




The
University
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Sheffield.

Changing Families,
Changing Food.



Socio-historical reproduction and food values

Principal Investigator

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Summary

This project will explore changes in socio-historical reproduction of food values, including diet and eating patterns, within families in two different communities.

We aim to critique the notion of 'changing families', in terms of food values, diet and eating patterns and parent/child discipline.

Our overall objective is to demonstrate the ways in which 'the family' adapts to the developments associated with its increasingly differentiated environment and food in particular.



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Research questions

- To compare social reproduction, particularly the transmission of food values and dietary patterns, among two groups with distinctive ethnic origins but similar socio-cultural backgrounds.
- To compare food habits between the two groups and document the process of change of such habits.
- To compare inter-generational references to the notions of traditional food and everyday food.
- To document the differentiated perceptions of family members with respect to the social significance of changing food habits.



Research design

This is an ethnographic and ethno-historical based study documenting changing 'taste'. Interviews with individuals from two and if possible three generations in families drawn from a single locality in two different locations in Yorkshire. In addition, some families will be engaged in photographing their relationship with food.

The 'Changing Families, Changing Food' Programme

'*Changing Families, Changing Food*' is a major inter-disciplinary research programme, funded by The Leverhulme Trust. The Programme began in October 2005 and will run for just over three years.

It is organised into three research strands on: pregnancy and motherhood; childhood and family life; and family and community. Focusing on contemporary Britain, the Programme also includes some international comparisons and a 'time-line' to establish the quantitative and qualitative nature of social changes affecting families and food over the last century.

The Programme is coordinated by Peter Jackson (Director of Research for the Social Sciences at Sheffield University) and is based in ICoSS (the University's new social science facility). The Programme involves colleagues from Clinical Sciences, East Asian Studies, Geography, Nursing and Midwifery, the School for Health and Related Research and Sociological Studies at Sheffield in collaboration with colleagues in Health and Social Care at Royal Holloway, University of London.

The research takes food as the lens through which to observe recent changes in family life and examines how changes in family form have affected patterns of food consumption. The Programme's findings are expected to contribute to current debates about obesity and nutrition, media and consumption, food choice and deprivation.

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