Welcome to the latest issue of *Families Relationships and Societies*. We are delighted to note that the journal continues to go from strength to strength as we receive submissions from across the world on topics of central importance to families, researchers and policy makers. Indeed, this issue of the journal attests to the range of exciting work that is being submitted to us.

The intersection of personal and academic identity is of great interest as exemplified in Yarwood’s article. What happens in the research journey, who changes and is changed by it is a topic that continues to fascinate those involved in whatever capacity with families. Thwaites turns to a topic that has been of great interest and debate throughout the years of feminist scholarship and activism – the meanings attached to naming practices in the context of marriage.

Notko and her colleagues offer important insights into the ethical challenges posed by an engagement with challenging family practices in an article that speaks directly to some of the issues raised in our themed section of Open Space explored further below.

It has been apparent throughout the brief history of the journal that changes and continuities in patterns of intimacy continue to be the subject of international scholarship and we are delighted to publish an article from Portugal by Ferreira on intimacy in the couple relationship. Philp reflects on post-separation fathering practices in an article that we are sure will be read with interest by the growing number of constituencies concerned with illuminating what has often been either hidden or denigrated. Duncan and his colleagues continue the interest in the field in exploring the array of practices that have emerged in more recent decades around patterns of living and loving.

Almudena’s article returns us to another vital area of policy and research concern in its exploration of patterns of male breadwinning in contemporary Spain while Grover offers a very timely reminder of how in the current climate of austerity in England policy makers are reworking familiar tropes in relation to class.

In the themed section of Open Space (guest edited by Kate Morris and Sue White along with Brid Featherstone) we provide a space for leading policy makers such as Martin Narey and Louise Casey in England to tell us about what are very contested areas of policy and intervention with families. In return, the lived experiences of families and alternative constructions of help are highlighted by the contributions by Thoburn and Tew. It is very important to facilitate dialogue across domains and perspectives and we are grateful to all the contributors to Open Space who responded so generously to our invitation to write for the issue.

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