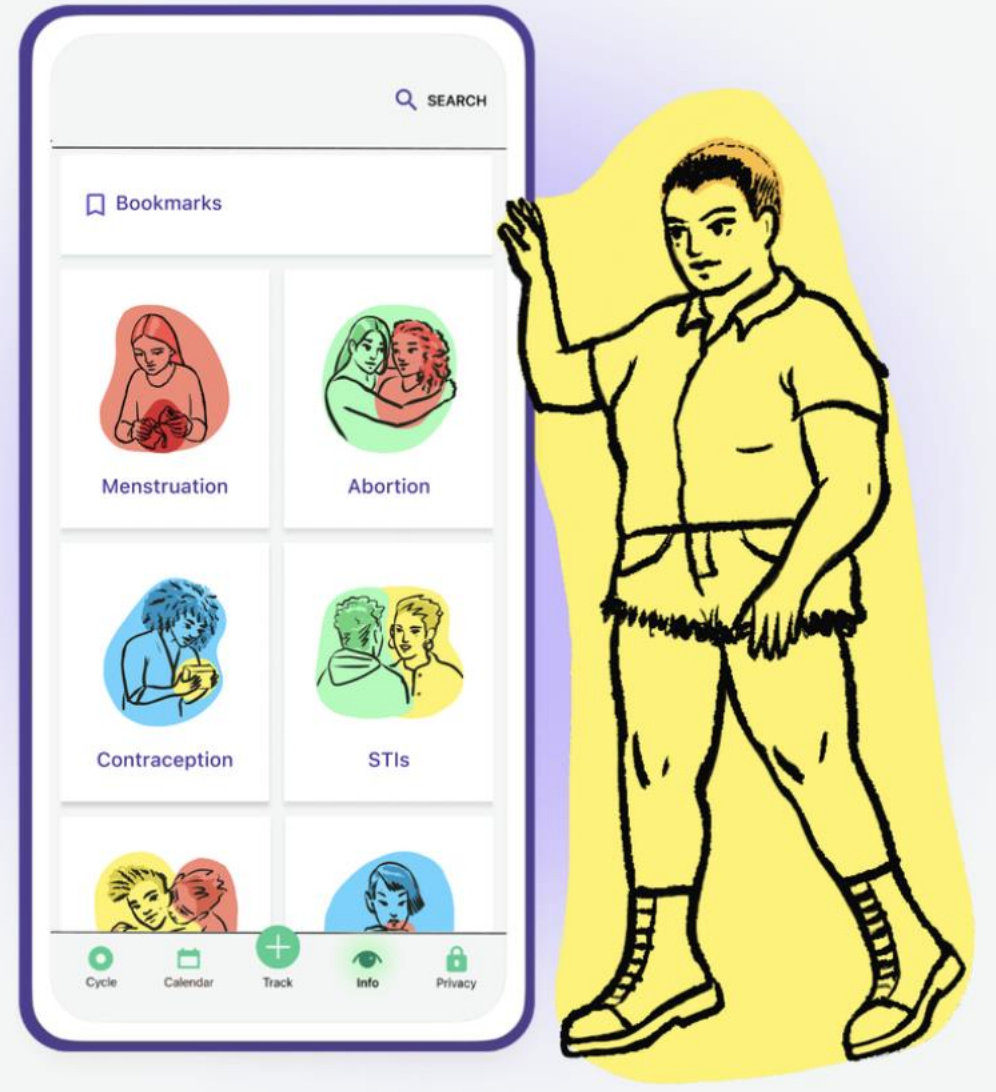
- Digital healthcare tools (female + tech)
- Tracking menstrual cycles & related conditions
- Track fertility & manage pregnancy
- 4 non-commercial trackers: Oky, Euki, Drip, Her Pride



Clue app

Critique

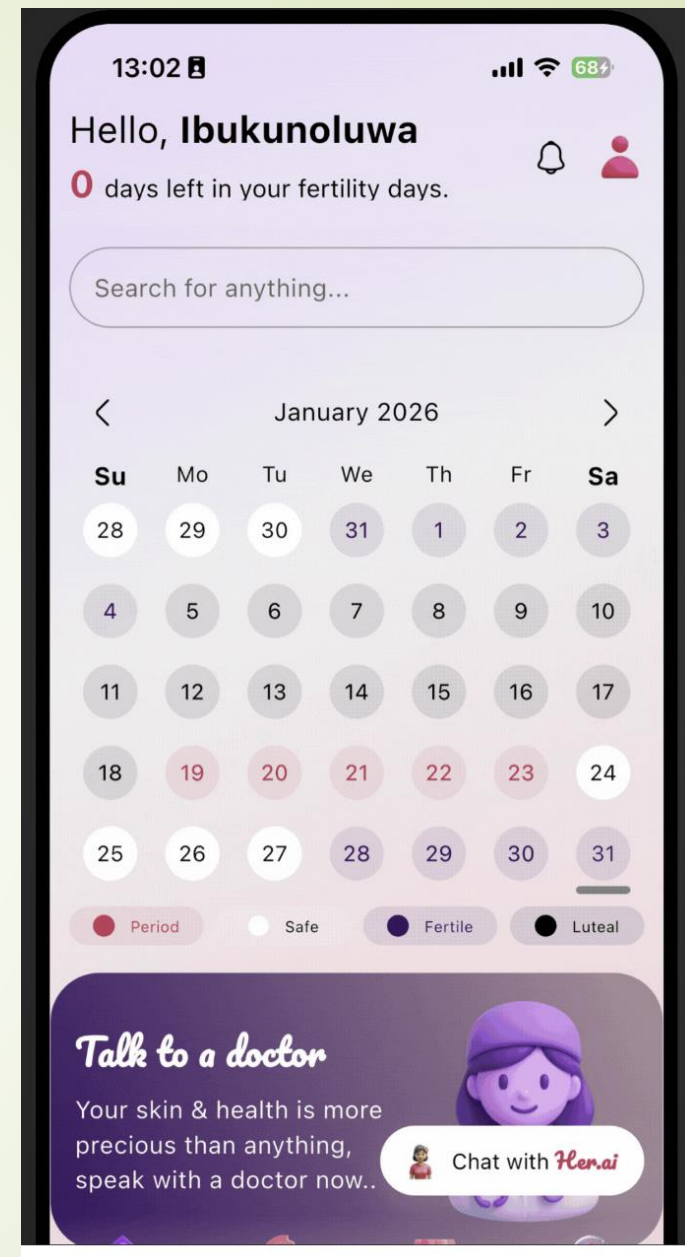
- Commodification & leaking of sensitive health data
- Valuable to multiple actors
- Class-action lawsuits (privacy)
- Cis-normative, gendered assumptions
- Criminalization of abortion



Euki app

Digital humanitarianism

- Literatures not commonly examined together
- Increasingly via platforms
- Reproductive health underfunded & constrained
- Intersecting vulnerabilities



Her Pride app

Case studies

Period tracking app	Partners	Data governance
Oky	UNICEF developed & govt partners. Donor funding.	Data stored on UNICEF servers
Drip	Small grants (Mozilla), volunteer labour, user donations	Data local to device; no advertising or analytics
Euki	Developed by US NGO Women Help Women	Data local to device; no advertising or analytics
HerPride	Developed by Nigerian NGO Big Family 360 & SmartRR. Few independent studies.	Users' personal data is shared with Google. Data retained indefinitely.



Conclusion

- Analytical value
- Distinct & unsettled field
- Precarious donors & infrastructures
- Weak accountability
- Future research

*If interested in learning more, see our work on CIGI (“Global Health Systems aren’t Ready for the Rise of ‘Humanitarian Femtech’”) and in Balsillie papers (“Beyond the App Store: Reproductive Governance & the Limits of Digital Autonomy”)