

Centre for Family Research

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It is with enormous sadness that I sit down today to write the introduction to our Annual Report. We have just heard the dreadful news that the beloved Chair of our Management Committee, Professor Peter Lipton, died unexpectedly yesterday evening. Peter has been the most wonderfully supportive and encouraging Chair we could ever hope to have. It has been a tremendous privilege to have him involved in the Centre - always helpful, always thoughtful, always inspirational and always ready to fly the flag. Only a few weeks ago, in true altruistic style, Peter agreed to serve for another term – an act of generosity that was greatly appreciated by us all. He will be greatly missed not only for his excellent advice, his unwavering enthusiasm and his lively humour but also for the kindness that was so essentially Peter.

The Centre for Family Research has had a busy and successful year. We have welcomed new staff – Lucy Blake, Polly Casey, Jenny Readings and Debra Spencer – and said our goodbyes to Karen Sage, who was accepted at the University of Southampton as the youngest ever Educational Psychology student in the UK, and to Emma Newberry. We are particularly sorry to say goodbye to Maggie Ponder, a specialist in families with genetic disorders, who retired after 15 years at CFR, and wish her well. Our expansion has been made possible through new funding. We were delighted to receive a grant from the United States National Institutes for Health, and most grateful to the Isaac Newton Trust for providing bridging funding until the US grant came through. We have also received funding this year from SSL International as well as a generous donation from them.

The most disruptive event of the year has been the extensive renovation work, almost completed, that has given CFR a smart new look. Thanks are due to Millcam, our tireless builders, for their hard work and for not minding too much whenever we decided that a paint colour was not quite right and needed to be changed yet again. We are particularly pleased with the new baby changing room – a much needed facility in a Centre for Family Research – and the re-housing of the Lowenfeld library, a bequest to the Centre

from the Trustees of the Lowenfeld estate, in our refurbished Seminar Room. Our year was also enlivened by our two Latin American visitors, Dr Rosario Esteniou from Mexico and Fernanda Muller from Brazil, and by Yolanda Garcia-Ruiz from the University of Valencia in Spain. We greatly enjoyed having them with us.

CFR seminars this academic year have been diverse in terms of topic and disciplinary perspective, and have been presented by both external and internal speakers. Highlights from our external speakers include “Understanding borderline disorder: A mentalization based treatment approach” by Professor Peter Fonagy “Arguments between mothers and their teenage daughters” by Dr Terri Apter, “Interactions and correlations between genes and family environment” by Professor Robert Plomin, “The depressed child and adolescent” by Professor Ian Goodyer and “Making Jeremy Cry” by Alex Graham, producer of the popular television series “Who do you think you are?” A very big “thank you” goes to Rosie Ensor for making it all happen. In addition, the Socio-Legal Group held an intensive and fascinating two-day seminar on the subject of reproductive autonomy that will be published as a book next year.

Academically, we have had a highly productive year – collecting data, publishing papers and presenting at conferences. These activities are presented below according to the three groupings within CFR. Tabitha Freeman was awarded the Symonds Prize for the best essay on a topic related to gender and sexuality for an article entitled ‘Psychoanalytic concepts of fatherhood: patriarchal paradoxes and the presence of an absent authority’ to be published in *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*. We are also proud to report a success in the world of sport - Alex Marks, Captain of the Women’s Boat Club at Corpus Christi, was awarded blades in May Bumps. Finally, we are delighted to announce the arrival of a new junior member of CFR, Bethan Rose, born to Tabitha Freeman and Tom Nutt on 17th March 2007.

Professor Susan Golombok, Director, 26th November 2007.

Non-Traditional Families

Our longitudinal study of families with a child conceived by assisted reproduction, begun at the time of the new millennium, has now reached the 7 year follow up phase. Families where children lack a genetic and/or gestational relationship with one or both parents (families created through donor insemination, egg donation and surrogacy) have been taking part in a variety of assessments including interviews and observations of parents and their children in the family home. This is the first study of its kind worldwide and is providing important information about the implications of these various assisted reproduction procedures for parenting and children's development. Other ongoing studies in this area include a comparison between families where children have, and have not, been told about their conception by donor insemination, and an investigation of young adults who have been raised in lesbian mother families from birth. Zeynep Gurtin Broadbent is now reaching the final stages of her PhD on assisted reproduction in Turkey and the UK which is shedding light on key cultural differences in attitudes towards and implications of procedures such as *in vitro* fertilisation (IVF) in different countries of the world.

Two new studies of new family forms have begun this year. The first, conducted in collaboration with the Donor Sibling Registry in the United States, has involved a survey of a very recent phenomenon – young people conceived by donor insemination searching for their donors and half-siblings through a website. Many have found more than 10 half-siblings, with the maximum number found by an individual person so far being 55. We hope to be able to continue to examine these fascinating relationships as they unfold. The second study, still at the pilot stage, is focusing on single women who have actively chosen to have a child on their own, a situation that is very different from that of most single mother families. The findings of this investigation will increase understanding of the processes that contribute to positive and negative outcomes for children in single parent homes.

Last, but not least, Liz Chapman has conducted a clinical trial of a new condom. Condom use is important, not just as a method of contraception, but also as a means of reducing the spread of STDs including HIV. Studies of the efficacy of different condom types help increase the effective use of condoms as prophylactics against disease.

Members of the grouping on non-traditional families have attended, and spoken at, a number of conferences over the year. Those given by Susan Golombok include keynote and plenary presentations to the Biennial Joint Meeting of UK Fertility Societies; the British Psychological Society Lesbian and Gay Section Annual Conference; the Bartlett Lecture at the University of Cambridge; the Family Justice Council Conference on Integrating Diversity; the Adoption Ethics and Accountability Conference, Washington; the Maternal and Child Health Seminar Series of the US Department of Health and Human Services; and the 3rd International Conference on the Science and Ethics of Assisted Reproduction and Stem Cell Research, Berlin. She has also given evidence to the Joint Committee on the Human Tissue and Embryos (Draft) Bill, and continues to be a Trustee of the Laura Ashley Foundation, the Brazelton Centre and One Plus One. Vasanti Jadva gave presentations to the 63rd Annual Meeting of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine and to Surrogacy UK. Tabitha Freeman gave a talk at the Bertarelli Foundation meeting on Triplets in Lausanne. Lucy Blake, Polly Casey and Jenny Readings participated in a conference for new researchers working in family research in Edinburgh. Zeynep Gurtin Broadbent presented papers at the Cambridge Interdisciplinary Workshops on Reproduction and the British Sociological Association Human Reproduction Study Group. She was also involved in the organization of the Cambridge Interdisciplinary Reproduction Forum and the Wellcome Trust 2nd Annual Postgraduate Conference on Bioethics.

Early Social Development and Families

The past academic year has been a busy one for the “Toddlers Up” research programme, for three reasons. Firstly, we have just completed the latest wave of data-collection (at age 6), involving school visits for 250 children and both home and lab visits for the 125 target children. Arranging these visits was, in itself, an impressive feat. For example, each lab visit involved coordinating diaries for 12 busy families – so getting all the families to turn up on the right day was the biggest challenge of all. Mr Rainbow’s magic show was very popular with the children, as were the trampoline, the giant jenga, the ping-pong and the tea-party! Setting up school visits was somewhat easier, but the children are scattered in almost 100 schools now, each of which has its own particular routines and rules to be followed – so that too called for good memory skills and lots of diplomacy.

Second, together with colleagues in Child Psychiatry (Professor Ian Goodyer and Dr Tim Croudace) we have recently submitted a grant application to the ESRC to continue our visits when the children are 8-years-old. Rosie Ensor also has an application for a British Academy Fellowship under review – fingers crossed for some positive decisions! (And until the future of the study is secure, we just keep sending in the grant applications)

Finally, we have made good progress in analyzing the results from the previous (age 4) wave of the study – and disseminating findings via conferences (e.g., Society for Research in Child Development in Boston, in April; BPS Developmental Section meeting in Plymouth, in September) and journal articles (see publications below). Several themes emerge from these papers. One is the importance of examining child and family characteristics in tandem when predicting problem behaviours – thus good ‘theory of mind’ skills, for example, appear to buffer children against the adverse effects of harsh parenting. A second theme is the importance of examining the quality as well as the content of children’s conversations with others – in particular, connected conversations appear especially helpful in promoting children’s social understanding, perhaps because they involve a ‘meeting of minds’. A third theme to emerge concerns the importance of early executive functions (e.g., planning, working memory, inhibitory control). For example, individual differences in executive function appear to play a mediatory role in

relation to associations between individual differences in problem behaviours and both children's language skills and family socio-economic status.

Genetics, Health and Families

Research in genetics, health and families continues to cover the whole of the lifespan, from even before the cradle through to the grave.

Pregnancy-related studies include Helen Statham's EU-funded study EDIG (Ethical Dilemmas in Genetic Diagnosis), her collaboration with colleagues in the University of Newcastle looking at abortion provision and Claire Snowdon's ESRC-funded work with obstetricians conducting a randomised controlled trial examining ways of improving the management of severe post partum haemorrhage. Both Helen and Claire have continued to work with parents who are bereaved in the perinatal period with studies of parental decision making about post mortems (HS) and of bereavement after participation in randomised controlled trials (CS). Joanna Hawthorne's work with new parents focuses on improving the relationships between parents and their newborn babies. Through the Brazelton Centre (UK) she focuses on training health professionals to support new parents by giving the parents knowledge about their newborns and how they communicate. Training this year has taken place in the UK, Poland, Portugal, Guernsey, the Isle of Wight and Abu Dhabi. The Brazelton Centre ran an international conference "Learning from the baby: new ways of working with parents" in March at King's College, Cambridge at which the special guest was Dr Berry Brazelton. A project to evaluate the Brazelton approach in Wales has been funded by the Laura Ashley Foundation.

A number of studies have involved families who are affected by genetic disorders. All of these studies have been funded by the Wellcome Trust and have taken a broad perspective of what it means to be in a family where multiple members may be affected with the disorder in question and where existing parents and other family members may be at risk of having an affected child. Maggie Ponder, Martin Richards and Helen

Statham have continued their collaboration with Lucy Raymond in the Clinical Genetics Department about the experiences of families with intellectual disabilities who are participating in a genetics research study to identify associated genes. This study has raised important ethical issues about the conduct of research when that research is similar to clinical care and carried out by clinicians. Shirlene Badger's study of families who are part of the Genetics of Obesity Study (GOOS), in collaboration with Professor Stephen O'Rahilly and Dr Sadaf Farooqi, is nearing completion. Shirlene was awarded funding through CRASSH and the Wellcome Trust to host a unique interdisciplinary conference on obesity in September 2007 at Newnham College, Cambridge. Claudia Downing's interest is in families with late onset genetic disorders, Huntington's Disease and Myotonic Dystrophy, and how at-risk individuals negotiate reproductive decision-making and how those who will develop the disease negotiate being parents.

End of life care is the remit of Gail Ewing who works in collaboration with members of the University of Manchester and the Palliative Care Team at Addenbrookes hospital. Two studies with the Manchester group have explored first how the preferred place of care, place of death and support at end of life impacts of health outcomes for carers after bereavement (funded by the National Forum for Hospice and Home and the University of Manchester) and secondly, the role and function of early support visits made by District Nurses to palliative patients and their carers at home (funded by the University of Manchester). With the Addenbrookes group she has studied patient, carer and provider perspectives of palliative care in an acute hospital.

Martin Richards has continued his work on the history of reproductive and genetic technologies funded by a Leverhulme Emeritus Fellowship, most recently concentrating on the eugenic use of donor insemination. He has also been a member of the following Advisory Boards: the UK Biobank Ethics and Governance Council, the HFEA Ethics and Law Committee and the Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Human Tissue Committee.

Eric Jensen, who is in the final stages of his PhD research on media coverage of therapeutic cloning left the Centre for Family Research during the year to become a post-doctoral research fellow at the Open University as lead researcher on an action research project addressing practice around public engagement with science.

Members of the group have presented findings nationally and internationally to a wide variety of audiences: academic, patient group and clinician-professional. Claudia gave a keynote address on “Becoming and being parents in families facing Huntington’s Disease” at the Australian Huntington’s Disease Association Bi-annual Conference in Melbourne, Australia and further presentations in Dresden and Milan. Maggie ran two workshops for Breakthrough at their annual conference for breast care nurses on ‘Participation in genetic studies - the patient's perspective’. Gail presented findings concerned with place of death and care outcomes at the National Forum for Hospice at Home and a methodological paper about the study of early support visits at the RCN International Nursing Research Conference. Claire gave presentations in Stockholm and Geneva as well as closer to home on many aspects of randomised control trials: declining participation, bereavement and recruitment in emergency situations.

PUBLICATIONS

Dr Elizabeth Chapman

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Dr Claudia Downing

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Dr Rosie Ensor

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Hughes, C. & Ensor, R. (in press). Executive Function and Theory of Mind: Predictive Relations from Ages 2- to 4-years. *To appear in Developmental Psychology*.

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Dr Tabitha Freeman

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Professor Susan Golombok

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Joanna Hawthorne

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Dr Vasanti Jadva

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Eric Jensen

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Maggie Ponder

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Emeritus Professor Martin Richards

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Claire Snowdon

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Helen Statham

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CURRENT GRANTS

Grants held at CFR

XJAG/033

Grant holder: Prof. Susan Golombok

Investigator: Dr Vasanti Jadva, Lucy Blake, Polly Casey & Jenny Readings

Title: Families created by assisted reproduction: Parenting and child development.

Sponsor: NIH

Period: September 2007 – August 2012

Authorised expenditure: \$1,147,500

XJAG/032

Grant holder: Prof. Susan Golombok

Investigator: Dr Liz Chapman

Title: Project Silk II

Sponsor: SSL International

Period: September 2007 – August 2008

Authorised expenditure (fEC): £150,000

Donation to CFR: £75,000

XJAG/031

Grant holder: Prof. Susan Golombok

Investigator: Dr Vasanti Jadva, Lucy Blake, Polly Casey & Jenny Readings

Title: Families created by assisted reproduction: Parenting and child development.

Sponsor: Isaac Newton Trust (bridging funding)

Period: April 2007 – March 2008

Authorised expenditure: £142,536

XJAG/026

Grant holder: Prof. Susan Golombok

Investigator: Shirlene Badger

Title: Young adults raised from infancy in lesbian mother families.

Sponsor: The Nuffield Foundation

Period: October 2006 – September 2008

Authorised expenditure: £71,586

XJAG/023

Grant holder: Prof. Susan Golombok

Investigator: Dr Tabitha Freeman.

Title: Adolescents conceived by donor insemination.

Sponsor: The Nuffield Foundation

Period: April 2006 – September 2008

Authorised expenditure: £91,887

XJAG/022

Grant holder: Helen Statham (main grant coordinated by Prof Dr Phil. Marianne Leuzinger-Bohleber, University of Kassel/Director of the Sigmund-Freud-Institute, Frankfurt/University of Kassel with collaborators in Israel, Italy, Sweden, Greece and Germany).

Investigator: As above

Title: Ethical dilemmas due to prenatal and genetic diagnostics (EDIG)

Sponsor: EC

Period: October 2005 – September 2008

Authorised expenditure: £39,549

XJAG/030

Grant holder: Professor Martin Richards

Investigator: Professor Martin Richards

Title: A history of reproduction and genetic choice

Sponsor: Leverhulme Emeritus Fellowship

Period: October 2006 – September 2008

Authorised expenditure (fEC): £18,003

XJAG/027

Grant holder: Dr Claire Hughes

Investigator: Dr Claire Hughes, Alex Marks, Karen Sage

Title: Peer interactions in the early school years: Cognitive and family procedures.

Sponsor: ESRC

Period: September 2006 – August 2008

Authorised expenditure (fEC): £308,223

XJAG/020

Grant holder: Dr Claire Hughes

Investigators: Claire Hughes, Rosie Ensor, Anji Wilson, Lorna Jacobs

Title: Social and cognitive predictors of success in the transition to school.

Sponsor: ESRC

Period: January 2006 – January 2008

Authorised expenditure: £345,631

XJAG/021

Grant holder: Dr Gail Ewing

Investigators: Dr Gail Ewing (+ based in University of Manchester: Dr Margaret Rogers, Dr Jane Griffiths)

Title: District Nurses – Early Support Visits

Sponsor: University of Manchester

Period: October 2005 – December 2007

Authorised expenditure: £21,317

XJAG/002

Grant holders: Professor M Richards
Investigator: Dr C Downing. Fellowship
Title: Parenting in the space between health and illness.
Sponsor: Wellcome Trust
Period: January 2002 – August 2007
Authorised expenditure: £117,613

XJAG/028

Grant holder: Prof. Susan Golombok
Investigator: Dr Liz Chapman
Title: Project Silk: A clinical trial of a new condom
Sponsor: SSL International
Period: September 2006 – August 2007
Authorised expenditure: £150,000
Donation to CFR: £75,000

XJAG/007

Grant holders: Prof. Martin Richards, Dr Nina Hallowell, Dr Lucy Raymond
Investigator: Ms Helen Statham, Maggie Ponder
Title: Psychosocial effects of molecular genetic diagnosis: The case of X-linked learning disability
Sponsor: The Wellcome Trust
Duration: February 2003 – August 2007
Authorised expenditure: £140,142

XJAG/025

Grant holder: Prof. Susan Golombok
Investigator: Lucy Owen
Title: A longitudinal study of the impact of assisted reproduction on family functioning and child development: a follow-up at age 18
Sponsor: Wellcome Trust
Period: April 2002 – May 2007
Authorised expenditure: £127,976

Grants held elsewhere

Grant holders: Prof. Melissa Hines & Prof Susan Golombok
Investigator: Anna Yates, Jaidan D'Arcy, Lakis Zervoulis
Title: The development of sex-typed behaviour in boys and girls: a longitudinal study from 20 weeks gestation to 13 years
Sponsor: Wellcome Trust
Period: April 2004 - December 2007
Authorised expenditure: £348,384

Grant holders: Susan Cox, Michael McDonald and others (including M. Richards).
Institute of Applied Ethics, University of BC.
Investigators: As above.
Title: Meaning and experience of being a human subject in health research
Period: September 2005-September 2008.
Authorised expenditure: \$750,000