



INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH
RESEARCH CENTER FOR GROUP DYNAMICS
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

RCGD Seminar Series: Winter 2015

BioSocial Methods

Monday, March 9th, 3:30-5:00 PM

Rm 1430 ISR, 426 Thompson St

<http://biosocialmethods.isr.umich.edu/rcgd-seminar-series-winter-2015>



Behavioral, biological, and epigenetic consequences of early social experiences in monkeys

Stephen Suomi

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, Comparative Behavioral Genetics

It is now well-established that the type of early social attachment relationships rhesus monkey infants form with their caregivers can have dramatic behavioral, biological, and epigenetic consequences throughout development. Recent research has focused instead on the consequences of being raised by mothers who differ in their social dominance status. There are major differences in both social opportunities on a daily basis and long-term physical and psychological health outcomes between offspring of high vs. low-ranking mothers, and it appears that relative social dominance status is generally transmitted from mothers to their female offspring, i.e., high-ranking mothers typically rear daughters who themselves are high-ranking, at least initially, and low-ranking mothers usually have daughters who turn out to be low-ranking themselves. Very recent data suggest that such cross-generational transmission of relative dominance status may be in part epigenetically mediated through the placenta.



The Group Dynamics Seminar series is one of the longest running seminars in the social sciences. The original intent was for RCGD senior staff to meet together weekly to maintain an integrated theoretical approach to the various research projects underway and to advance theoretical thinking in several areas. Today the seminar series is open to the entire University community and continues to provide an opportunity for researchers, scholars, staff, and students to meet and learn about new theoretical developments as well as ongoing research activities. •