PBS11 THE FAMILY

LIST OF LECTURES

Michaelmas Term

Day: Thursday
Time: 11am-1pm
Beginning on: October 6th, 2016

Venue: Committee Room, Old Cavendish Laboratory, Free School Lane

Lecture 1 (6th October): Dr Robbie Duschinsky/Professor Susan Golombok
Introduction to the psychology of the family

Lecture 2 (13th October): Dr Tabitha Freeman
Introduction to the sociology of the family

Lecture 3 (20th October): Dr Susanna Graham
Introduction to the social anthropology of the family

Lecture 4 (27th October): Dr Tabitha Freeman
The politics of motherhood and fatherhood

Lecture 5 (3rd November): Dr Jens Scherpe
The family and the legal system

Lecture 6 (10th November): Professor Susan Golombok
Lesbian and gay families

Lecture 7 (17th November): Professor Susan Golombok
Assisted Reproduction Families

Lecture 8 (24th November): Professor Susan Golombok
Single-parent and step-families
Lent Term

Day: Thursday
Time: 11am-1pm
Beginning on: January 19th, 2016

Venue: Seminar Room, Old Cavendish Laboratory, Free School Lane

Lecture 9 (19th January): Susan Imrie
Adolescents and the family

Lecture 10 (26th January): Dr Polly Casey
Marriage

Lecture 11 (2nd February): Dr Sophie Zadeh
Motherhood and the media

Lecture 12 (9th February): Dr Vasanti Jadva
Doing family research

Lecture 13 (16th February): Dr Lucy Blake
Family estrangement

Lecture 14 (23rd February): Dr Tina Gutbrod
Family therapy

Lecture 15 (2nd March): Dr Humera Iqbal
Parenting and child development from a cross-cultural perspective

Lecture 16 (9th March): Anastasia de Waal
Social policy and the family

Easter Term

Lecture 17 Professor Susan Golombok
Revision lecture, date tbc
PAPER CONTACTS

Course Organiser
Professor Susan Golombok seg42@cam.ac.uk

Lecturers

Dr Lucy Blake, lb377@cam.ac.uk
Dr Polly Casey, pcasey@tccr.org.uk
Anastasia de Waal, Anastasia.dewaal@civitas.org.uk
Dr Robbie Duschinsky, rd522@cam.ac.uk
Dr Tabitha Freeman, trf23@cam.ac.uk
Dr Susanna Graham, smg57@cam.ac.uk
Dr Tina Gutbrod tinagutbrod@yahoo.co.uk
Susan Imrie, si275@cam.ac.uk
Dr Humera Iqbal, H.Iqbal@ioe.ac.uk
Dr Vasanti Jadva, vj227@cam.ac.uk
Dr Jens Scherpe, jms233@cam.ac.uk
Dr Sophie Zadeh, sz255@cam.ac.uk

OUTLINE OF PAPER

Course content
In addition to psychology, this interdisciplinary paper draws on material from sociology, social anthropology, law and other relevant disciplines. Psychological and social perspectives on family relationships and child development are examined in relation to specific topics such as motherhood, fatherhood, adolescence, marriage, new family forms, cross-cultural perspectives, dysfunctional family relationships, and family policy. Theories of family life are studied as well as methodologies of family research.

Mode of teaching
The course will be taught by lectures and discussion. Directors of Studies are advised that students should receive 3 supervisions per term on specialist topics. Development of writing skills will also be taught through supervisions. The paper will be assessed through a 3 hour examination.

Introductory reading

Cambridge University Press.

Lecture 1. Introduction to the Psychology of the Family: Adult Attachment

Dr Robbie Duschinsky

When attachment is discussed, it is usual to think of young children where a specific behavioural system orients a child to achieve the availability of their caregiver when they are hurt, anxious or alarmed. Yet attachment remains relevant into adulthood, if in a more diffuse way, in how we manage difficult feelings in the context of our close relationships. This lecture will explore the Adult Attachment Interview and its surprising correlates, and think through the implications of adult attachment for clinical and social welfare work with families using case study material.

Supervision Essay Question

What can research on adult attachment tell us about how difficult feelings are managed or not managed within parent-child and couple relationships?

Reading

General background:


Suggested reading:


**Lecture 2. Introduction to the Sociology of the Family**

**Dr Tabitha Freeman**

This introductory lecture will present an overview of classical, modern and contemporary sociological approaches to the family and personal relationships, including feminist perspectives. The lecture will examine alternative accounts of the past, present and future of the nuclear family and introduce key concepts such as patriarchy, the public and private sphere, and the sex/gender distinction.

**Supervision Essay Question**

Why has the nuclear family been both criticised and idealised in recent years?
Lecture 3. Introduction to the Social Anthropology of the Family

Dr Susanna Graham

This lecture introduces students to the social anthropology of the family by problematising “the family” as a self-evident concept. Rather than families, anthropologists tend to talk about “kinship”, exploring the different ways and means by which persons consider themselves to be related. Through a historical look at the anthropological discipline, combined with a range of ethnographic examples, this lecture shows how terms which are often taken for granted in social analysis actually require considerable contextualisation. The lecture therefore prompts students to think about who counts as ‘family’, and why.
Supervision Essay Question

What does the term ‘kinship’ convey that ‘family’ does not?

Reading


- especially chapters by Charis Thompson and Signe Howell


Lecture 4. The Politics of Motherhood and Fatherhood

Dr Tabitha Freeman

This lecture will explore the gendered politics of parenting and provide a broad theoretical and cultural framework for understanding contemporary debates about men and women’s roles in family life. Key topics include: gender, patriarchy and the cultural construction of motherhood and fatherhood; feminist approaches to motherhood and childcare; ‘traditional’ and ‘new’ models of fatherhood; shared parenting.
Supervision Essay Question

Is it possible for men and women to parent as equals?

Reading


Lecture 5. The family and the legal system

Dr Jens M. Scherpe

The lecture will look at the role family law plays, or intends to play, with regard to the family. In particular, the lecture will discuss the increasing number challenges that the family law system because of societal and scientific developments - and possible answers.

Supervision Essay Question

What should the role of family law be - to regulate or to regularise family life?

Reading


*Eekelaar, Regulating Divorce (1997), especially pp. 142-145.


Lecture 6. Lesbian and gay families

Professor Susan Golombok

This lecture will examine the influence of parental sexual orientation on children’s social, emotional and gender development.

Supervision Essay Question

Are children with same-sex parents at risk for psychological problems?

Reading


Lecture 7. Assisted Reproduction Families

Professor Susan Golombok

This lecture will look at parenting and child development in families created through assisted reproduction (in vitro fertilisation [IVF], donor insemination, egg donation and surrogacy), with an emphasis on families where parents lack a genetic and/or gestational link with their children. It will also examine how disclosure can impact on children’s well-being. The network of relationships that develop as a result of gamete donation and surrogacy and the implications of this will also be discussed.

Supervision Essay Question

Should children born using gamete donation and/or surrogacy be told about their birth?

Reading


Slutsky, J., Jadva, V., Freeman, T., Persaud, S., Steele, M., Steele, H., Kramer, W., & Golombok, S. (2016). Integrating Donor Conception into Identity Development: Adolescents in fatherless families. Fertility and Sterility,

Lecture 8. Single-parent and stepfamilies

Professor Susan Golombok

This lecture will focus on types of single parent family, as well as stepfather and stepmother families, and the psychological consequences for parents and children.

Supervision Essay Question

Would you expect children born to single mothers by choice to be more at risk for psychological difficulties than children in single parent families resulting from divorce?

Reading


Biblarz, T. & Stacey, J. (2010) How does the gender of parents matter? *Journal of marriage and the Family, 72*, 3-22. [see also commentary on this paper by Strohschein pp. 23-28; Goldberg, pp. 29-34; Tasker, pp. 35-40; Biblarz & Stacey, 41-44]


Lecture 9: Adolescents and the family

Susan Imrie

This lecture will look at the developmental stage of adolescence in relation to the family. It will examine the influence of parenting and family relationships on adolescent psychological well-being, as well as considering the roles of the peer group and changes in brain development during adolescence. It will also examine the outcomes for adolescents of teenage pregnancy and parenthood.

Supervision Essay Questions

Evaluate the role of parents in influencing adolescents’ psychological well-being?

OR

Teenage parenthood continues to be portrayed as problematic and undesirable. To what extent could such portrayals be considered misleading?

Reading


**Lecture 10: Marriage**

**Dr Polly Casey**

This lecture looks at the psychology of marriage and couple relationships in general. The lecture will introduce students to the dynamic psychological processes within couple relationships, considering the couple relationship as a fundamental element within the wider family system, and thinking about what happens when couple relationships break down. This will be within the context of current and historical demographic trends, including the changing face of marriage and the rise in cohabitation and divorce.

**Supervision Essay Question**

Can we predict who will get divorced?

**Reading**


**Lecture 11. Motherhood and the Media**

**Dr Sophie Zadeh**

This lecture will explore media representations of parenthood. Drawing on examples from the UK and elsewhere, it will discuss depictions of ‘non-traditional’ parenthood
and related issues (assisted reproductive technologies, fertility decline) in the mass media, and will consider the relationship between media representations and lived experiences. The lecture will also look at the relationship between media representations and the public sphere, and consider some of the theoretical approaches to understanding this relationship.

(Please note: students writing supervision essays on this topic are not expected to have read all of the reading suggestions. Essays should, however, combine empirical examples with a degree of theoretical insight. Texts good for theory are listed at the end).

**Supervision Essay Question**

What are the contents and consequences of mass media messages about parenthood?

**Reading**


**Texts good for theory**


Lecture 12. Doing family research

Dr Vasanti Jadva

This lecture will evaluate different methodologies used to study families focusing on how family research is carried out and the advantages and disadvantages of different methods used. The ethical considerations that need to be taken into account when studying families will also be discussed. Examples from selected studies will help gain an insight into the practicalities of doing family research.

Supervision Essay Question

What ethical considerations need to be taken into account when researching family relationships?

Reading


Lecture 13. Family Estrangement

Dr Lucy Blake

The family is often assumed to be a source of support and security, in which love and affection between family members is unconditional. Relationships that are distant, dissatisfying, or have broken down do not fit into this normative model of the family. This lecture will focus on estrangement between family members, and in particular, parents and their adult children. The causes, processes and consequences of estrangement will be explored.

Supervision Essay Question

What are the causes and consequences of family estrangement?

Reading


Lecture 14. Family Therapy

Dr Tina Gutbrod

This lecture will introduce students to the core principles of family therapy, and will emphasise the importance of seeing individual behaviour in the context of relationships within the family and wider system. Clinical case examples and videoclips of family therapy sessions will highlight systemic tools and techniques used in clinical practice. We will explore the importance of intergenerational patterns, lifecycles and narratives in families, and participants will be invited to reflect on their own family scripts and beliefs.

Supervision Essay Question

How can correcting family scripts lead to further challenges in family relationships? Discuss using clinical examples and/or examples from your own life experiences.

Reading


Lecture 15. Family life from a cross-cultural perspective

Dr Humera Iqbal

This lecture looks at similarities and differences in parenting and early social development of children across cultures (and ethnicities). It will introduce students to the discipline of cross-cultural psychology and discuss key theories in this field. We also challenge existing Western knowledge around the nature of parenting and child development including Baumrind’s parenting style model and the development of self-awareness. Some of the methodological issues that need to be considered when studying families from different cultural and ethnic groups will also be covered.

Supervision Essay Question

What have we learnt about the universality of parenting and child development from the study of family life across cultures?

Reading


(* indicate key readings)

**Lecture 16. Social Policy and the Family**

**Anastasia de Waal**

This lecture presents the central concepts within family policy, moving from definitions of social policy to what specifically constitutes family policy. Family policy is then contextualised, exploring its interface with welfare policy, economics, politics and history.

The second half of the lecture goes on to look at key elements of family policy in the UK today, including demographic change and family structure, partnerships, parenting and work, and family income. Central to exploring influences on family life will be discussion around the dynamics between policy and social change, and the interdisciplinary tools used to understand these interactions.

**Supervision Essay Question**

What is the relationship between the changing family and family policy?

**Reading list**


**Easter Term**

**Lecture 17** Professor Susan Golombok
Revision lecture, date tbc