

Pregnancy and pregnancy planning in the new parenting culture

A two-day seminar organised by Parenting Culture Studies and the Kent Centre for Law Gender and Sexuality and supported by the ESRC and bpas

**Tuesday 22nd and Wednesday 23rd June 2010
School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research, Cornwallis Building,
University of Kent, Canterbury**

The University of Kent's School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research and the Kent Centre for Law, Gender and Sexuality have organised an international conference, bringing together academics from a range of disciplines, to discuss the way in which pregnancy is being re-conceptualised at a time when parenthood has become the object of increasing attention and concern. The event is supported by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and British Pregnancy Advisory Service (bpas).

Speakers will address how anxieties about parenting are 'extending backwards' into pregnancy and even pre-conception, with potential parents increasingly being regarded as in need of 'parent training'. Papers will consider the validity and impact of claims that a healthy baby requires a stress-free pregnancy; the impact of contemporary parenting culture on reproductive decision-making, in particular, abortion; the increasing pressure for men to become actively involved not just in baby-care but in guiding and supporting their partner's antenatal choices; and the way in which the new norm of 'intensive parenthood' is shaping the regulation of reproductive technology. The conference will also include a comparative discussion of US and UK controversies surrounding the consumption of drugs and alcohol by pregnant women.

The two-day conference will continue the success of the ESRC-funded 'Changing Parenting Culture' seminar series <http://www.parentingculturestudies.org/seminar-series/index.html> and develop the work of Parenting Culture Studies, <http://blogs.kent.ac.uk/parentingculturestudies/> a network of academics co-ordinated by Dr Ellie Lee, senior lecturer in social policy at Kent university. 'Pregnancy and Pregnancy Planning in Contemporary Parenting Culture' will take forward this work by focusing on contemporary thinking about mothers, fathers, conception and pregnancy. The event is being organised by Kent University colleagues Dr Jan Macvarish (Centre for Health Services Studies), Professor Sally Sheldon (Kent Law School) and Dr Ellie Lee (School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Research).

Organiser: Jan Macvarish, Research Associate, Centre for Health Service Studies, University of Kent j.macvarish@kent.ac.uk

To book a place: email Sarah Slowe s.e.slowe@kent.ac.uk

Programme

Day 1. Tuesday, 22 June 2010

10-10.30 **Coffee/registration**

10.30-11 **Welcome and introduction to the event**

Ellie Lee, co-ordinator Parenting Culture Studies

11-1pm **Session 1: Extending parenting backwards? Pregnancy and pre-pregnancy in contemporary context**

Chair: Jan Macvarish, Research Associate, CHSS, University of Kent

Elizabeth Mitchell Armstrong, Associate Professor of Sociology and Public Affairs, Princeton University, *'Do happier pregnancies make healthier babies? Stress and the medicalization of maternal emotion'*

Cynthia Daniels, Professor of Political Science, Rutgers University, *'Policing pregnancy'*

Discussants: Frank Furedi, Professor of Sociology University of Kent and Janet Golden, Professor of History, Rutgers University

1-2.30 **Lunch**

2.30-4 **Session 2: Fatherhood and parenting culture**

Chair: Sally Sheldon, Professor of Law, University of Kent

Tina Miller, Reader in Sociology, Oxford Brookes University, *'Men and 'bonding': fathers' expectations in the antenatal period'*

Jonathan Ives, Lecturer in Behavioural Science and Heather Draper, Reader in Biomedical Ethics, Centre for Biomedical Ethics, The University of Birmingham, *'Should we strive to involve men in a meaningful way during pregnancy? Rethinking men's involvement in antenatal care'*

Discussant: Mary Ann Kanieski, Assistant Professor of Sociology, St.Mary's College, Notre Dame

4-4.30 **Coffee**

4.30-6.30 Session 3: Pregnancy, drugs and alcohol in contemporary parenting culture

Chair: Andy Alaszewski, editor *Health, Risk and Society*

Janet Golden, Professor of History, Rutgers University *Alcohol, pregnancy and harm-reduction: a review of the American experience*

Pam Lowe, Lecturer in Sociology, Aston University *Under the influence? The construction of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome in the UK*

Polly Radcliffe, Research Associate, University of Kent *Substance misusing women and pregnancy. Problematised mothers and the management of spoiled identities*

Discussants: Elizabeth Mitchell Armstrong, Associate Professor of Sociology and Public Affairs, Princeton University and Pat O'Brien, Consultant & Honorary Senior Lecturer in Obstetrics and Gynaecology University College Hospital London and spokesperson, RCOG

6.30 Drinks, followed by dinner.

Day 2: Wednesday, 23 June 2010

8.45-9.15 Coffee

9.15-11.15 Session 4: Motherhood, abortion and parenting culture

Chair: Ann Furedi, CEO bpas

Rachel Jones, Senior Research Associate, Guttmacher Institute, New York, *'Abortion decision making in a culture of 'intensive motherhood''*

Danielle Bessett, PhD, Charlotte Ellertson Social Science Postdoctoral Fellow, Ibis Reproductive Health, Cambridge, MA, USA, *'Pregnancy after Abortion: women's experiences of a stigmatized reproductive career'*

Evelyn Mahon, Senior Lecturer in Sociology at the School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin, *'Is there ever a good time to have a child?'*

11.15-11.45 Coffee

11.45-1.15 Session 5: Abortion and the politics of motherhood

Chair: Ann Furedi, CEO bpas

Professor Kristin Luker, Elizabeth Josselyn Boalt Professor of Law and Professor of Sociology, University of California, Berkeley, '*Abortion and the politics of motherhood revisited*'

Discussant: Ruth Fletcher, Senior Lecturer in Law, Keele University

1.15-2.30 Lunch

2.30-4.15 Session 6: Reproductive technology in an age of intensive parenthood

Chair: Emily Jackson, Professor of Law, LSE

Martin Richards, Emeritus Professor of Family Research, Cambridge University, '*Choice or eugenics? Present practice and future developments in the culture of choice*'

Julie McCandless, lecturer in law, Oxford Brookes University, '*What is 'supportive parenting'? The new 'Welfare of the Child' clause in the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act (2008)*'

4.15 Closing remarks