

# Enduring Love? Couple Relationships in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

## Findings, Dialogue, Future Directions

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2014, 12.30 – 6pm

The British Library, Euston Road, London NW1 2DB



From the 7 year itch to the 3 year glitch. From grey divorce, Facebook affairs and cheating love rats to sumptuous celebrity weddings, childhood sweethearts and the power of love to conquer all adversities. Stories about couple relationships saturate the media. But does this reflect how people think about and experience their relationships? How do couples work through their ups and downs, pains and pleasures, hopes and fears? What constitutes relationship success? What makes love endure?

Over the past two years the Enduring Love? project has been addressing these questions. The data from this large scale empirical study provides fresh insight on the lives, loves and lores of couples in contemporary Britain. Through an online survey and qualitative research we have been exploring how couples experience, understand and sustain their long-term relationships, with particular attention to the impact of gender, generation, sexuality and parenthood.

The project has been designed, developed and implemented in dialogue with policy makers, relationship support organisations, media commentators and academic colleagues. The aim of this event, therefore, is to launch the study findings and also to provoke wider discussion on making research count, why relationship research matters and dialogic research practice.

To hear the study's findings and critical debate about the scope and relevance of relationship research by leading contributors in the field, you are warmly invited to join us at this end of project celebratory event.

The event is hosted by Dr Jacqui Gabb and Dr Janet Fink, Dept of Social Policy and Criminology, The Open University [Jacqui.Gabb@open.ac.uk](mailto:Jacqui.Gabb@open.ac.uk) [Janet.Fink@open.ac.uk](mailto:Janet.Fink@open.ac.uk)

For more information on the study see the Enduring Love? project website [www.enduringlove.co.uk](http://www.enduringlove.co.uk)

Register online at: <http://www.open.ac.uk/ccig/events/enduring-love-findings-dialogue-future-directions> or contact CCIG Research Secretary Sarah Batt at: [SocSci-CCIG-events@open.ac.uk](mailto:SocSci-CCIG-events@open.ac.uk)

## **Schedule**

12.30 Registration. Tea and coffee

1.00 Welcome and introductions

Dr Jacqui Gabb, The Open University

Dr Janet Fink, The Open University

1.10 **Making Research Count**

Angela Neustatter, Author and Journalist (Event Chair)

Professor Tim Blackman, PVC (Research, Scholarship and Quality), The Open University

Professor John Holmwood, British Sociological Association President, University of Nottingham

1.40 **Why Relationship Research Matters**

Susan Quilliam, Relationship Psychologist

Ruth Sutherland, Relate CEO

Professor Carol Smart, University of Manchester

2.20 **Quick Questions, points of clarification**

2.30 **Enduring Love? The Study and Key Findings**

Dr Jacqui Gabb, The Open University

Dr Janet Fink, The Open University

3.30 **Discussant Panel**

Professor Lynn Jamieson, University of Edinburgh

Penny Mansfield (CBE), Director, One Plus One

Naomi Eisenstadt (CB), University of Oxford, Former Director of the Social Exclusion Taskforce, Cabinet Office

4.00 **Questions and Discussion**

5.00 **Closing Remarks: Dialogue and Future Directions**

Dr Janet Fink, The Open University

Dr Jacqui Gabb, The Open University

5.15 **Celebratory drinks & canapés**

6.00 Close