PBS 11 THE FAMILY

LIST OF LECTURES

Michaelmas Term

Day: Tuesday
Time: 2pm-4pm
Beginning on: October 13th, 2015

Mill Lane Lecture Theatre, Room 7.

Lecture 1 (13th October): Professor Susan Golombok
Introduction to the psychology of the family

Lecture 2 (20th October): Dr Tabitha Freeman
Introduction to the sociology of the family

Lecture 3 (27th October): Dr Charlotte Faircloth
Introduction to the social anthropology of the family

Lecture 4 (3rd November): Dr Jesse Olszynko-Gryn
History of the family

Lecture 5 (10th November): Dr Tabitha Freeman
The politics of motherhood and fatherhood

Lecture 6 (17th November): Professor Susan Golombok
Lesbian and gay families

Lecture 7 (24th November): Professor Susan Golombok
Assisted Reproduction Families

Lecture 8 (1st December): Professor Susan Golombok
Single-parent and step-families
**Lent Term**

*Day: Tuesday  
Time: 2pm-4pm  
Beginning on: January 19, 2016*

**Mill lane Lecture Theatre, Room 5.**

**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  
Social representations and the family

**Lecture 12 (9th February):** Dr Aisha Gill  
Violence in ethnic minority families

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

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

**Lecture 15 (1st March):** Dr Humera Iqbal  
Parenting and child development from a cross-cultural perspective

**Lecture 16 (8th March):** Dr John Appleby  
Ethics and the family

**Easter Term**

**Centre for Family Research, Seminar Room 606.**

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

Course Organiser
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Lecturers
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OUTLINE OF PAPER

Course content
In addition to psychology, this interdisciplinary paper draws on material from sociology, social anthropology, social history 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, divorce, ethnicity and cross-cultural perspectives, dysfunctional family relationships, and new family forms. 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


Lecture 1. Introduction to the Psychology of the Family

Professor Susan Golombok

This lecture will look at the psychological processes at work within the family with particular attention to family influences on child development including the formation of attachment relationships and parenting styles.

Supervision Essay Question

Do psychologists place too much emphasis on the importance of children's attachment relationships with their parents?

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?

Reading


Lecture 3: Introduction to the Social Anthropology of the Family

Dr Charlotte Faircloth

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 ‘kinship’ describe that ‘the family’ does not?

Reading


Many useful key texts, but especially: Introduction; Articles by Barnes, Evans-Pritchard, Levi-Strauss, Leach, Schneider, Yanagisako and Collier, Carsten, Ragone, Bloch and Sperber.


Especially: Introduction; Articles by Astuti, Bodenhorn, Edwards and Strathern


**Lecture 4. History of the Family**

**Dr Jesse Olszynko-Gryn**

Today, the family is so much taken for granted as the basic reproductive unit of society that it is easy to forget it has a history. Taking modern Britain as the case study, this lecture will ask how the everyday practices and ideals of family life have changed over time. It will focus on how changing sexualities, gender relations, and media representations have transformed traditional notions of motherhood, fatherhood and the nuclear family as both a lived experience and a cultural norm.

**Supervision Essay Question**

What can historians tell us about the family? Discuss in relation to sex, contraception, reproduction and/or parenting.

**Reading**


### Lecture 5. 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; second wave and contemporary feminist
approaches to motherhood and childcare; ‘traditional’ and ‘new’ models of fatherhood; equality and difference in parenting and ‘shared parenting’.

**Supervision Essay Question**

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

**Reading**


**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


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. Social representations and the Family.**

**Dr Sophie Zadeh**

This lecture will address the family from a social psychological perspective. It will consider what social psychological theory in general, and social representations theory in particular, might contribute to the study of ‘non-traditional’ families. The lecture will explore public perceptions and media representations of assisted reproductive technologies (ARTs), reflecting upon how, and to what extent, the social world may
shape the experiences of individuals in families formed through ARTs. Finally, it will consider how best to investigate these issues in terms of methodology.

**Supervision Essay Question**

What, if anything, can the theory of social representations add to the interdisciplinary study of the family?

OR

How, and to what extent, are the experiences of individuals in non-traditional families shaped by the wider social world?

**Reading**


Lecture 12 (9th February): Violence in black and minority ethnic families

Dr Aisha K. Gill

This lecture will invite students to think about how should we evaluate what constitutes ‘violence’ against women as distinguished from norms accepted in the culture in which they occur? What if anything we should do to affect change in cultures not our own? Cultural relativism involves the problem of evaluating acts that constitute violence in one culture that may be accepted and practiced in another cultural and not regarded as
violence. Commitment to the idea of cultural relativism is usually seen as precluding the acceptance of the idea of universal human rights. But is ‘relativism’ vs ‘universalism’ a false dichotomy? Can we construct a ‘differentiated universalism’ or a ‘non-ethnocentric universalism’ when addressing harmful practices such as ‘honour’ crimes, forced marriage and female genital mutilation within ethnically diverse groups and families?

**Supervision Essay Question**

Cross-cultural perspectives on violence can help us to gain a better understanding of the role of violence in our own culture, as well as in that of other cultures. How far do you agree with this view in understanding the causes and consequences of ‘honour’ killings?

**Essential Reading**


**Required Reading**


**Recommended Reading**

[https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=62VLTiwTGgOC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=62VLTiwTGgOC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false)


https://muse.jhu.edu/login?auth=0&type=summary&url=/journals/human_rights_quarterly/v022/22.2tilley.html

http://www.amazon.co.uk/Warrior-Marks-Genital-Mutilation-Blinding/dp/0788155814
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 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? Discuss using 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 socio-emotional and psychological development of children across different cultures (and ethnicities). It will introduce students to the discipline of cross-cultural psychology and discuss some important theories in this field. 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


Lecture 16. Ethics and the family

Dr John Appleby

This lecture investigates a variety of ethical perspectives and debates about family making and family life. The session begins with a look at the morality of limiting procreative liberty, which leads to a discussion about ethics of who should be a parent. We will then discuss different ways we can think about the ethical interests of parents and children. Over the course of the lecture we will cover questions such as: what do parents owe children; what ethical benefits do parents get from rearing children; and, in the end, what makes a morally “good” parent?

Supervision Essay Question

What moral duties, if any, do parents have to their children?

OR

What limits, if any, can ethically be placed on procreation and parenthood?
Reading


Supplementary reading: