

ESW Open Seminar Series

Wednesday 27 February, 4.30-6pm
Room G22, Jubilee Building, University of Sussex

Professor Jacqui Gabb
The Open University

Paradoxical Family Practices: LGBTQ+ youth, mental health and wellbeing

In this seminar Professor Gabb will explore how queer young people sustain - and in some cases survive - family relationships. Open channels of communication between family members are crucial to wellbeing, and when ruptured can adversely impact on the mental health of young people.

Families' investment in quality time can facilitate communication and a sense of family belonging. Conversely, family tensions could also erupt during these 'precious' times. Parental practices of care can convey meaningful sentiments - such as being there for the young person - but these interactions also have the capacity to instantiate intergenerational power relations. Here, the meanings, practices and management of food and eating a particularly salient example.

The seminar will be an opportunity to introduce the concept of 'paradoxical family practices' and the ways in which queer youth manage family life through everyday emotion work. This highlights (i) the value of emotion-centred multiple qualitative methods to explore the lives of queer youth and mental health; (ii) the ways in which cultural and household contexts reproduce heteronormativity which in turn generates paradoxical family practices; and (iii) the need to develop 'paradoxical family practices' as a conceptual tool.

Discussion Questions:

1. How can emotion-centred multiple qualitative methods help us to better understand the lived experience of queer youth?
2. How do everyday family practices reproduce heteronormativity through 'parent-child' interactions and household contexts?
3. How can the conceptual tool of 'paradoxical family practices' facilitate insight on the mental health and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ young people?

All welcome



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