

1983-84 Child Care & Development Group (formerly Medical Psychology Unit)

(Department of Paediatrics and Social & Political Sciences Committee)

Tel. (0223) 358381
Network 7-11-326

Free School Lane,
Cambridge CB2 3RF.

The work of the Group is mainly concerned with research on child development, with particular emphasis on the growth and influence of parent-child relationships and the effect of medical practice on children and parents. In several projects we work closely with the paediatricians at Addenbrooke's Hospital. Members of the Group teach for various departments in the University, including Social and Political Sciences, Experimental Psychology, the Medical Sciences Tripos and the Department of Paediatrics.

The library of the Institute of Child Psychology is now housed in our premises. This came to us together with the Margaret Lowenfeld Fellowship, held by Dr. Catherine Urwin, through the Lowenfeld Trustees. We also have been given some archival material relating to Dr. Lowenfeld and the Institute of Child Psychology. Anybody wishing to consult this should contact Dr Urwin. Sally Roberts is our Honorary Librarian. The library also houses books given by Professor Harry Highkin following the death of his wife Elspeth, who was a research student in the Group at the time of her death.

Barbara Antonis has been working on the development of the children in the longitudinal study and completing a project (begun by J.F. Saucier) on first pregnancies and the early months of parenthood. She also works part-time in a psychiatric day clinic for adults.

Frances Barnes is engaged on a study of the children in the longitudinal study at 2 1/2 - 3 years - focusing on patterns of communication in the family, in as far as it is informative about underlying relationships. Work continues on the relationships between pregnancy factors, the children's status at birth and their later development, including handedness.

Ben Bradley (lecturer in psychology at Coventry Polytechnic) is analysing the image of childhood implicit in psychological research on development and in adults' comments to and about children.

Jill Brown - Secretary for the Group.

Sheila Gatiss is working on the psychological and social aspects of newborn screening with particular reference to screening for cystic fibrosis and other aspects of perinatal medicine.

Les Goldmann (second year research student, a psychotherapist from Oregon) is researching the psychological aspects of anaesthesia and surgery. He is particularly interested in the questions of awareness under anaesthesia and the preoperative psychological preparation of patients.

Carlos J. Leighton (fourth year research student, on leave from the Metropolitan University, Caracas) is carrying out a research project on some aspects of prosocial behaviour in children 4-5 years of age; in particular, sharing, cooperation, role-taking and their inter-relationships. He is also interested in un-traditional pre-school programmes in Third World countries.

Mary Lund (U.S. National Institute of Mental Health Post-Doctoral Fellow) is completing a two year study of the effects on children of parental divorce. The study investigates the connections between post divorce family relationships and children's emotional, social and academic functioning. A special interest is in the role of non-custodial fathers in the divorced family system.

Lise Lussier-Hamel (a psychologist from Montreal) is interested in the psychology of motherhood, specifically in the changes experienced by women at their first pregnancy.

Jane Kenrick is concluding a study of family ideology, concentrating on the impact of separation and divorce on couples with children.

Brigitte Niestroj (third year research student from the University of Berlin) is studying the development of low birthweight babies in Southern Africa.

Shirley Prendergast and Alan Prout are undertaking a three year study of parenthood classes in a small number of secondary schools. Using intensive data collection methods the intention is to produce a number of case studies of what occurs in classrooms which will illuminate the educative process at this level. The research is funded by the Health Education Council.

Martin Richards main interests are the effects of marital separation on children and the intended and unintended consequences for development of perinatal medicine. He is also working on books on fatherhood and Divorce and Children. In the perinatal field current work is focussed on the social and psychological effects of neonatal screening for various diseases including cystic fibrosis.

Sally Roberts - Assistant Secretary, Unit Librarian and Computer Representative.

Jane Selby (sixth year research student) is working on the social and psychological issues of being a career woman, especially in academia as a research student. Also methodological issues in social psychology. The research project focusses on the contradictions, social, professional and psychological which women research students, as career-committed women, have to contend with.

Bruce Tonge (Director of the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Austin Hospital, Melbourne, Australia) is on sabbatical leave and is writing up a study of post-natal mood change in mothers and its effect on mother-child interaction and child development. He is also working on the value of family therapy in the treatment of children with asthma and a descriptive and psychological study of children with pervasive developmental disorders.

Cathy Urwin (Margaret Lowenfeld Research Fellow) is carrying out a small-scale intensive study of the development of relationships between same-aged infants. She is also working on the application of psychoanalytic theory and other clinical approaches to the empirical study of parent-child interaction, and on the relationship between developmental psychology and child rearing practices.

Selected publications

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 "Teenagers and Motherhood: Who's being Naive?"
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