

**Call for Papers**

**Revue des politiques  
sociales et familiales**

## **Understanding Kinship through Practice: Material Issues and Emotional Foundations**

**Coordination: Jennifer Bidet** (Cerlis / Université Paris Cité) and **Marie-Clémence Le Pape**  
(Centre Max Weber, Université Lumière Lyon 2)

Authors are invited to submit an article title, along with its summary (around 200 words) and keywords, indicating whether the submitted article is a scientific article or a synthesis, study and method article, as well as a short biographical note by 9 January 2023 to the journal's editor-in-chief ([rpsf@cnafr.fr](mailto:rpsf@cnafr.fr)) and coordinators of this special issue: [jennifer.bidet@parisdescartes.fr](mailto:jennifer.bidet@parisdescartes.fr) ; [marie-clemence.lepape@univ-lyon2.fr](mailto:marie-clemence.lepape@univ-lyon2.fr)

**Keywords:** kinship; family bonds; support; household; network; bloodlines; entourage; family solidarity

## *Journal of Social and Family Policies*

Founded in 1985, the *Journal of Social and Family Policies* [RPSF] (*Research and Projections* from 1985 to 2009, then *Social and Family Policies* until March 2015) is a quarterly peer-reviewed and multidisciplinary scientific journal. It publishes **original research** in the field of **family and social affairs** (public policies, benefits, service offerings, actors of these policies, targeted audiences, etc.), as well as developments affecting the **family, childhood, youth, parenthood, poverty and housing**. The journal welcomes articles in all areas of **social sciences and humanities**. Its multidisciplinary approach requires authors to use plain words and explain what does not come under common language (presentation of measures, theoretical concepts, specific survey methods, etc.).

The *RPSF* is developed based on special thematic issues or dossiers, or presented in the form of a collection of contributions (mixed issues). It is composed of different sections, all subject to external review:

- "**Scientific articles**" (60,000 characters maximum, with spaces) are original contributions based on empirical subject matters;
- "**Syntheses and perspectives**" (30,000 characters) present problematised analysis of grey literature or research syntheses;
- "**Studies**" articles (30,000 characters), shorter than scientific articles, present the first outcomes of quantitative (including descriptive statistics) or qualitative (exploratory surveys, studies, research in progress) surveys by placing them in their field of research;

- **"Methods"** articles (30,000 characters) discuss data collection tools in the field covered by the *RPSF* (inputs and limits of these methods, discussion about indicators, etc.);
- **"Reviews"** are book (8,000 characters) or symposium reviews (20,000 characters) problematised in accordance with the journal's areas of interest. Reviewed book authors or symposium organisers cannot submit reviews.

### Special Issue Presentation

While until the 1970s, contemporary family sociology focusing on European and North American countries seemed to describe a linear evolution towards a concentration of family bounds around the couple, and around emotional and identity issues rather than material ones, several factors have since contributed to revising family ties beyond what might be called the "elementary family". However, the boundaries of this "enlarged family" remain blurred and still difficult to name today: how to grasp and objectify the bonds that go beyond the couple and minor children? How to think spaces and temporalities of family bounds' morphological variations? How to articulate the material issues and the emotional foundations of family relations? What terminologies and what methodological entries should be used to grasp the shifting boundaries of what is seen and experienced as "the family" today?

This dossier seeks to answer this set of questions based on original empirical articles from all areas of social sciences (anthropology, demography, law, geography, history, political science or sociology), covering different historical or geographical scopes, and using different terminologies and methodological entries.

More specifically, we suggest three complementary and non-exclusive lines of reflection:

- **Axis 1: Define the boundaries of kinship. Family bounds beyond conjugal family**
- **Axis 2: Analyse the content of kinship relationships. Material and emotional bonds marked by inequalities**
- **Axis 3: Describe and name contemporary kinship. Methodological and terminological issues**

### ***Axis 1. Define the Boundaries of Kinship. Family Bounds Beyond Conjugal Family***

At the end of the 1970s, pioneering work in France rediscovered the importance of family bounds beyond the conjugal unit, family ties through which a whole range of support and exchanges circulate (Roussel, 1976; Gokalp 1978; Pitrou, 1978). The combination of demographic changes (increase in divorces, aging of the population) and the political questioning of a strong social state model (aimed at reducing expenditure) contributes to turn “family solidarity” into a political issue from the 1980s onwards: mutual aid based on family ties is seen as a solution to cushion the consequences of the economic and social crisis (Debordeaux, Strobel, 2002; Martin, 2015). Transferring the management of individuals to the family is an issue again discussed at the end of the 1990s, as the political stakes of the elderly's aging and loss of autonomy again redefine the existing balance between State, family and market in the management of social risks. In France, as in other European countries, under various modalities (Da Roit, Le Bihan, 2010), the intervention of close family caregivers is gradually institutionalised and funded by the State (Touahria-Gaillard and Trenta, 2019).

Quantitative work on family solidarity highlights the life cycle of mutual aid: young adults and dependent elderly people are more often the beneficiaries of these circulations, around the still key significance of the filiation bound (Bonvalet and Ogg, 2006; Portela and Raynaud,

2019). Yet these support relationships also question relations between first family members, less often analysed: how to conform to the norm of equality between first family members when you help your adult children? How are the tasks of taking charge of dependent parents distributed among siblings, especially according to gender between sisters and brothers, sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law?

Other contemporary realities question family boundaries: the rise of single-parent and blended families that question the movement of individuals and goods within kinship (Cadolle, 2000; Martial, 2005); migration and the role of geographical remoteness and migration policies in the evolution of remote family bonds (Merla, Kilkey and Baldassar, 2020; Imbert *et al.* 2018; Grysole, 2020; Bidet, 2021); development and progressive recognition of homosexual or trans-parent families whose research has examined conjugality, filiation, but less so other kinship relationships (Gross, 2014); the rise of new communication technologies that also help to renew the forms and boundaries of the "extended family" (Dupin, 2018), as highlighted during the health crisis.

Beyond individual and collective practices within family groups, it is useful to question the role of institutions in defining these shifting boundaries of the "extended family": at the notary, at the doctor, at the family allowances fund, at the prefecture, how are bonds beyond the conjugal core defined and regulated? What roles and connections are attributed or denied to first family members, adult children or step-children, grandparents, uncles or aunts when interacting with the administration? And how can actors circumvent or negotiate legal obligations, when they are out of step with their practical experience of kinship relationships?

## ***Axis 2. Analyse the Content of Kinship Relationships. Material and Emotional Bonds Marked by Inequalities***

In addition to examining relationships within kin, work on “family solidarity” has also shown the material dimension of family bonds – in addition to the emphasis on the relational, affective and identity dimension of these bonds (de Singly, 2017). To respond to the social crisis and to the impotence of the social state in taking charge of young studying people or of dependent elderly people, it is then money, “helping hands” in kind, contacts, which circulate in the close entourage. In contrast to E. Durkheim's prophecy that “things increasingly cease to be a cement of domestic society” (Durkheim, 1892), material issues continue to feed into contemporary experiences of family relationships. If contemporary norms want to hide this economic dimension of family bonds (Zelizer, 2005), this “hidden economy of kinship” still structures relations between relatives (Déchaux, 1994). Work on these issues has shed light on how the family contributes to the reproduction of class and gender inequalities (Herpin and Déchaux, 2004; Papuchon, 2014; Bessière and Gollac, 2020).

However, attention to these unequal mechanisms based on material issues must not obscure the affective dimension and emotional work (Hochschild, 1983) which are closely interwoven with these material circulations at the heart of family relations. If so many conflicts erupt around alimony payments, donations or inheritance, it is because money issues mingle with feelings, positive or negative, specific to family relationships.

Disagreements reveal differences in drawing boundaries and in expected contents of different family relationships (Gollac, 2014). The gendered conception of family ties also influences how to think and practice mutual aid. Thus women, who are often pivotal in family solidarity, make their help more dependent on the relational quality that binds them to their relatives, when men follow a more statutory logic (Le Pape *et al.*, 2018).

If one must continue to study more closely and systematically the material dimension of family bonds, it is also necessary to deepen the study of these ties' affective implications. For example, what forms does “moral support” take among relatives – a classic refuge value in quantitative surveys on family forms of mutual aid? How can one objectify the anxiety and

mental burden experienced by a child in search of autonomy during his/her studies, or by an elderly parent who may at any time fall into dependence when he/she does not wish to depend on his/her children? And how to measure the variations of this emotional work according to age, sex, social environment, or even the family connection considered?

To take emotions and the emotional dimension of family bonds seriously is as well to think of benevolence, dedication, compassion, as to decipher anger or jealousy, by paying attention, for instance, to family conflicts.

### ***Axis 3. Describe and Name Contemporary Kinship. Methodological and Terminological Issues***

The boundaries of what is perceived and experienced as "family bonds" are blurred and changing over time and according to the issues considered, shifting with the context and crises that individuals or family groups may go through. This vagueness seems intrinsic to the study of these links, as the ready-made expression of "extended family" points to: extended to where and in relation to what? Do family bonds beyond the conjugal family form a group, a network, a configuration? How can we differentiate between family subsets, between "elementary" or "extended", "orientation" or "procreative" families, between conjugal family and kinship?

The anthropology of kinship has provided family sociology with a productive toolbox to rethink these bonds and help characterise them (Déchaux, 2008; Weber, 2013). The logic of "household" refers to the pooling of resources within a group, according to a solidarity principle, to face everyday life, when the logic of "lineage" questions the mechanisms of intergenerational transmission and the tensions that can arise from them (Weber, 2002; Gollac, 2003). However, these terms of household and lineage are not always easy to handle, because they designate fragile collectives, organised around often temporary

common causes. Moreover, these concepts may have different meanings depending on the disciplines used, and these variations will also have to be questioned.

Kinship, on the other hand, means at least all the people to whom an individual is related, whether this individual has an ongoing relationship with these parents or not. More specifically, it may refer to types of bonds that operate on a principle of reciprocity rather than pooling (Martial, 2005).

Following a usually quantitative approach, the analysis of kinship networks activated by an individual within his kinship allows to objectify the intensity, yet also the quality, of the links organised around an individual (Wall *et al.*, 2018).

Other issues should also be considered, including temporality of these family bonds, their evolutions in the cycle of life, their reconfigurations at key moments such as the departure from the parents' home, entry into the labour market and access to property, the arrival of children, separation, the dependency of an elderly or disabled relative, inheritance, etc. These pivotal moments can be thought of as temporary, family ties alternating between routine organisations more often centered on the conjugal cell, and moments of "crisis" where other connections can take over – such as when an elderly dependent parent is taken in and can compete with married life. Yet with the increase in life expectancy, the phase of a loved one's dependency can greatly lengthen, and these moments of crisis thought as occasional last longer and force more lasting, but also more costly and potentially conflictual, reconfigurations. Moreover, the idea that the contemporary family is mainly organised around the conjugal core must be discussed and reintroduced in the multiplicity of routine family organisations, in France or in other national contexts: intergenerational cohabitation, substitution kinship with placement of children with "trusted third parties" or entrusting children to relatives in the home country for migrants, affiliation with a step-parent's kinship in the case of family reconfiguration, etc.

Kinship is also effectively captured through space. Whereas in public statistics the family has long been assimilated into the cohabiting conjugal family through the notion of household, urban sociology has contributed to make visible family ties that go beyond the housing scale alone (Willmott and Young, 1957), in particular through the notion of family-entourage (Bonvalet *et. al.*, 1999).

In order to describe the forms of exchange within these groups or networks, should the term "solidarity" – too politically marked and guiding the reading of these bonds only towards positive affects – be abandoned and replaced by another notion, such as "mutual aid"? If the word "caregiver" has been used for the management of the elderly or ill people, why is it denied by parents materially accompanying their children into adulthood (Le Pape *et. al.*, 2018)? How can we identify support and count them as precisely as possible, without falling into a standardised accounting logic that would neglect the emotional meaning given to these support systems, and the socially differentiated ways of counting (Perrin-Heredia, 2011)?

These terminological considerations are articulated with methodological questions. What are the difficulties and contributions of statistical surveys, based on interviews or observations?

In quantitative approaches, what can be learnt from administrative data or public statistical surveys to better understand these kinship bonds? Several issues around the statistical input of kinship relationships deserve to be raised. The first question is how do major national surveys map the geography of kinship relationships? "Household/family" equivalence has long been criticised, and the evolution of domestic organisations, due to increasing marital separations for instance, has only reinforced the inadequacy of our understanding of family relationships at the household level (Trabut *et. al.*, 2015). How can statistical sources be used today to better study the circulation of minor children within kinship for example? Finally, the most recent surveys have sought to improve the measurement of practical and financial exchanges within kinship – mainly around the management of dependent elderly

people or the financial support of young adults, challenging the notion of "main caregiver", to update the differentiated contributions of several members of the same family group (Béliard *et. al.*, 2013). How has attention to kinship relationships led to change major national surveys? And what do these major surveys tell us today about these issues?

In qualitative approaches, what can post-surveys do to refine the definition of kinship relationships by individuals? What is specific about multiplying interviews in a family monograph approach (Eideliman, 2009) rather than conducting individual interviews? What are the conditions for these monograph approaches? Intimate sphere par excellence, does the family lend itself to observations and under what conditions? Within households (Lareau and Rao, 2020) or through institutions responsible for organising these kinship relationships – at the risk of studying institutions and their normative imposition more than the reality of family bonds – and forms of resistance to institutional norms? The choice of family time and spaces through which these bonds are studied also influences the results obtained: the configuration of family ties varies according to the year's rhythms – holidays or daily life involving various domestic organisations – but also to places – the secondary house is the site of potentially renewed relationships compared to the main residence.

Beyond the expected analyses of contemporary transformations in kinship relationships in French society or in European or North American societies, the coordination team strongly encourages authors to submit comparative points of view, in time (by considering the historical variations in the forms taken by these kinship ties) and in space, by revealing the specificities or similarities between various national contexts.

## Editorial Process

Authors will send a summary (around 200 words) and keywords by **9 January 2023**, indicating the section for which the article is submitted, as well as a brief biographical note. If the abstract proposal is accepted, the article must be sent by **June 2023** at the latest to be evaluated (double evaluation) and discussed by the editorial board. **There is therefore no**

**guarantee of publication before** the article's validation by scientific experts and **acceptance by the editorial board**.

Recommendations to the journal's authors (in English and in French), to follow for all submitted articles, are available on the journal's website:

[https://www.caf.fr/sites/default/files/medias/cnaf/Nous\\_connaitre/Recherche\\_et\\_statistiques/RPSF/RPSF\\_Recommendations\\_to\\_Authors\\_June22.pdf](https://www.caf.fr/sites/default/files/medias/cnaf/Nous_connaitre/Recherche_et_statistiques/RPSF/RPSF_Recommendations_to_Authors_June22.pdf)

## Calendar

- **9 January 2023:** Dateline for submitting summary proposals
- **June 2023:** Sending the original version of articles to coordinators, followed by exchanges with authors
- **September 2023:** Submission of articles to the editor-in-chief and external reviewers
- **Fall 2023:** Editorial board
- **February 2024:** Submission of the articles' second version
- **Mid-March 2024 – June 2024:** Comments on articles, editorial secretariat and layout
- **Fall 2024:** Publication of the issue

## References Mentioned in the Call for Papers

- Bessière C. and Gollac S., 2022, *The gender of Capital. How Families Perpetuate Wealth Inequality*, Harvard University Press.
- Béliard A., Billaud S., Perrin-Heredia A. and Weber F., 2012, *Circulation de l'enquêteur, relations familiales et aide informelle*, <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00813125> (accessed on 27 October 2022).
- Bidet J., 2021, *Vacances au bled. La double présence des enfants d'immigrés*, Paris, Raisons d'agir, collection "Cours et travaux".
- Bonvalet C., Ogg J., 2006, *Enquêtes sur l'entraide familiale en Europe. Bilan de 9 collectes*, Editions de l'INED, collection Méthodes et Savoirs.
- Bonvalet C., Gotman A., Grafmeyer Y., *La famille et ses proches: l'aménagement des territoires*, n° 143, Paris, Editions de l'INED, collection Travaux et Documents.
- Debordeaux D. and Strobel P., 2002, *Les solidarités familiales en questions: entraide et transmission*, Paris, L.G.D.J.
- Déchaux J.-H., 1994, « Les trois composantes de l'économie cachée de la parenté. L'exemple français. », *Recherches sociologiques (Louvain)*, vol. 25, n° 3, p. 37.
- Déchaux J.-H., 2008, Kinship Studies: Neoclassicism and New Wave. A Critical Review, *Revue française de sociologie*, vol. 49, n° 5, p. 215-243.
- Durkheim E., 1892, "La famille conjugale", in *Textes III. Fonctions sociales et institutions*, p. 35-49, Paris, Les éditions de Minuit.
- Eideliman J.-S., 2009, « Familles à l'épreuve », *Ethnologie française*, vol. 39, n° 3, p. 435-442.
- Da Roit B. and Le Bihan B., 2010, « Similar and yet so Different: Cash-for-Care in Six European Countries' Long-Term Care Policies », *The Milbank Quarterly*, vol. 88, n° 3, p. 286-309.
- Dupin N., 2018, « "Attends, deux secondes, je lui réponds..." : enjeux et négociations au

sein des familles autour des usages socio-numériques adolescents », *Enfances Familles Générations*, n° 31.

de Singly F., 2017, *Double je. Identité personnelle, identité statutaire*, Paris, Armand Colin, collection « Individu et société ».

Gokalp C., 1978, « Le réseau familial », *Population*, vol. 33, n° 6, p. 1077-1094.

Gollac S., 2014, « Deux femmes détestables ? Dire les inimitiés en famille », *Genèses*, n° 96, n° 3, p. 9-34.

Gollac S., 2003, « Maisonnée et cause commune : une prise en charge familiale », *Charges de famille. Dépendance et parenté dans la France contemporaine*, Gojard S., Gramain A. and Weber F. (eds), Paris, La Découverte, p. 274-311.

Gross M., 2014, « Grands-parents, homopaternité et gestation pour autrui en France », *Homosexualité et parenté*, Paris, Armand Colin, p. 157-173.

Grysole A., 2020, « Fabriquer des enfants redevables. Pluriparentalité transnationale les États-Unis et le Sénégal », *Revue des politiques sociales et familiales*, vol. 134, n° 1, p. 11-24.

Hochschild A. R., 2012 (1983), *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*, University of California Press.

Herpin N. and Déchaux J.-H., 2004, « Entraide familiale, indépendance économique et sociabilité », *Économie et statistique*, vol. 373, n° 1, p. 3-32.

Imbert C., Lelièvre E. and Lessault D., 2018, *La famille à distance. Mobilités, territoires et liens familiaux*, Paris, France, Editions de l'INED.

Lareau A. and Rao A. H., 2020, "Intensive Family Observations: A Methodological Guide", *Sociological Methods & Research*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0049124120914949> (accessed on 27 October 2022).

Le Pape M.-C., Tenret É., Véron B., Pietropaoli K., 2018, « “Ce sont ceux qui en parlent le plus qui en font le moins”. Pratiques et normes de solidarité familiale chez les femmes et les hommes dans la France contemporaine », *Nouvelles Questions Féministes*, vol. 37, n° 1, p. 31-51.

- Le Pape M.-C., Portela M. and Tenret É., 2018, « "Ça n'a pas de sens de compter comme ça". Difficultés et limites d'une approche comptable des aides financières et matérielles apportées aux jeunes adultes dans la famille », *Sociologie*, vol. 9, n° 4, p. 417-436.
- Merla L., Kilkey Majella, Baldassar Loretta, 2020, « Examining transnational care circulation trajectories within immobilizing regimes of migration : implications for proximate care », *Journal of Family Research*.
- Martial A., 2005, « Comment rester liés ? », *Terrain*, n° 45, p. 67-82.
- Martin C., 2015, « Solidarités familiales : débat scientifique, enjeu politique », *Faire ou faire-faire ? Famille et services*, Le sens social, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, p. 55-73.
- Papuchon A., 2014, « Les transferts familiaux vers les jeunes adultes en temps de crise : le charme discret de l'injustice distributive », *Revue française des affaires sociales*, n° 1-2, p. 120-143.
- Perrin-Heredia A., 2011, « Faire les comptes : normes comptables, normes sociales », *Genèses*, n° 84, p. 69-92.
- Pitrou A., 1978, *Vivre sans famille ? Les solidarités familiales dans le monde d'aujourd'hui*, Toulouse, France, Privat.
- Portela M. and Raynaud É., 2019, « Comment se composent les ressources des jeunes ? Le dossier illustré par l'enquête nationale sur les ressources des jeunes (ENRJ) », *Revue française des affaires sociales*, n° 2, p. 23-52.
- Roussel L. and Bourguignon O., 1976, *La famille après le mariage des enfants : étude des relations entre générations*, Paris, France, Presses universitaires de France.
- Touahria-Gaillard A. and Trenta A., 2019, « La rémunération des aidants profanes dans les politiques du handicap et du vieillissement : entre enrôlement et libre choix des proches de personnes dépendantes », *Revue française des affaires sociales*, vol. 1, p. 199-215.
- Trabut L., Lelièvre É. and Bailly E., 2015, « Does the Household-Based Census Capture the Diversity of Family Configurations in France ? », *Population*, vol. 70, n° 3, p. 637-665.
- Wall K., Widmer E. D., Gauthier J.-A., Cesnuité V., Gouveia R. (eds), 2018, *Families and*

*Personal Networks: An International Comparative Perspective*, Palgrave Mcmillan, p. 225-238.

Weber F., 2002, « Pour penser la parenté contemporaine », *Les Solidarités familiales en questions : entraide et transmission*, Debordeaux D. and Strobel P. (eds), Paris, Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, p. 73-106.

Weber F., 2013, *Penser la parenté contemporaine. La force du quotidien*, Éditions Rue d'Ulm, collection Sciences Sociales.

Young M. and Willmott P., 2011 (1957), *Family and Kinship in East London*, Routledge, *Routledge Revivals*.

Zelizer V., 2005, *The Purchase of Intimacy*, Princeton, Princeton University Press.