

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE
BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT SEMINAR
Spring 2015

**Margaret Stanton, Center for the Advanced Study of Human
Paleobiology, Columbian College of Arts & Sciences,
The George Washington University**

“Maternal behavior and early social experience in wild chimpanzees”

Early social experiences can have lasting consequences in terms of behavioral development and future fitness outcomes. In primates, early experiences are mediated in large part through the mother who invests a substantial amount of time and energy in a few, high-quality offspring. Parental investment theory predicts that maternal resources are finite and how a mother behaves towards and invests in her offspring is based on factors including maternal age and condition, and offspring age, sex, and parity. Chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*) are one of human's closest relatives; yet until recently much about maternal behavior and the consequences of variation in early experience in the wild remained unknown. Using 40+ years of data on the Kasekela community of Gombe National Park, Tanzania, we investigated common sources of variation in maternal behavior in mammals and found relationships between maternal behavior and birth order, infant sex, and maternal stress hormone concentrations. We are currently applying this knowledge to understand how variation in maternal behavior and social experience in general relates to fitness outcomes, such as survival and dominance rank acquisition.

TUESDAY March 24, 2015

3:00-4:15 PM

Johnson Center Room Meeting Room F