

# Report

December 2003

Volume 48:4



## IN THIS ISSUE:

### Family Focus on... Religion

pages F1-F24

According to writer Christina Baldwin, "Spirituality is the sacred center out of which all life comes..." For many families, participation in a faith community and belief in core values form the basis of their life together.

In this issue, we explore how faith and spirituality contribute to individual and family resilience, why the church is so important for many African Americans, and how religious belief can shape and enrich family life. Also included is information about President Bush's Faith-Based and Community Initiative.

As always, we welcome your comments.

## Next issue:

### Mental Health over the Life Course

## Look Ahead and Plan to Attend the 2004 NCFR Conference in Orlando

NCFR's conferences have always tried to be relevant with issues that are "in the news" about families. The 2004 Conference, November 15-20, at the Rosen Centre Hotel in Orlando, FL, promises to be particularly relevant. The theme is dealing with *Inequalities and Families*.

Jay Teachman, 2004 Program Chair states, "Inequalities are inclusive. Inequalities are ubiquitous and overlapping and include dimensions involving nations, cultures, power, income, gender, religion, race/ethnicity, health, etc. There is a diversity of families, many facing several of these inequalities simultaneously. The intersection of multiple inequalities may be one of the most difficult obstacles faced by disadvantaged families. There is plenty of evidence showing that inequality is rising (particularly with respect to income) both within the US and internationally. A vast array of research has already documented the impact that inequalities can have on families."

### Conference Goals

1) To provide greater insight into the multidimensional nature of inequality, including but not limited to, income, gender, and race/ethnicity and why the study of inequalities is important for families.

2) To review cross-national evidence on the relationship between inequality and family functioning with particular emphasis on how this relationship varies according to history, culture, and political environment.

3) Drawing on historical and cross-cultural evidence, to assess the potential for reasonable and cost-effective public and private policies designed to reduce the negative consequences of inequalities for families.

### Plenary Speakers

**Arland Thornton**, Univ. of Michigan - *International Networks, Ideas, and Family Change*

**Tim Smeeding**, Ctr. for Policy Research and the Luxembourg Income Study, Syracuse Univ. - *No Child Left Behind: Economic Inequality and Social Consequences for American Kids in Comparative Perspective*

**Peggy Dilworth-Anderson**, Univ. of North Carolina-Greensboro - *Inequalities Associated With Race*

**Julie Brines**, Univ. of Washington - *Gender Inequalities*

### Research Updates for Practitioners and Special Sessions

**Randal Day**, Brigham Young Univ., *The Role of Fathering in Child Development*

2004 Conference continued on page 4



# President's Report

## Are You Coming to Orlando?

I hope you are planning to participate in the 2004 NCFR Conference on *Inequalities and Families* chaired by Jay Teachman in Orlando Florida, November 17-21. In thinking about my participation in NCFR sometimes I feel like Admiral Stockdale in the 1992 vice presidential debates: "Who am I? Why am I here?" I can't tell you what we'll be doing during my term as president until after the Board meets in November which

will occur after I am writing this in October. But, I can tell you who I am in hopes that my NCFR experience helps you think about how you might become involved in the organization if you are not already and want to be.

I began attending NCFR conferences in the 1970s and met colleagues in paper sessions, section meetings and through

receptions and NCFR field trips. My first NCFR organizational activity was setting up seminars in the round. I had asked Pauline Boss, the 1986 Program Chair, if there was something I might do. I was elected chair of the nominations committee of the Research and Theory Section in 1988 and asked in 1990 to participate in an ad hoc publications committee

*President's Report continued on page*

### Report

of The National Council on  
Family Relations

Mission Statement for the Report:

*REPORT, the quarterly newsletter of the National Council on Family Relations, strives to provide timely, useful information to help members succeed in their roles as researchers, educators, and practitioners. Articles address family field issues, programs and trends, including association news.*

President: Gay C. Kitson  
Editor: Michael L. Benjamin  
Managing Editor: Sasha A. Smith  
Topics Feature Writer: Nancy Giguere

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NEWS DEADLINES: January 5 for March issue; April 5 for June issue; July 5 for September issue; October 4 for December issue.

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## We Want You to Serve in Leadership Positions

Edith A. Lewis and Ben Silliman, CFLE  
NCFR 2002-2003 Elections Council Co-Chairs

**W**e want your involvement in our organization! We understand that many public and private educational institutions have recently faced budget reductions, particularly during the last year. Please do not let those limitations interfere with your participation in NCFR. We encourage you to have your sections or fellow NCFR members nominate you for leadership positions in the organization for the 2005 election.

We have submitted a nomination slate (ballots will be mailed to members in spring 2004) for terms that will be filled at the end of the national meeting in Orlando, Florida in November 2004. The nominees are:

### **Board Member-At-Large (2004-2007): (2 Positions)**

Wayne M. Blake, CFLE - SC	vs.	Robert Reyes, CFLE - PA
Deborah Barnes Gentry, CFLE - IL	vs.	Jeffrey H. Larson, CFLE - UT

### **Association of Councils President (2004-2007): (1 Position)**

Marcie J. Brooke, CFLE - MN	vs.	Shulamit Ritblatt - CA
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### **Student/New Professional Board Representative (2004-2006): (1 Position)**

Jason D. Hans, CFLE - MO	vs.	Julie K. Kohler - FL
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### **Program Chair Elect (2004-2005) (Program Chair for 2006 Conference): (1 Position)**

William D. Allen - MN	vs.	Libby B. Blume, CFLE - MI
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### **Elections Council (2004-2007): (2 Positions)**

Tammy L. Henderson, CFLE - VA	vs.	Teresa W. Julian - OH
Laura S. Smart, CLFE - IL	vs.	Judy Watson Tiesel - MN

### **Fellowship Committee (2004-2007): (2 Positions)**

Patricia Bell-Scott - GA	vs.	Gladys J. Hildreth, CFLE - KY
Gary L. Hansen - KY	vs.	Gregory E. Kennedy - MO

### **Student/New Professional Program Representative (2004-2006): (1 Position)**

Elise Radina, CFLE - MO	vs.	Ani Yazedjian - IL
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*Leadership Positions continued on p*

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*continued from page 2*

reviewing *Family Relations* that was chaired by Gary Lee. After participating in the Theory Construction and Research Methodology workshop for many years, I became chair of that program – my first NCFR trip to Orlando in 1992. I was elected treasurer of NCFR in 1995. Greer Litton Fox, the president of NCFR at the time, asked me in 1997 to be the Chair of the Executive Director Search Committee. I was subsequently elected program chair for the NCFR meeting in Rochester, New York, and then president-elect which brings me to where I am now.

My NCFR history illustrates some of the routes to participation in NCFR: volunteering in sections you belong to; putting your name on lists asking for volunteers; obtaining visibility through papers and publications; and making friends at NCFR meetings who invite you to participate in activities.

A key element to being asked to participate again is doing what you volunteered or were appointed to do in a fairly cheerful and timely manner. A reputation for not getting tasks done can rapidly spread to no more requests for your help.

With more “on the job” education provided in many of the elected positions under NCFR’s Carver Governance Model, there should be less need for the route I took and more diversity in the ways people take leadership positions. In fact, former Election Council Chairs Maxine Hammonds-Smith and Leonora Johnson are developing a leadership institute to identify individuals who are or would like to be involved in NCFR activities. You can contact Maxine at hammondssmith\_mm@tsu.edu or let me know of your interest at the e-mail address below.

Finally, in my two years as president elect, I have had the opportunity to watch Carol Darling in her work as president. She has been thorough, conscientious, and fun to work with. We all owe her many thanks for her able leadership. I hope to see you in Orlando!

Gay C. Kitson  
NCFR President  
E-mail: kitson@uakron.edu

## LEADERSHIP POSITIONS *continued from page 2*

The Elections Council wants to encourage ALL members to become involved in leadership positions of our organization. There are several avenues to become involved in NCFR and your involvement can begin by becoming active in various sections, as well as participating as a Student /New Professional.

Our charge from the Board is to develop a slate that reflects the selection criteria in the revised NCFR By-laws.

Here are the Selection Criteria (Source: NCFR By-Laws, May, 2002, Article IX, Section 2, B 3) to help you identify potential candidates for upcoming elections:

- knowledge and/or experience in areas reflecting broad trends in Family Science in the United States and internationally.
- knowledge and/or experience with policy governance and the development of ENDS policies.
- knowledge and/or experience in leadership roles through Sections, Association of Councils, Elections Council, Conference planning, publishing, public policy or other committee work.
- diversity in race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, gender, age, physical ability or religion.
- diversity of geographic location.
- diversity in educational training.
- diversity in employment and/or professional settings; and
- specific characteristics identified by the Board of Directors and charged to the Elections Council before the call for nominations is developed and circulated.

Keeping these criteria in mind, we invite self-nominations or nominations of others for the following positions for the next slate to be elected in the spring of 2005. The terms for these positions will begin November 2005 at the end of the annual conference in Phoenix, Arizona.

*President-elect - 2005-2007  
(President 2007-2009)*

The President-elect shall assist the President and in the event of the President's absence, incapacitation, resignation or death, the President's duties (general

management of the business of the NCFR Board) shall devolve upon the President-elect.

*Three Board Members-At-Large - 2005-2008*

NCFR Board Members are responsible for the overall governance of the organization on behalf of all NCFR members. They attend three face-to-face Board meetings per year, along with regular conference calls and email exchanges. They take responsibility for maintaining contact with the membership and to reflecting the needs of all NCFR members.

*Two Elections Council Members - 2005-2008*

It is the responsibility of the Elections Council to prepare a slate of nominees for officers and members of the Board of Directors, Fellowship Committee, Program Chair-elect, and the Elections Council positions, and to ensure that the policies regarding recruitment as provided by the NCFR Bylaws, and the Elections Council Policies and Procedures are followed.

*Conference Program Chair-elect - 2005-2006  
(Program Chair for 2007 Conference)*

Serves one year as Conference Program Chair-elect, proceeding to Program Chair the following year and has primary responsibility for selecting the theme for the Annual Conference and selecting plenary and other special speakers.

*Association of Councils Program Chair - 2005-2008*

Serves as a member of the Annual Conference Program Committee. Presides at meetings of the A.C. and the A.C. Executive Board in the event of the absence of the A.C. President. Works with the A.C. President to plan sessions sponsored by the A.C. during the Annual Meeting. Attend meetings of the A.C. Executive Board, consult with the A.C. President regarding articles for *Affiliate Connection*, the A.C. newsletter, and responsibilities at the Annual Conference.

Send nominations to Jeanne Strand at [jeanne@ncfr.org](mailto:jeanne@ncfr.org). For additional information, please review our website, [www.ncfr.org](http://www.ncfr.org). *Deadline for nominations is January 31, 2004.*





# Executive Review

## Year in Review

First of all, many thanks to program chair Paul Amato, Ph.D., and conference coordinator Cindy Winter, CMP, for all their hard work on NCFR's 65th annual conference in Vancouver. Congratulations to outgoing president Carol A. Darling, Ph.D., CFLE, for the successes of the past two years. And, finally, a round of applause for Gay Kitson, Ph.D., NCFR's 2003-05 president, and Pamela Monroe, Ph.D., president-elect, as they take office.

As 2003 comes to a close, it's time to report on the accomplishments of the past year and look forward to upcoming changes that will improve services and create more value for our members. In 2004, the NCFR staff will continue to

work towards the goals identified in our strategic plan:

- To establish NCFR as an influential player in public policy.
- To increase NCFR's visibility nationally and internationally to better impact family life.
- To improve member acquisition and retention.

### Finances

At the close of the fiscal year (May 31, 2003), NCFR's independent audit showed a financially stable organization with a net surplus of \$110,000 for a total fund balance of \$878,338 that will replenish the prior year's fiscal deficit. This represents an increase of 14 percent

over 2002. NCFR's total assets for 2003 were \$1,565,163, an increase of 5 percent over 2002.

NCFR's 2003 total liabilities of \$677,215 were down 10 percent from the previous year. (See financial reports on pages 5 and 6.)

We continue to provide the best possible products and services in a cost-effective manner as possible to NCFR members. For this reason, we will not increase membership dues and conference registration fees in 2004.

### Public Policy Activities

In 2000, NCFR created a Public Policy Committee (PPC). Over the past three

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## 2004 CONFERENCE *continued from page 1*

Harris Rosen, Rosen Properties, et al, *The Tangelo Project: Making a Difference in the Community*

### New Changes for Submitting Your 2004 Conference Proposal!

NCFR is delighted to announce that this year you will be able to submit your proposal online! Between February 1-15, 2004 you can go to NCFR's Website and click on Submit a Proposal. Follow the instructions explicitly. Proposals will be sent to the Section Chairs and Reviewers online, and we will also be able to send the letters of acceptance and rejection via e-mail.

If you are uncomfortable submitting online, we will still accept proposals by mail this year. Look for specific instructions in the *Call for Proposals* which is inserted in this issue of the NCFR Report.

Many people are hesitant to submit a proposal for the NCFR Annual Conference. Presenting a paper at the NCFR conference is a step toward becoming more involved in the organization. You can advance your career and get to know leaders in the family field. Having conference presentations at a professional

conference on your resume can help you as you renew your professional licenses.

NCFR Sections are the bread and butter of conferences, and these sessions are built from proposals submitted. Attendees often wonder why a particular topic has not been addressed at a Conference. The answer is that we can't have sessions on certain topics if we don't have the submissions! If you have done work on a topic, submit the proposal. It is important to submit, because allocations for Sections are based on the number of submissions. If a Section has just a few proposals submitted, only a few sessions will be allocated.

All proposals are blind reviewed by seasoned professionals - every proposal has the same chance for acceptance. Many educational institutions provide travel funds only to those presenting at a conference. Therefore, it is important for you to submit a proposal. If you are hesitant

about submitting one by yourself, ask a colleague to work with you on a project, and submit it jointly. If your proposal is accepted and you present at the conference, you will be recognized by your peers. Leaders in the family field may be in the audience. You will receive feedback on your work that will help you learn about your strengths and weaknesses as you advance in your career.

If you have hesitated to submit a proposal in past years, I encourage you to give it a try this year. You will find that can be one of the most rewarding experiences of your career. If by chance your proposal doesn't get accepted this year, you can learn from the process, and the feedback will aid you as you prepare for the following year.

Cindy Winter, CMP  
Conference Director  
E-mail: [cindy@ncfr.org](mailto:cindy@ncfr.org)

## Reflection - Celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family

Keep watching in the next few months for special sessions that will be held in conjunction with the 10th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

## EXECUTIVE REVIEW *continued from page 4*

years, the PPC has spent a good deal of time developing its structure, goals, and intent. Members have also worked on establishing the PPC's role in relationship to the Board and to the organization as a whole.

NCFR has established an ongoing agenda and activities to educate our members, policymakers, and the wider public. The Public Policy Committee is working with NCFR staff member Laura Eiklenborg on a variety of activities.

**2003 fact sheets.** The PPC and other interested NCFR members developed four fact sheets:

- Assuring the Future: Family Life Education
- Family Caregivers: Helping Families Meet the Needs of Older Adults
- Health and Economic Well-Being of Rural Families
- Marriage Promotion in Low-Income Families

**2003 briefing papers.** The following policy briefs were developed with funds from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

- Effective Mothering in Low-Income and Working Poor Families
- Economic Stability and Financial Decision Making in Low-Income and Working-Poor Families
- Competing Stressors and Tensions in Low-Income and Working-Poor Families

The fact sheets and policy briefs were mailed to 1800 national, state, and local policymakers throughout the United States.

**2004 fact sheets.** The Public Policy Committee is in the process of identifying topics. These will be determined to a large extent by the issues considered during second session of the 108th Congress. Potential topics include (but are not limited to):

- Youth and the adult justice system.
- The effects of incarceration on the entire family.
- Affordable health care for all family members.
- Older adults, Medicare, and affordable health care options.

- Grandparents parenting grandchildren.
- Early childhood education.

**Families: Perspectives on Research and Policy.** This book relates current research to a range of policy recommendations that are important for family development. It will be edited by Thomas R. Chibucos, Ph.D., the 2002-2003 PPC chair. The book is intended for advanced undergraduate or beginning graduate students, public policymakers, professionals, and families at all ages and stages.

### Policy and education conferences.

NCFR convened the 4th annual Public Policy Conference, "Families and Health" in Washington, D.C. on April 10-11, 2003. Eighty people attended. For the first time, we partnered with our sister organization, the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS).

In 2004, we again will co-host the Public Policy Conference with AAFCS. The 5th annual Public Policy Conference will take place April 1-2. The conference will feature

- **Congressional briefing:** Invited guests will include members of Congress and

their staff, conference attendees, press, and the public. A panel featuring NCFR experts will focus on a family policy issue being discussed in Congress. A poster session will feature research by NCFR members.

- **Student roundtable:** We hope this will attract more students to the conference and increase student awareness of the link between public policy and family scholarship.

- **Workshops:** These sessions, based on our new publication, *Families: Perspectives on Research and Policy*, will be organized around a common theme, "Drawing Policy Implications from Research."

**Collaboration with Halsey, Rains & Associates.** Since 2000, NCFR has been involved with Halsey, Rains & Associates (HRA) through the Coalition for Professional Certification (CPC). The CPC is a group of private sector certifying bodies that came together in 1997 to present a unified voice in Washington, D.C. on

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EXHIBIT A		
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON FAMILY RELATIONS		
STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS		
FOR THE YEARS ENDED MAY 31, 2003 AND 2002		
	2003	2002
<b>Support and Revenue:</b>		
Grants and Contributions:		
Unrestricted	\$ 84,090	\$ 32,494
Dues	346,737	328,039
Fees and Subscriptions	807,365	499,783
Registration and Exhibits	211,446	181,283
Special Projects (Less Expenses of \$35,951)	(951)	-
<b>Investment Income:</b>		
Interest and Dividends	21,368	29,459
Realized Gain/(Loss)	(9,215)	1,914
Unrealized Gain/(Loss)	(23,120)	(23,742)
Total Investment Income	(10,967)	7,631
Miscellaneous	1,749	5,093
<b>Total Support and Revenue</b>	<b>1,439,469</b>	<b>1,054,323</b>
<b>Expense:</b>		
<b>Program Services:</b>		
Membership	275,074	273,929
Information Dissemination	369,258	271,644
Educational Activities	482,112	454,753
<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>1,126,444</b>	<b>1,000,326</b>
<b>Support Services:</b>		
Management and General	202,522	193,750
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>1,328,966</b>	<b>1,194,076</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>110,503</b>	<b>(139,753)</b>
<b>Net Assets - Unrestricted - Beginning of Year</b>	<b>767,835</b>	<b>907,588</b>
<b>Net Assets - Unrestricted - End of Year</b>	<b>\$ 878,338</b>	<b>\$ 767,835</b>



## EXECUTIVE REVIEW *continued from page 5*

certification issues. NCFR is working with CPC to get our Certified Family Life Education (CFLE) certification program recognized on the federal level.

With help from HRA, NCFR has submitted two proposals to the Department of Labor (DOL). The first is a request to fund a collaborative partnership during upcoming 10th anniversary of the International Year of the Family. The second proposal seeks funding to explore the creation of professional standards for family life and parenting educators. In addition to the DOL effort, Halsey, Rains & Associates is working with NCFR to raise our visibility with the administration, federal agencies, and the U.S. Congress.

### Annual Conference

Again, kudos to Paul Amato and the Program Planning Committee. The theme, "What is the Future of Marriage?" was hot! In fact, the theme was so hot that we added a special session hosted

by the Justice Department in Canada on "The Future of Marriage in Canada."

**Positive trends.** According to conference coordinator Cindy Winter, "the general trends over the past four years are positive." As we go to press, the number of pre-registrants (743) shows an increase of 16 percent over 2000. At the same time, the number of conference proposals submitted has also increased over the

four-year span: 547 proposals in 2003, or a 7.5 percent increase over 2000 (see table above). Symposia submissions also rose approximately 20 percent.

**Work-Life Summit.** The Summit is now in its fourth year, and this is the best one yet. We began convening the British Columbia Work-Life Advisory Committee in April 2002, and participants have worked hard to secure all the speakers and sponsors. Sponsors for the Summit include HELP, Bright Horizons Family Solutions, Electronic Arts Canada, Envision Credit Union, Success By 6 - Unite Way of the Lower Mainland, and BC Council for Families.

Another first for the Summit is an Executives Round Table Breakfast. This session is designed for CEOs to discuss the common problems of work-life issues and to show how work-life programs can improve the bottom line. Linda Duxbury will present a brief overview of a study of 4,000 British Columbian workers and their feelings about their work life. Comments from the CEOs will follow.

**Exhibits.** As we go to press, there are currently 16 exhibits. This compares with 35 last year at this time. Several exhibits are free this year, and we are including a special booth for the Medi Awards in an attempt to create more interest in this program. One month before the conference, Combined Books are already at 15. Last year, we only had 18 books at the Conference.

It has been difficult to appeal to exhibitors this year. We have made more calls than ever, but many more publishers are cutting back because of the economic downturn. It is, however, encouraging that the Combined Books are up. Son

## OCTOBER 2003 ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT

### Comparison of Pre-registrations 6 Weeks Prior to the Conference

No. of Registrants	2003 Vancouver, BC	2002 Houston, TX	2001 Rochester, NY	2000 Minneapolis, MN
Total Registrants	743	714	689	641

### Comparison of Proposals Submitted

Submissions	2003 Vancouver, BC	2002 Houston, TX	2001 Rochester, NY	2000 Minneapolis, MN
Total Submissions	547	428	523	509

### NATIONAL COUNCIL ON FAMILY RELATIONS STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION MAY 31, 2003 AND 2002

#### EXHIBIT B

	2003	2002
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current Assets:		
Cash	\$ 26,516	\$ 85,471
Accounts Receivable (Less Allowance for Doubtful Accounts of \$2,000 in 2003 and 2002)	129,718	54,218
Interest Receivable	5,645	6,929
Inventory	29,646	15,982
Prepaid Expenses	22,296	11,332
Total Current Assets	213,821	173,932
Furniture, Equipment and Leasehold Improvements - Net	88,253	91,439
Investments	1,263,089	1,292,213
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 1,565,163</b>	<b>\$ 1,557,584</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts Payable	\$ 24,126	\$ 10,609
Accrued Salaries	9,589	8,541
Accrued Vacation	11,115	10,026
Other Accrued Liabilities	2,582	2,983
Refundable Advances	-	70,000
Deferred Revenue	226,190	234,358
Award Funds Held	287,258	289,668
Funds Held for Affiliates and Sections	116,355	137,400
Total Current Liabilities	677,215	763,585
Long-term Liabilities:		
Deferred Revenue	9,610	26,164
Total Liabilities	686,825	789,749
Net Assets - Unrestricted	878,338	767,835
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 1,565,163</b>	<b>\$ 1,557,584</b>

## EXECUTIVE REVIEW

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of those who traditionally had full booths have come in with the Combined Books or Take One. Here are three of the biggest challenges we face:

- Publishers and other companies are cutting back their exhibits because of travel cost. Many now exhibit only at conferences of 2,000 or more attendees.
- Authors complain that their publishers are not marketing their books. Even when we call the publishers, some still balk. Strong convincing on our part helps to sway others.
- We must try to find new exhibitors, even though conference attendees want publishers. Recent mergers and acquisitions have reduced the willingness of publishers to exhibit. In addition, publishers get more sales with less cash outlay through online sources such as Amazon or Barnes and Noble.

Call us with your suggestions for potential exhibitors! Pictures and more news from the Annual Conference sessions will appear in the March 2004 *Report*.

### Internet Technology

**NCFR website.** Our website attracts nearly 800 visitors per day and that number is growing. To improve membership services via the Internet, we are redesigning the website under John Pepper's direction. The new website will go live by this winter and will include:

- Simple navigation.
- Streamlined content.
- Easy search capabilities.
- Personalized access.
- Instant access to online member services.
- Confirmation of purchased services such as membership, conference registrations, and products.
- Membership renewal notifications via e-mail.
- The ability to subscribe or unsubscribe to various e-mail discussion forums without delay.

**NCFR database.** We are upgrading the database to an online association management system (AMS) through the

## MEMBERSHIP COUNTS

Member Type	9/30/2003	9/30/2002	9/30/2001	9/30/2000	9/30/1999
Colleague	1301	1264	1263	1338	1352
Benefactor	107	93	98	106	94
Supporting	489	479	484	453	442
Student 1-journal	401	455	382	299	352
Student 2-journal	387	365	313	340	284
Organization	98	110	125	141	137
Associate	754	801	905	908	848
Life	33	33	34	34	33
Emeritus	118	101	83	24	2
Totals	3688	3701	3687	3643	3544

## JOURNAL OF MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY COUNTS

Recipient	9/30/2003	9/30/2002	9/30/2001	9/30/2000	9/30/1999
Subscribers				3107	3196
Individual U.S.	82	96	87	n/a	n/a
Institution U.S.	2238	2267	2321	n/a	n/a
Individual Non-U.S.	23	34	43	n/a	n/a
Institution Non-U.S.	445	513	559	n/a	n/a
Members	2560	2572	2590	2653	2852
Exchanges	15	70	61	88	83
Totals	5363	5552	5661	5848	6131

## FAMILY RELATIONS COUNTS

Recipient	9/30/2003	9/30/2002	9/30/2001	9/30/2000	9/30/1999
Subscribers				1346	1341
Individual U.S.	4	13	10	n/a	n/a
Institution U.S.	1065	1036	1066	n/a	n/a
Individual Non-U.S.	5	8	9	n/a	n/a
Institution Non-U.S.	145	171	200	n/a	n/a
Members	2409	2416	2371	2438	2386
Exchanges	11	52	46	61	56
Totals	3639	3696	3702	3845	3783

website. The new AMS database will go live by the spring of 2004. The database will allow the members to:

- Modify member content such as biographical information, e-mails, mailing addresses and list subscriptions in real time.
- Renew CFLE dues directly online.
- Receive printable receipts with all purchased services.

- Register online for TCRM, Public Policy Conferences and other ancillary events.

- Review their account and purchase history.

### Membership and Journals

Although we have incurred a slight dip in the overall membership, we, nevertheless, are holding our own! (See *Membership Counts table above*.)

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## EXECUTIVE REVIEW *continued from page 7*

**Retention.** Under Sasha Smith's leadership, we are making it easy to renew. Instead of mailing a renewal form every few months, Sasha now sends an e-mail notifying members that their expiration date is looming. The e-mail gives renewal options, including online renewal, fax, mail, or a call to the office. This process benefits everyone: members have less mail to sort through and are less likely to let their membership expire. NCFR saves on postage and paper costs.

For us, membership retention begins as soon as a person completes the membership application. Once the application is received and entered into the database, Sasha e-mails the new member a short welcome note and provides the ID number. This allows Sasha to introduce herself to new members and answer any questions. New members receive a personalized packet containing a welcome letter, Board directory, \$5 coupon for NCFR products, and other useful information. Instead of printing this material on letterhead, Sasha now copies the files onto a CD. The CD is mailed with brochures and a NCFR note pad.

Beginning in March 2004, Sasha plans to offer incentives to encourage renewals within the first month after she sends out the renewal form. Watch for this new program!

**Recruitment.** Staff member Lynda Bessey uses various recruiting tools: the Internet, trade show exhibits, incentive programs, member-get-a-member program and the professor outreach program. Write in for our new membership brochure and check out NCFR's newly designed exhibit on the website. It's great!

Major recruitment efforts will focus on family sociologists and Extension educators. We will work with President Gay Kitson and her network in family sociology field and Extension.

**Journals.** Despite disruptions caused by the transition to a new publisher (Blackwell Publishing Company) and the recent bankruptcy of a major subscription company, our journals continue to hold their own. The subscription rate for both has decreased less than 1 percent in the last year. (*See chart on page 7.*) Our marketing focus for 2004 is the non-U.S. institutional market.

### **Certified Family Life Education Department**

Dawn Cassidy and her colleagues, Laura Eiklenborg and Jeanne Strand, continue to develop the CFLE department. They received 40 applications for the spring 2003 review and 28 for the fall review. In addition, they received 92 abbreviated applications during the year.

**Product development.** In 2003, the department developed:

- **Family Life Education: Integrating Theory and Practice Textbook.** This new publication became available in May 2003 and has been selling well. Many people are ordering it as a text or text supplement. We mailed a postcard featuring this book and the new Vision 2003 book to approximately 13,000, including NCFR members and graduate school departments.

- **Family Science: Professional Development and Career Opportunities.** This booklet, written for students and new professionals, provides information on career options in the field and presents the advantages of certification. The booklet, which is available for distribution, is an important contribution to our goal of increasing awareness of family life education as a profession.

- **Registry of Marriage Educators.** We have created the NCFR Registry of Marriage Educators in response to the pending Healthy Marriages legislation. So far we have about 40 people on the registry. We continue to send the Department of Health and Human Services an updated list.

- **Fact sheet.** Laura Eiklenborg worked with Wally Goddard and others to produce "Assuring the Future: Family Life Education," which has been posted on the NCFR website and distributed at the NCFR exhibit at various conferences.

- **CFLE Network.** This newsletter is now 16 pages and features at least one content article and several book reviews. The new format allows us to include a second color for approximately the same cost as a 12-page newsletter. We have also redesigned the masthead and will continue to improve the design.

**2004 initiatives.** These will include:

- A syllabus collection.

- An internship/practicum handbook.
- A promotional CD.
- A poster contest.
- An expanded "Tips for Families" on NCFR's Website.
- Increased marketing of the CFLE designation through the Affiliated Council network.
- An effort to clarify the scope of Family Life Education.
- Announcements of continuing education credits in the NCFR journals.

**Federal job classification.** Dawn Cassidy has discovered that no classification or code for CFLEs exists in the Department of Labor's 2002-03 Occupational Outlook Handbook. Official recognition of the title "family life educator" would advance the profession considerably.

A major goal in 2004 will be to determine what it takes to create a new classification Recognition by the Department of Labor (DOL) would pave the way for acceptance of CFLE certification at the state and local level.

We are working with Halsey Rains & Associates on a proposal to the DOL. We will request a job classification structure that would consist of a continuum - from individuals with no formal academic training through those with the CFLE credential. This would create a career path for those interested in working with families.

**Academic program reviews.** We currently have 77 approved CFLE programs: 64 undergraduate and 13 graduate programs. The Academic Program Review Committee approved the following programs in the 2003 calendar year:

- Montana State University, Bozeman, *Family and Consumer Sciences*
- University of Utah, Salt Lake City, *Family and Consumer Studies*
- Harding University, *Family and Consumer Sciences*
- University of Central Oklahoma, *Child Development, Marriage and Family, Gerontology*
- Southwestern College, *Counseling*

*Executive Review continued on page 8*





# Family Policy



## Report From Washington

### Influencing Policy

When NCFR members say they are interested in policy, what exactly can that mean for action? The Policy Committee of NCFR has developed a statement defining what our organization can do to forward policy important to families. The criteria are spelled out. The first point reads: "Emphasize policy education over policy advocacy". This means that we will not make public pronouncements about the position of NCFR unless a rather elaborate set of criteria involving a Board decision have been met.

I think of myself as an activist so when I first heard this statement I was disappointed that we could not lobby—which means to work toward a certain position

which we "know is right." It turns out that NCFR members do not always share views of what is "right" and therefore what some of our members would advocate for would not be approved of by others. The idea of "educating" based on peer reviewed research should be approved by most.

An example of this concept in action occurred this summer as reported in the COSSA Washington UPDATE (Sept. 22, 2003, Vol. 22, Issue 17). An important goal of the biomedical and behavioral research group in Washington is to increase the funding for the National Institutes for Health, the major grants-giving agency which includes family and demographic studies. In each of the last several years there has been an increase for NIH. NIH funding is included in the massive

Labor, Health and Human Services, Education spending bill.

During House consideration of its version of the NIH bill one member offered an amendment which selected five peer-reviewed grants, funded by the NIH, to have their funding rescinded. Four of the grants were for research on sexual health; the fifth grant was for a demographic study. This amendment was defeated 210-212.

Would there be a similar amendment in the Senate? The Washington representatives of biomedical and behavioral research organizations defined the problem as one to preserve the integrity of the peer review system. They set about to "educate and inform" members of the

*Washington continued on page 10*

## EXECUTIVE REVIEW *continued from page 8*

### Media Awards

This summer we surveyed the NCFR membership to determine the usefulness and viability of the Media Awards Competition after 35 years of competition. Not only were NCFR members aware of the competition, but they were unanimous in saying that the competition was an important NCFR activity. Lynda Bessey coordinates the competition, and although she actively solicited entries from film producers and production companies, we received only 59 entries, compared to 121 entries in 2002 - a 51 percent decrease. In 2004, we will focus on university extension programs and departments of communication, video and media, in addition to commercial producers.

### Other Product and Project Development

NCFR staff member Laura Eiklenborg has developed a series of publications based on the NCFR Annual Conferences. She also serves as project director for the Annie E. Casey Foundation project and the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment grant.

**Vision 2003: Contemporary Family Issues.** This publication is a compilation of papers

and presentations from the 2002 annual conference. It is the first in a series of publications that NCFR will produce after each annual conference. The purpose is to wider disseminate of the latest research findings in the field of family science.

**Vision 2004: What is the Future of Marriage?** This is the second in a series of publications based on conference presentations. Anticipated publication date is May 2004.

**Annie E. Casey Foundation project.** NCFR has received a grant of \$35,000 to link research, practice, and policy relevant to family issues. Under the terms of the grant, we will:

- Develop a special session for the 2003 annual conference on newcomer families.
- Convene two study groups on topics jointly agreed upon to produce a synthesis of the latest research.
- Produce two policy briefs from the study group discussions.

**Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT).** This \$20,000 grant from CSAT's

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration will help us determine the role of NCFR members in addressing the needs substance abuse needs of hard-to-reach populations. We will also determine how NCFR members can use a family systems framework when working with these populations. Grant activities include:

- A planning meeting at the NCFR 2003 annual conference.
- A two-day workshop in Washington, D.C., during March 2004. The workshop will feature experts in the family field.
- The development of an action plan.

**"Tips for Families."** This database provides parents with practical information based on current research. This project is directed by Jodi Dworkin, Ph.D., Department of Family Social Science and the Minnesota Extension Service; and Heather Haberman, M.A., Department of Family Social Science, University of Minnesota. "Tips for Families" is currently under construction. To check on our progress,

*Executive Review continued on page 10*

## WASHINGTON *continued from page 9*

Senate and their staffs of the value of sexual health research cited in the House amendment but stressed the needs to protect the integrity of the merit review process. More than 150 organizations sent a letter to critical Senators to oppose the House amendment bill when it came to them. They warned that if "Congress sets about to micromanage individual NIH grants, it would set a dangerous precedent that would have a chilling impact on medical research and threaten to politicize research—which could impair NIH's ability to continue to make scientific progress on which our future health depends." In the end, "educating and informing" paid off. No amendment similar to the House amendment was offered.

After debate the Senate rejected an amendment which would have added 1.5 billion for NIH and the original version was approved. Senate and House versions now go to a joint committee for reconciliation. But the peer-review system was not challenged. We will see what the final funding for NIH turns out to be.

### Tom Chibucos

In the September 2003 NCFR Report, Tom Chibucos wrote an article on the "Role of NCFR in Family in Policy Initiatives: Marriage Promotion as an Exemplar." He ended his paper saying, "I hope members will keep one central fact in mind: Policy that affects families will be made, whether or not NCFR participates

in the discussion. But as family professionals, researchers, and practitioners, we should strive to shape public policy as only we can: by providing the research based information that decision makers and their constituents need to create policies that support and strengthen families." The task then becomes, how to get the policy makers to take research into account when they make policy. You can work as an individual. Those of you in States with Senators and Representatives (unlike D.C.), can visit, phone, or write to your own Representatives and call your research to their attention, particularly if they sit on an appropriate committee.

### Family Impact Seminars

Your Affiliate can work in your state. A number of years ago Karen Bogenschneider, working for County Extension Services in Wisconsin developed the Family Impact Seminar where she arranged with legislators to hold seminars where Dr. B. and her colleagues presented their best researched information about the needs of families in Wisconsin. These seminars were well received and repeated and finally the idea was spread to many other states. I just looked on the Internet under Dr. Bogenschneider's name and found a large number of links to sources of information about her work. If you are one who has missed knowing about this successful model to educate on the state level, try this.

Hearings in Washington should educate and inform, and they do when ideology or economics are not paramount. What is needed is a coalition of organizations here in Washington to work together to make family issues, as represented by peer-reviewed research, more visible to policy makers.

### Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service

You can work in your own neighborhood to get well-researched family programs implemented. Check out SAMHSA on the web to find tested programs to deal with addictions. These programs have been tested in communities, schools, social service organizations, and workplaces across America, and have shown that science-based prevention works. Look at the SAMHSA web page for Model Program. This is policy in action.

This work represents translational research talked about in my last column. The model is to do the research, test it on a variety of populations to see where it works, and then advertise to an appropriate user audience.

Margaret Feldman  
NCFR Policy Representative  
E-mail: mefeldman@aol.com

## EXECUTIVE REVIEW *continued from page 9*

go to [www.ncfr.org/families/index.asp](http://www.ncfr.org/families/index.asp). For more information, e-mail us at [tips4families@che.umn.edu](mailto:tips4families@che.umn.edu).

You can help make this project a success. Here's how:

- Become a reviewer. All information will be peer-reviewed before it appears on the website.
- Submit your work. We need research-based articles and resources that are ready to be used by families.

**International Year of the Family.** Jacki Fitzpatrick, Ph.D., CFLE, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Texas Tech University, is chairing NCFR's 10th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family Committee. Jacki also chairs NCFR's International Section. The celebration will kick off at the annual

conference during the "International Initiatives in Family Life Education" plenary session.

The committee is working on a special summer conference - more to be announced. In addition, the *Journal of Marriage and Family* will publish a special 5th issue in 2004 on "International Perspectives on Families and Social Change." Laura A. Sanchez, Ph.D., Department of Sociology, Bowling Green State University, will be the guest editor. Individual state NCFR councils and college/university councils will also celebrate IYF-2004. Our celebration will end at the 2004 conference in Orlando.

As always, I welcome your comments.

Michael L. Benjamin, M.P.H.  
Executive Director

### LECTURER POSITION—CHILD, FAMILY, AND CONSUMER SCIENCES California State University, Fresno

The Department of Child, Family and Consumer Sciences invites application for a lecturer position in Child and Family Sciences available Fall 2004. Responsibilities include teaching courses in the following broad categories: child development, family relations, intimate interpersonal relationships, parenting, children and families in crisis, and human development. An earned doctorate (Ph.D.) in Family Relations, Child Development, Family and Consumer Sciences or a closely related field is required for appointment to a tenure track position. Application materials, including vita, graduate transcripts, three letters of reference should be received by January 15, 2004 to assure consideration.

William R. Fasse, Chair  
Child, Family and Consumer Sciences Dept.  
California State University, Fresno  
5300 N. Campus Drive M.S. #FFS12  
Fresno, CA 93740-8019  
Phone: 559-278-2283  
E-mail: [williamf@csufresno.edu](mailto:williamf@csufresno.edu)  
Website: <http://cast.csufresno.edu/cfcs>



# CFLE Directions

## CFLE Business Card Collage Provides Overview of FLE Settings and Positions



**A**t the CFLE Reception in Vancouver British Columbia last month we displayed a collage made up of the business cards of Certified Family Life Educators from around the world. The collage was created as a way to show the wide range of settings and positions in which family life educators find themselves working. The cards ran the gamut from universities and colleges to neighborhood family resource centers, sheriff departments, health care, hospices, housing authorities, high schools, churches, social services, cooperative extension and much more. It was great to see how many CFLEs included the CFLE

initials and/or words "Certified Family Life Educator" on their cards. It is that kind of exposure that will help increase awareness of the CFLE designation!

### Two NEW NCFR Products

NCFR is pleased to announce the publication of two new family life education resources.

*Family Science: Professional Development and Career Opportunities – What can you do with a degree in Family Science?* is a pamphlet that provides students with information needed to contemplate and navigate their academic training in the family field, while preparing for a fulfill-

ing professional career. Individual copies are free; multiple copies are available at low cost.

*Pathways to Practice: A Family Life Education Practicum/Internship Handbook.* NCFR members, Jan Wilson, Ph.D., CFLE and Angie O'Malley, Ph.D., CFLE, have edited this must-have resource for anyone involved in organizing and/or supervising internship or practicum experiences for family life education students. The book includes an introduction to family life education, internships and practicums, as well as discussion of "professional issues in the workplace, enhancement of professional status, potential problems and ethical conduct." Special sections for faculty and site supervisors are included. The Appendix includes a collection of various forms, checklists, agreements/contracts, student assignments, and evaluation tools, contributed by numerous NCFR members.

Contact the NCFR office for ordering information for both publications. *Family Science: Professional Development and Career Opportunities* is now available. *Pathways to Practice: A Family Life Education Practicum/Internship Handbook* will be available in late January.

### Member Involvement Needed for FLE Projects to Succeed!

We have a number of important projects in the works in the CFLE department. All are geared towards our overall goal of increasing awareness of family life education as a profession. But in order for them to succeed we need the input of our members. Please consider contributing to these important projects.

### FLE Syllabus Collection

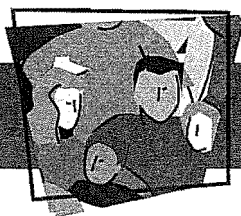
I am frequently contacted by NCFR members seeking resources for teaching classes dealing with family policy, family resource management, etc. They might be inquiring about what text book is

Following is a list of Certified Family Life Educators designated since June 15, 2003. (\* - Provisional)

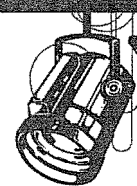
## CERTIFIED FAMILY LIFE EDUCATORS

<b>Arkansas</b> Crystal Whittington *	Merilee Lippert * Marsha Macha - Upgraded to Full Julane McNatt *	<b>Tennessee</b> Jessica Chambers *
<b>California</b> Emily Scott-Lowe	Denise Mosby-Lewis * Ruth Ressler - Upgraded to Full Melonie Sheneman * Nancy Winogrodzki * Debra Wright *	<b>Texas</b> Jeremey Ahlgren * Dianne Costa - Upgraded to Full Christina Wilkie *
<b>Florida</b> Eboni Baugh Yasinny Garcia * Douglas Marans Karina Priest	<b>Minnesota</b> Hee-Kyung Kwon Jackie Mosqueda *	<b>Utah</b> Xochi Minchey *
<b>Illinois</b> Marilyn Bruckman * Bernadette Collins *	<b>Mississippi</b> Melanie Jordan *	<b>Virginia</b> Amanda Garrett * Chris Underwood *
<b>Indiana</b> Sherry Daughetee *	<b>New Jersey</b> Merrilee Rackham *	<b>Washington</b> Jessica Stull *
<b>Kansas</b> Molly Callaghan * Jackie Wallace * Ann Walsten *	<b>New York</b> Krystalyn Davis *	<b>Wisconsin</b> Tiffany Grinde * Kimberly Nelson *
<b>Louisiana</b> Holly Wagner	<b>Ohio</b> Carolyn Dorn * Melodye James *	<b>Canada</b> Elaine Tong *
<b>Michigan</b> Nadine Dolan * Roxanne Forquer * Deborah Jackson *	<b>Oregon</b> Mary Johnson *	<b>Japan</b> Kaori Southwick - Upgraded to Full
	<b>Pennsylvania</b> Barbara Bingham * Heather King *	<b>Military</b> Daphne DiBrogroccio

CFLE Directions continued on page 12



# Members in the News



## Spotlight on S/NP Professional Activities: Dr. Susan Takigiku

**D**r. Susan Takigiku received her Ph.D. in Family Studies from Purdue University. Susan first became involved with NCFR as a master's student at Miami University (Ohio) and has been a member of NCFR for ten years, presenting papers, posters, and round-tables at NCFR conferences. Susan was elected to serve as the Student/New Professional Representative to the Research and Theory Section, 2001-03. She is also a member of the Feminism and Family Studies Section and the Family and Health Section.

As a Student/New Professional, Susan has enjoyed the interaction with other S/NP representatives. According to Susan, "Being an S/NP Representative is a wonderful opportunity to interact with a cohort of your peers and develop long-lasting professional relationships." Susan regards NCFR as her professional "home" and looks forward to attending the annual NCFR conferences.

Susan's research focuses on family and social problems related to substance

abuse. Her dissertation research studied women's drug use and relationship adjustment with male partners over an 18 month period of time, utilizing five waves of data from a National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) study conducted by Dr. Robert A. Lewis, Principal Investigator. For many years, there was a lack of substance abuse research on women of childbearing age. During the 1990s, NIDA funded a series of studies to study women's substance abuse. This research is one of the studies funded by NIDA during the 1990s. It is one of the most substantive, longitudinal studies done on women's drug abuse, utilizing a true randomized, experimental design with three treatment groups: Couples therapy (woman and partner), individual therapy (woman only), and drug education (the control group). Susan's interest was to study simultaneous change in women's drug use and relationship adjustment with male partners before, during, and after drug treatment, using cross-domain growth modeling. Results from this study and others suggest that couples

and family therapy does not substantially reduce women's drug use over time. Findings also revealed little or no relationship between drug use and relationship adjustment for women. However, a significant finding was that poverty was related to women's drug use, even during treatment.

Currently, Susan is an Assistant Professor of Human Development and Family Sciences at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. Building upon her previous work, Susan is in the process of developing a NIDA new investigator grant proposal to study rural substance abuse. A major drug problem in Arkansas, Missouri and Oklahoma is methamphetamine use (speed, "meth," "crank"). Why is methamphetamine use so prominent in Arkansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma? Some research indicates that methamphetamine use is increasing due to drug trafficking organizations in this region, the interstate highway system, and small, hidden "mom and pop" labs in rural

*Spotlight continued on page 13*

## CFLE DIRECTIONS *continued from page 11*

most commonly used for a Marriage and Family course, or a course focused on Parenting. Based upon this expressed interest NCFR is proceeding with a collection of family life education syllabi. The submission deadline has been extended to January 31, 2004. If you teach a course that falls within the ten CFLE family life education content areas and are willing to share your syllabus, consider contributing to the NCFR Family Life Education Syllabus Collection. If your syllabus is accepted for inclusion in the collection, you will receive a free copy. Think how helpful it would be to see how other family professionals are teaching. What resources are they using? How much coverage do they allow for certain topics? Help us make this resource a

reality by contributing your own ideas. You can contact me at [dawn@ncfr.org](mailto:dawn@ncfr.org) for a submission form or more information.

### FLE Poster Contest

The Family Life Education Poster Contest will provide an opportunity to involve students directly in understanding and promoting family life education.

The intent of the Family Life Education Poster Contest is two-fold. NCFR members working in academic settings can use the development of the poster as a class project to encourage students to think about the mission and value of family life education. Entry does not need to be limited to students however! Those of you working in the field may want to include it as part of a staff re-

treat or meeting in order to stimulate discussion of the mission of your organization. Perhaps by participating in the development of a poster depicting family life education, entrants will internalize and better understand what it is they want to accomplish in their practice as family life educators.

We've created a lesson plan to help you implement this project in the classroom or with your staff. Contact Jeanne Strand at [Jeanne@ncfr.org](mailto:Jeanne@ncfr.org) for a copy of the lesson plan.

2004 promises to be a busy year as we continue our efforts to make a place for family life education. We look forward to your involvement.

Dawn Cassidy, M.Ed., CFLE  
Certification Director  
E-mail: [dawn@ncfr.org](mailto:dawn@ncfr.org)

## Moore and Davidson Share 2003 Osborne Award

The Ernest G. Osborne Award honoring three term NCFR President, and outstanding Columbia University educator Ernest G. Osborne, will be shared this year by J. Kenneth Davidson and Nelwyn B. Moore.

The award, which consists of a plaque accompanied by a \$1,000 check and reimbursement of up to \$750 toward the recipients' travel expenses, was given at the NCFR Annual Conference in Vancouver on Saturday, November 22, 2003.

This award recognizes individuals who have demonstrated outstanding leadership and excellence in the teaching of family relationships.

Dr. Nelwyn Moore is professor emeritus of Home Economics at Southwest State University, San Marcos, TX, and a prac-

ticing clinical marriage and family therapist. She served as department chair and as director of the Center for the Family during her tenure there. Nelwyn has received numerous research grants for teaching and curriculum innovations. She worked abroad in Austria, Germany, Denmark, and Sweden studying methods of family life education. She was National President of the Phi Upsilon Omicron Honor Society, a member of NCFR's original task force to study the formation of a family discipline, and the Committee for the Certification of Family Life Educators. Dr. Moore served on the NCFR Board of Directors as Chair of the Education and Enrichment Section and chair of the program committee. She continues to be active in the TX Council on Family Relations of which she was President in



Dr. J. Kenneth Davidson and Dr. Nelwyn Moore

1980. She has a long career as advisor to many students, both undergraduate and graduate levels, and is a tireless worker for educational improvement in the schools of Texas. She is the author of several textbooks on sexuality and family life education, as well as numerous published articles.

Dr. Davidson is currently a professor of Sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, where he has served as Assistant to the Dean for Special Projects in the School of Graduate Studies and Research. His major teaching areas have been in Marriage and Family and in Sociology of Human Sexuality. He has directed numerous research projects including several on impacts of course contents on sexual behaviors. He is the author of numerous refereed publications. Dr. Davidson has had a lifelong career interest in family life education and sex education as demonstrated by the many professional activities in Georgia and Wisconsin. He was President of the Wisconsin Council on Family Relations and was program chair for the state conferences. He has guided many graduate students in their Ph.D. theses. He has served as critical reviewer of manuscripts for dozens of professional publishers of marriage and family books. Dr. Davidson was a member of the NCFR Committee on Standards and Criteria for Certification, which was the foundation of the current CFLE program. He served on the first CFLE review committee, the Implementation committee, and chaired the focus group on Human Sexuality. As a team, Davidson and Moore have authored several textbooks on Family Life Education and on Human Sexuality which are used in college level courses. Both have been tireless supporters of the NCFR Certification of Family Life Educators Program and are themselves, certified CFLEs. They were nominated for their dedication and leadership over long careers in family life education and teaching human sexuality.

## Reuben Hill Award

The 2002 Reuben Hill Award winning publication, "Community differences in the association between parenting practices and child conduct problems" appeared in the May issue of *Journal of Marriage and Family* and was authored by Ronald L. Simons (University of Georgia), Kuei-Hsiu Lin (Iowa State University), Leslie C. Gordon (Clemson University), Gene H. Brody (University of Georgia), Velma Murry (University of Georgia), and Rand Conger (University of California-Davis). This

article was judged by a panel of 35 family scholars to be the best published article of the year that combined theory and research on an important family issue.

The winning study was an investigation of the extent to which the association between child conduct problems and two dimensions of parenting—control and corporal punishment—differed by neighborhood conditions. Participants were 867 African American children in Iowa and 405 in Georgia who were 10-12 years old when first contacted, and their primary caregivers. Findings supported a cultural relative view of child socialization. That is, children's responses to physical punishment varied by the extent to which such parenting practices were normative within the community, and conscientious monitoring and discipline had less impact upon child behavior when the family resided in a neighborhood where deviant behavior was widely prevalent. The deterrent effect of caretaker control on conduct problems also became smaller as deviant behavior became more widespread within a community. The results suggested that particular parenting strategies might be more effective in some neighborhood environments than others.

Marilyn Coleman  
Chair, Reuben Hill Award  
E-mail: colemanma@missouri.edu

## SPOTLIGHT *continued from page 12*

areas. Family stress, poverty, unemployment, mental health disorders, crime, child abuse and domestic violence are also associated with methamphetamine use. However, relatively little is known about methamphetamine use and other forms of illicit drug use in rural communities. Susan hopes that her research can contribute to the understanding of rural substance abuse, treatment, and outcomes.

If you know of a Student or New Professional who is conducting exciting work (research or applied) in the area of children and families, please contact Adriana Umaña-Taylor (umana@uiuc.edu). Self-nominations are welcome!







## Annual Conference



## Thank You!

**T**he 2003 Conference was extremely exciting! When **Paul Amato** selected the theme - **What is the Future of Marriage?** - little did we realize how relevant this would be. In all of 2003, in the entire world, the topic of Marriage was "hot" as some of the provinces in Canada took some bold steps regarding legislation and marriage. Kudos to Paul, the great leader of the 2003 Conference for giving NCFR the opportunity to be an important player in this debate. Paul also did a slightly different thrust from the innovations started in 2002 by Alan Booth, and had some plenaries and RUPS with single speakers, and other sessions were panel discussions. All the sessions were exciting and enlightening. The poster sessions again received the recognition they so rightly deserve. The quality of the posters was great, and with virtually no competing sessions, the attendance was high. Paul did an excel-

lent job as Program Chair. Thanks Paul, for a job well done. He was truly a partner with NCFR staff to ensure that the program met the needs of attendees.

We were extremely pleased with the overall quality of all sessions this year. This was evident from the time the proposals were submitted. There was a substantial rise in the number of symposia that were submitted, and our overall submissions were up by over 100 from last year. The Section Chairs had a difficult time deciding on the program because the quality was extremely high. In fact, we found that it was necessary to add sessions to accommodate all the great proposals.

When an attendee sees a conference run smoothly, it appears to be an easy task to put on a convention. However, a successful conference involves an enormous number of people who spent numerous hours planning the program, executing logistics and seeing to attendees' needs.

**THANK YOU** to the following for their contributions:

- **Section Chairs** did a superb job in planning the excellent, innovative special sessions, paper, symposia, poster and round table sessions. They have a tremendous amount of work in sending out submissions to reviewers, evaluating the reviewers' comments, and formulating the program.
- **Reviewers of the Section proposals** did an excellent job in making sure that all the criteria were adhered to, and carefully scored each proposal based on its merits. This can be a thankless job, but it is vital to ensuring a top-quality conference program. Please note the list of all the reviewers on page 30 of this year's Printed Program.
- **Phyllis Johnson and Cheryl Jeffs, our local arrangements co-chairs, the rest of the local arrangements team, and the BC Council for Families** were superb! They went "the extra mile" in working with NCFR staff in planning, locating contacts, and being part of the advisory team for the Work-Life Summit, and numerous other duties. They worked diligently behind the scenes in the roles such as Hospitality Café, Employment Matching Service, VIP Speaker Hosting, Student Assistant coordination, securing Audio-visual equipment, and Emergency Liaison. They never complained about the work, but were always enthusiastic about their tasks. We had a truly international feeling as we watched the Red Serge of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police escort Board and Staff to the stage as they were introduced. The local arrangements committee also arranged to have The Honourable Linda Reid, Minister of State for Early Childhood Development from the Province of BC welcome attendees.
- **The Work-Life Advisory Committee** was phenomenal! This committee, made up of some NCFR members and others from the business community, began their work in April of 2002. They enthusiastically worked to ensure that the Work-Life Summit was a success. Through their contacts they secured top-notch speakers, and brought in many sponsors. They were truly the ones who made the Summit successful.
- **NCFR staff** worked endlessly behind the scenes. They are the "silent" partners that are absolutely essential making sure that everything runs smoothly. In addition to helping behind the scenes, they attended meetings, provided answers to questions that attendees

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To reach specific staff members:

<b>Michael L. Benjamin</b> <a href="mailto:mbenjamin@ncfr.org">mbenjamin@ncfr.org</a>	<b>Jeanne Strand</b> <a href="mailto:jeanne@ncfr.org">jeanne@ncfr.org</a>
<b>Lynda Bessey</b> <a href="mailto:lbessey@ncfr.org">lbessey@ncfr.org</a>	<b>Judy Schutz</b> <a href="mailto:judy@ncfr.org">judy@ncfr.org</a>
<b>Dawn Cassidy</b> <a href="mailto:dawn@ncfr.org">dawn@ncfr.org</a>	<b>Sasha Smith</b> <a href="mailto:sasha@ncfr.org">sasha@ncfr.org</a>
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To reach NCFR President **Gay Kitson**:  
[kitson@uakron.edu](mailto:kitson@uakron.edu)

## CONFERENCE *continued from page 14*

had, and many other duties. They do a superb job in pulling off all the details.

- More than 40 **Student Aides** assisted in registration, employment service, exhibits, and general assistance. Through their efforts, the conference ran smoothly. **Jim White**, the Student Aides chair, assisted by **Virginia Hayes**, did an excellent job in using setting up the schedule, and training them to do a good job.

Other people who were important to the success of the conference:

**Coordinators of the Pre-conference Workshops.** These sessions provided "hands-on" tools based on the latest techniques and research for family professionals.

**Carl Williams**, our A/V Coordinator for more than 20 years, worked many hours seeing to the needs of program speakers to ensure great presentations. **Ricardo Astillero** does all the video taping of the special sessions. Carl and Rick made a great team.

*Conference continued on page 17*

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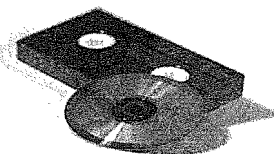
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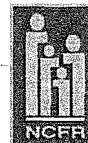
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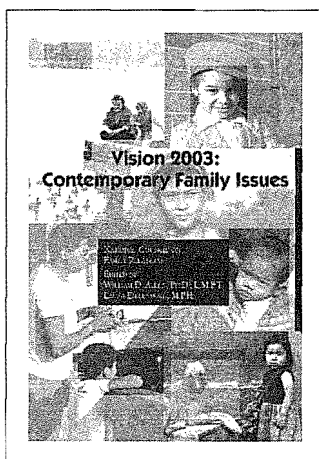
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## Two New Publications from the National Council on Family Relations



### Vision 2003: Contemporary Family Issues

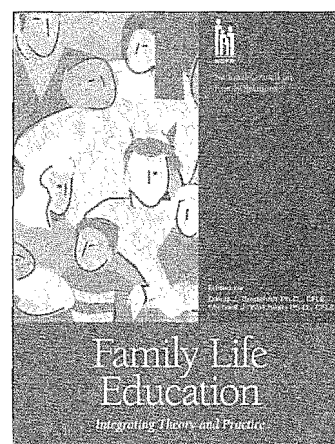
is a thought-provoking collection of articles summarizing presentations given at the 2002 NCFR Annual Conference: Families Over the Life Course.

Vision 2003 covers the following areas of interest to students, researchers, and practitioners in the family field: Marriage, Family Life, and Family Policy.

### Family Life Education: Integrating Theory and Practice

Edited by David J. Bredhoff, Ph.D., CFLE and Michael J. Walcheski, Ph.D., CFLE, Concordia University

NCFR's newest publication is perfect as a supplemental textbook or as a professional resource. It contains relevant cutting edge information on leadership and community involvement, assessment and evaluation in family life education, professional program development, and diversity in family life education. Section One focuses on Current Themes in Family Life Education. Section Two, Family Life Content Areas, integrates the original Curriculum Guidelines and Life Span Framework into ten specific articles. Section Three includes Family Life Education Teaching and Practice Resources.



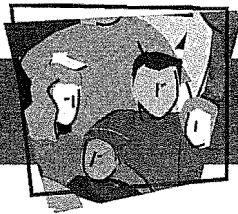
Contributing Authors include:  
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## Section News

## International Section



**B**y the time you read this column, the 2003 Conference will have ended. I wish to thank all of you who contributed to the section's participation in the conference this year. As you might have noticed, we had more paper and poster sessions than in prior years. I hope that the opportunity to showcase your work was a pleasant and productive experience.

The 2003 Conference also ends the term of the current officers. I wish to thank my fellow officers, Colleen Murray (Vice Chair), Paul Schvaneveldt (Student/New Professional Representative), and Bahira Sherif-Trask (Secretary-Treasurer) for their assistance during the past two years. I ask all of you to give your continued support to the new officers – Mary Ann Hollinger (Chair), Annita Sani (Vice Chair), Linda Trollinger (Secretary/Treasurer), and Jane Rose Njue (Student/New Professional Representative).

I also hope that everyone will consider submitting a proposal for the 2004 confer-

ence in Orlando, Florida. Program space is allocated in ratio to the number of submissions. So the more proposals that are submitted to the International Section, the more poster/paper sessions will be given to the section. It would be helpful to receive some submissions relevant to the conference theme, but submissions on many topics are quite welcome. I respectfully request that you follow the instructions in the call for papers very carefully. The instructions will be the template for the reviewers' evaluation form. The more closely you follow the instructions, the more likely that your work will receive a positive evaluation. The consistency with instructions does not guarantee acceptance of your submission, but it does enhance the likelihood of success.

The 2004 theme is Inequalities and Families. Inequalities can be internal (e.g., power differentials among family members) and/or external (e.g., economic, political strati-

fication) to the family. Proposals can focus on inequalities within or across cultures/countries. Given the diverse contexts (e.g., cultural, educational, religious, community) that affect equalities and inequalities, I think that this theme might fit quite nicely with some of the international issues addressed by International Section members.

Of course, proposals on other topics (e.g., elders' roles in family relationships, adolescents' social development, parent-child interactions, marital quality, work-family conflict, the role of technology in relationships, professional development of family studies students/colleagues, public policy initiatives, program evaluations, family education, family therapy) will also be very helpful. Proposals on topics that contrast the conference theme are important because they offer broader appeal and variety for conference attendees. Such

*International Section continued on page 17*

## Client Resources for Therapists

***The Stress Owner's Manual: Meaning, Balance and Health in Your Life (2nd ed.)***

Ed Boenisch, Ph.D. and C. Michele Haney, Ph.D.

\$15.95/224 pages

New edition of practical guide to personal stress management offers specific solutions to help you assess your areas of stress; activities to deal with stress on the spot.

***Making Intimate Connections:******Seven Guidelines for Great Relationships and Better Communication***

Albert Ellis, Ph.D. and Ted Crawford

\$15.95/160 pages

Applies Dr. Ellis's famous "Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy" principles to intimate relationships. Offers seven proven techniques for overcoming relationship problems and improving communication.

***Loving Choices: An Experience in Growing Relationships (2nd ed.)***

Bruce Fisher, Ed.D. and Nina Hart

\$14.95/256 pages

Bruce Fisher's work has renewed the lives of hundreds of thousands of divorced men and women around the world. This powerful, personal guide shows how to build new and lasting loving relationships.

***50 Ways to Love Your Leaver: Getting on With Your Life After the Breakup***

Dwight Webb, Ph.D.

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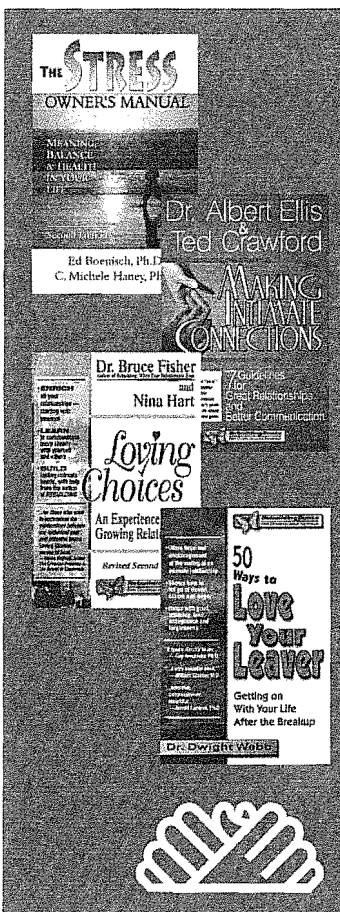
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## Affiliate Connection

### Celebrate the United Nation's 10th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004

**A**s usual, the annual conference was a wonderful and invigorating experience. I hope that you were able to attend and enjoy the outstanding sessions, as well as the opportunity to visit with friends and colleagues. Thanks to Dr. Armint Jacobson, AOC Program Chair, the Association of Councils sponsored some exciting sessions.

At this year's conference, the Association of Councils announced its two Outstanding Student Paper Award winners. The winning undergraduate paper, nominated by Dr. Paul Schvaneveldt from the Utah Council on Family Relations, entitled, "The Effects of Chronic/Terminal Illness on the Family" was written by Terree Carter, Jeffrey Bright, K. Renee Mickens, Amy Shaw, and Emily Schultz. The Outstanding Graduate Student Paper Award recipient was Melissa Rudd for her paper entitled "The Influence of Teenage Childbearing, Family Structure, and Social Support on Educational Attainment among Rural, Low-income Women." Melissa's paper was nominated by Dr. Bonnie Braun from the University of Maryland Council on Family Relations. Cash prizes of \$100 and \$500, respectively, were given for this outstanding work. In addition, Melissa made a brief presentation

about her paper at the Meeting of Presidents or Representatives of Student Affiliated Councils on Friday morning at the conference. I want to acknowledge our AOC Student Representatives, Joi Woodard and Michele Genest, for their excellent work in coordinating the review process. We hope that more of our students will submit papers for consideration next year. Check out the Handbook of Student Affiliated Councils, available on NCFR's website ([www.ncfr.org](http://www.ncfr.org)) for submission details.

As we think ahead to 2004, I'd like to encourage our affiliated councils to highlight their work with and commitment to families by sharing in the 10th anniversary celebration of the International Year of the Family (IYF). The objectives of IYF are to: a) increase awareness of family issues among Governments as well as in the private sector; b) strengthen the capacity of national institutions to formulate, implement and monitor policies in respect of families; c) stimulate efforts to respond to problems affecting, and affected by, the situation of families; d) undertake at all levels reviews and assessments of the situation and needs of families, identifying specific issues and problems; e) enhance the effectiveness of local, national and

regional efforts to carry out specific programs concerning families, generate new activities and strengthen existing ones; and f) improve collaboration among national and international non-governmental organizations in support of families ([www.un.org/esa/socdev/family/TenthAnv/objectives.PDF](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/family/TenthAnv/objectives.PDF)).

I'd like to propose some possible ways to recognize this special year. First, affiliated councils might adopt some international family focus or theme for their annual meetings in 2004. For instance, the Mid-Atlantic Council on Family Relations plans to invite papers related to international family issues such as immigration and acculturation, cross-cultural parenting practices, comparative studies of family policies (e.g., family/maternal leave) in their call for proposals for its 2004 meeting. Meals served at annual conferences during 2004 might incorporate foods and traditions from different cultures. Conference planners might also be sensitive to the locations of their annual meetings, selecting cities or contexts known for ethnic and cultural diversity.

Since some of our affiliated councils, particularly many of our campus councils,

*10th Anniversary continued on page 18*

## INTERNATIONAL SECTION

*continued from page 16*

diversity also allows more opportunities to share the interests and expertise of the International section members.

If you have any questions or comments about the developments in the International Section during the last two years, please feel free to contact me. If you have any comments/questions about the future directions of the International Section, please direct them to the new Chair, Mary Ann Hollinger. Thank you for your interest and support for the section.

Jacki Fitzpatrick  
Outgoing Chair, International Section  
E-mail: [Jacki.Fitzpatrick@ttu.edu](mailto:Jacki.Fitzpatrick@ttu.edu)

## CONFERENCE

*continued from page 15*

With the advent of all the technology in the plenary and special sessions, **Dudley Chancey** provided technical assistance for the plenary and special sessions. He had the responsibility of making sure that all the PowerPoint materials worked on cue.

**Program presenters, discussants, presiders, and recorders.**

**And most of all, to Conference attendees.** Without you, the Conference would not take place.

Thanks to the outstanding, efficient Convention and Visitors Bureau representatives and volunteers who went out of their way to do the "extras" to make everyone feel welcome. The staff at the Hyatt Regency Vancouver did a yeoman's job making quick turns of rooms in a short amount of time. They truly were a team with the NCFR Staff. We also acknowledge their generous donation to the Work-Life Summit.

There are many others who also worked behind the scenes. As you can see, it requires a tremendous number of people to orchestrate a conference, and each person and task is vital. **Thank you one and all.**

Paul R. Amato, Program Chair, E-Mail: [pxa6@psu.edu](mailto:pxa6@psu.edu)

Cindy Winter, CMP, Conference Director, E-mail: [winters@ncfr.org](mailto:winters@ncfr.org)



## Northwest Council on Family Relations

I hope that you all enjoyed your time in Vancouver, BC. There are many other incredible places to visit in the Pacific Northwest, one of them being West Yellowstone, Montana. Thus, the Northwest Council is joining with the Family Science Association to combine the NWCFR and Teaching Family Science Conferences on June 16-19, 2004, in West Yellowstone. Because 2004 is the International Year of the Family, the conference theme is Sharing Information about International Families Through Teaching and Research. Presentation proposals will be due March 1st to Suzanne Smith. Conference registration will be \$120, with a student rate of \$80, and will include a light dinner on the 16th as you arrive, breakfast and lunch on the 17th, all meals on the 18th (including a Chuck Wagon dinner as we often host a location-themed meal on the last night of the conference), and a breakfast buffet on the 19th. If you have questions or comments feel free to contact me. I hope to see all of you there as both conferences always promise a good time, both educationally and socially, so think how exciting a combined conference will be!

Suzanne Smith  
President, Northwest CFR  
E-mail: smithsu@vancouver.wsu.edu

## 2004 Oklahoma Council on Family Relations Annual Conference

The Oklahoma Council on Family Relations is proud to announce its call for proposals for the 2004 Annual Conference at the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond, Oklahoma. The one-day event is scheduled for Friday, March 26, 2004 and will benefit students, instructors, researchers, and practitioners interested in the family. The conference theme is *Building Fantastic Families* and should prove to be one of our best conferences in the state affiliate's history.

Our board encourages researchers and workshop leaders from Oklahoma and surrounding states to submit proposals and participate in this annual event. Our guest speakers are some of the best in the nation on the topic of family strengths.

The opening speaker will be Dr. Raeann R. Hamon. Dr. Hamon is Professor of Family Science and Gerontology and Chair of the Department of Human Development and Family Science at Messiah College in Grantham, Pennsylvania. Additionally, she is President of the Association of Councils for the National Council on Family Relations,

where she is also an active member of the International Section.

Our keynote speaker for the event will be Dr. Nick Stinnett, author of *Fantastic Families: 6 Proven Steps to Building a Strong Family* (2000 Gold Medallion Finalist) and *Magnificent Marriage*.

Dr. Stinnett is a professor of Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Alabama. For twenty-five years Dr. Stinnett has researched strong families worldwide. He will speak on the parenting techniques to build not only strong but fantastic families.

Paper sessions, poster sessions, symposia, workshops, and round tables will be a part of the all day event. The deadline for proposals to the 2004 OCFR Conference must be postmarked by December 30, 2003. For more information on the Annual Conference go to: <http://www.okstate.edu/hes/frcd/service/index.html> or contact Dr. Kent Choate 3800 North May, Oklahoma City, OK 73112 or call at 405-942-3800 ext. 645.

Kent Choate  
President, Oklahoma CFR  
E-mail: kchoate@bgco.org

### INDIANA UNIVERSITY Department of Applied Health Science Bloomington, IN 47405

**Department of Applied Health Science, Assistant Professor, Human Development/Family Studies, tenure track. Begins August, 2004.** Qualifications include doctorate in Human Development/Family Studies or closely related field. Must demonstrate potential for carrying out research endeavors. Applications must be received by January 30, 2004. Responsibilities include teaching both undergraduate and graduate courses in human development/family studies. Conduct research and publish in scholarly journals. Serve on department/school committees and be involved in professional organizations. Send letter of application which includes a brief statement of professional objectives, complete curriculum vitae, and a listing of at least three references. Candidate will be asked to contact references to obtain support letters. Applications should be addressed to: Dr. Kathleen R. Gilbert, Chair, HD/FS Search and Screen Committee, Department of Applied Health Science, HPER 116, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405 (phone 812-855-5209; e-mail: gilbertk@indiana.edu). Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

## 10TH ANNIVERSARY *continued from page 17*

also have service as part of their mission, these groups might coalesce around some type of international service project which benefits families. For example, the Messiah College Council on Family Relations (MCCFR) is planning to collect money to contribute to needy families in Guatemala. Funds collected will be sent to a missionary in Guatemala to purchase clothing and supplies for poor families whose survival is dependent upon what they can scavenge from a dump in Guatemala City. Similarly, the Weber State University Child and Family Studies Student Association will collect and distribute educational toys to children in an orphanage in Ecuador.

Third, campus, state, and regional councils might also call upon its international members to provide special presentations on various aspects of family life from their countries of origin. So, too, panels of students from countries around the world could discuss couple formation practices,

intermarriage, parenting practices or other topics of interest to college-aged students.

Finally, affiliated councils, many of which are already very active in the political arena, might choose to advocate for a particular policy that would be good for families. Similarly, affiliates could offer workshops on how family professionals might evaluate policy initiatives by applying the "Checklist for Assessing the Impact of Policies and Programs on Families," available in NCFR's publication entitled *Public Policy Through a Family Lens*.

For this new year let's be creative in approaching our work in strengthening families and working to support policies and practices which promote healthy family relationships. I hope that our affiliated councils will consider ways in which they can be instruments for attaining some of the IYF's worthy objectives.

Raeann R. Hamon, Ph.D., CFLE  
President, Association of Councils  
E-mail: rhamon@messiah.edu



## CALL FOR PAPERS

### Poster Session

#### Congressional Briefing:

linking family research to family policy



#### 5th Annual NCFR-AAFCS Public Policy Conference

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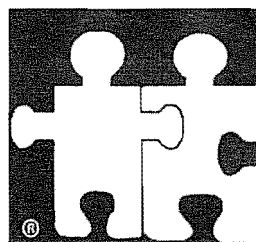
**Congressional Briefing:** In conjunction with the Public Policy Conference, we will host a congressional briefing Thursday, April 1 from 9-11:30 on Capital Hill.

The briefing will culminate with a **peer reviewed poster session** that will enable participants to share their research with policy makers.

We seek manuscripts that link family research to policy. We encourage submissions on a variety of topics, including, but not limited to, work and family issues, family formation, poverty, welfare reform, child care and family leave policy, aging, comparative family policy, and health care.

**Submission deadline: January 16, 2004**

For more information contact Laura Eiklenborg at [laura@ncfr.org](mailto:laura@ncfr.org) or Michael L. Benjamin at [mbenjamin@ncfr.org](mailto:mbenjamin@ncfr.org) or 763.781.9331.



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  - Lori Gordon - PAIRS
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  - Frank Pittman - Teaching Men Marriage
  - Charles Johnson - 10 Rites of Passage
  - Rob Scuka - Relationship Enhancement
  - Sherod & Phyllis Miller - Couple Communication
  - Lorraine Blackman - African American Marriage Ed
  - Steve Stosny - Compassion Workshop/Anger Management
  - Popenoe & Whitehead - State of Our Unions
  - Birchler & Fals-Stewart - Learning Sobriety Together
  - Barry McCarthy - Rekindling Desire
  - Mike McManus - Marriage Savers
  - Stan Posthumus - Focused Mediation
  - Pam Jordan - The Becoming Parents Program
  - Jon Carlson - TIME & Living Love
  - Francesca Baeder - Smart Steps for Stepfamilies
  - George Doub - Couples: The Strongest Link
  - Kay Reed - Connections • McLaren - Loving Well
  - John Van Epp - How to Avoid Marrying A Jerk
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# Family Focus On... Religion

Issue FF20

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The Effect of Extreme Religiosity on Academic Achievement and College Adjustment among College Students  
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## The Faith-Based and Community Initiative: Empowering America's Grassroots

by Joyce A. Thomas, Region V-Chicago, Regional Administrator and Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Regional Lead for the Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (FBCI); Deanna Carlson, MSW, Associate Director/ACF Liaison, Department of Health and Human Services Center for FBCI; Jane A. Nystrom, Special Projects Coordinator, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Services, Assisting the Lead Regional Administrator in the Regional ACF/FBCI activities

A young mother-to-be lives in her car unable to receive assistance because she has no permanent residence. An older couple can't afford to pay the heating bill and doesn't know what to do with winter setting in. A homeless couple with two children has moved to a new community looking for work and doesn't know where to turn. These are just some of the families that are helped on a daily basis by faith-based and community organizations.

Through President George W. Bush's Faith-Based and Community Initiative (FBCI), a new approach to government's role has been developed to enhance current efforts of faith-based and community organizations serving those in need. President Bush, through Executive Orders, established the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives and the seven Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. These centers are

located in the Departments of Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Education, Justice, Labor, Agriculture, and the Agency for International Development. The purpose of the centers is to help grassroots organizations

The Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives help grassroots organizations compete equally for federal dollars.

complete equally for federal dollars and assure that they will face fewer bureaucratic barriers.

Since the inception of the President's Initiative in January 2001, the federal government has held numerous meetings and conferences with local faith and community organizations. The common questions asked include: What is the FBCI? Is there new money available? How do I access government money? Must my organization give up its religious identity to receive federal funding? How do I apply for a grant? What are the specific organizational requirements?

### A level field

The Department of Health and Human Services Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives began March 15,

## FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVE *continued from page F1*

2001 under the direction of HHS Secretary Tommy Thompson to establish "a level playing field" within the department. Some of the activities of the center include identifying barriers to participation for grassroots organizations new to government funding, proposing initiatives to remove barriers, proposing the development of demonstration projects to increase the participation of local faith-based and community-based groups, and developing and coordinating the Department's outreach efforts.

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), within HHS, is responsible for federal programs that promote the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals, and communities. ACF funds states, territories, local, and tribal organizations to provide family assistance (welfare), child support, child care, Head Start, child welfare, and other programs relating to children and families. Emphasis is placed on key priority areas including healthy marriage, fatherhood, positive youth development, and the President's Faith-Based and Community Initiative.

### Reaching communities

Under the direction of the Assistant Secretary, Wade F. Horn, Ph.D., ACF staff have been working closely with States and local organizations to expand their efforts to reach out to their communities, particularly the underserved ones. ACF strives to inform these communities of ACF's key priorities and activities, as well as increasing their participation in

ACF programs through grants, contracts, and employment or internship opportunities.

ACF has demonstrated great leadership in promoting the Faith-Based and Community Initiative. Recent examples are:

- **The creation of a dedicated website** to provide organizations with up-to-the-minute information on ACF's FBCI efforts.
- **The inclusion of "Charitable Choice" language** in both the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (1996) which includes the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program and the Community Services Block Grant program (1998 reauthorization);
- **The establishment of a \$30 million Compassion Capital Fund** in 2002. The fund has
  - ❖ awarded \$24.8 million to 21 "intermediary organizations." Intermediary organizations help smaller organizations operate and manage their programs effectively, access funding from varied sources, develop and train staff, expand the types and reach of social services programs in their communities, and replicate promising programs. HHS/ACF also awarded a contract to create a



Joyce A. Thomas



Deanna Carlson



Jane A. Nystrom

National Resource Center to help intermediary organizations access the tools and information they need to be effective and to support research on best practices with faith-based and community organizations.

- ❖ awarded four grants totaling more than \$850,000 to Caliber Associates; Florida International University; University of Pennsylvania; and University of Maryland, College Park, to support research about how faith-based and community organizations provide social services and the role they play in communities and in the lives of the people they serve. Also, \$1.35 million was awarded to Branch Associates of Philadelphia to evaluate innovative practices and promising approaches that intermediary organizations are using so that other organizations can benefit from their unique approaches.

- **The expansion of the Compassion Capital Fund Program** in 2003. On September 22, 2003, HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson announced 60 new grants totaling \$8.1 million to help faith-based and community organizations expand and strengthen their ability to provide social services to those in need. The grants include

- ❖ 52 one-time grants of \$50,000 to help faith-based and community organizations expand their ability to serve the needs of at-risk youth and homeless people. The awards will enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of programs, help the grantees to access funds from other sources, and promote the implementation of model programs and best

### Faith-Based and Community Initiatives on the Web

**The White House** provides information on grants, grant writing, as well as guidance on partnering with the Federal Government. [www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/)

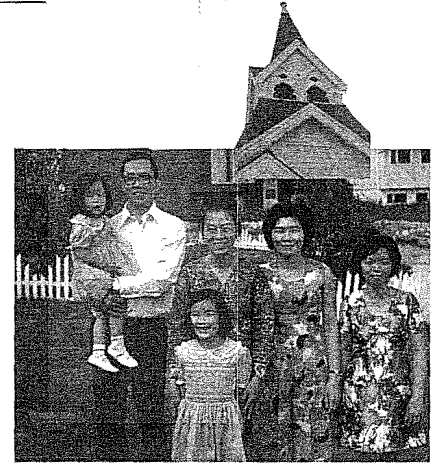
**The Department of Health and Human Services** provides information on different programs and funding within HHS as well as resources available to local organizations. [www.hhs.gov/fbci/](http://www.hhs.gov/fbci/)

**The Administration for Children and Families** provides links to the Compassion Capital Fund resources including the National Resource Center, which serves as an expert resource regarding faith-based and community initiatives and best practices. [www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fbci/index.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fbci/index.html)

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continued on page F3*

# Families of Faith: A Preliminary Report on Why Religion Matters

by Loren D. Marks, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, School of Human Ecology, Louisiana State University; and David C. Dollahite, Ph.D., Professor, School of Family Life, Brigham Young University



**W**hy does religion matter to families? This was our central question as we began our collaborative project to conduct qualitative interviews with a diverse array of over 100 Christian, Jewish, and Muslim families from several regions of the nation. We have interviewed 57 families to date and several themes have already emerged through preliminary data analyses. In this article, we respond to the question of why religion matters by explaining how families interface with three important dimensions of religion: religious community, religious practices, and religious beliefs.

## Religious community

The families report that their religious community can serve as either an important source of physical and psychosocial support or as a source of challenge or

frustration depending on the situation and response from congregational members and clergy. A few families report disturbing behavior by a past religious leader, but most report positive experiences including receiving help, spiritual support, instruction, or even a lifetime of friendship from religious leaders.

On the personal level, many report that worshipping with their faith community promotes healing and psychological coping. On a familial level, parents frequently say that religious services provide an opportunity to obtain guidance for parenting and marriage, as well as an opportunity for family members to be together regularly in a meaningful way. Some mothers and fathers also commented on the impetus for discussion and parent-child interac-

Parents strive to "practice what they preach."

tion that sermons, sacred readings, and lessons provide.

In spite of the reported benefits of faith community involvement there are challenges. Prejudice, bigotry, and feelings of alienation are common for many outside mainstream Christianity.

For all faiths, service and involvement is costly. Many families reported contributions of more than 10 percent of their income and more

than 10 hours a week in time. Even so, most are reluctant to call these costs "sacrifices"; they choose instead to emphasize the benefits they receive from their involvement or to describe the costs as wise "investments" in something that matters. Many feel that such costs are an essential part of walking a path, which while challenging, leads them to meaning, joy, and a sense of being a part of something bigger than oneself.

## Religious practices

Religious practices, including prayer, ritual, religious discussions, and the study of sacred texts, are an important part of life for the families we interview. Such practices help them maintain a sense of stability and continuity in an uncertain world and also help them cope with death and other challenges, both profound and mundane.

Certain religious rituals and practices are deeply imbedded in family life, such as the Sabbath meal for Jewish families or the Family Home Evening for Latter-Day Saint families. Although parents mention that their children frequently resist these practices, most parents report that the

## FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

*continued from page F2*

practices. Organizations in 35 states, the District of Columbia and the Virgin Islands received grants, and each grantee has at least one year of experience serving at-risk youth or homeless people.

- ❖ grants to 10 additional large, intermediary organizations with established relationships with local grassroots agencies. These grantees will provide training and technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of faith-based and community groups. Grantees also will award at least 25 percent of their grant money to grassroots organizations through sub awards.

- ❖ \$24 million in continuation grants for the 21 initial "intermediary organizations" funded under HHS' Compassion Capital Fund.

The Administration for Children and Families continues to reach out to all grassroots organizations to help those in need. Through a network of 10 ACF regional offices, staff are available and willing to partner with local faith-based and community organizations to provide enhanced services to those in need.

For more information, contact Joyce A. Thomas at 312-353-4237 or [jthomas@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:jthomas@acf.hhs.gov); Deanna Carlson at 202-358-3595 or [Deanna.Carlson@hhs.gov](mailto:Deanna.Carlson@hhs.gov); or Jane A. Nystrom at 312-886-4202 or [jnystrom@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:jnystrom@acf.hhs.gov).

*Families of Faith continued on page F4*



### FAMILIES OF FAITH *continued from page F3*

unity promoted by the practices is worth the struggle over the long term.

Most families reportedly try to actively integrate faith into their activities and daily lives, but the ways they do this vary. Some families emphasize working with others for justice, equity, peace, and ecology, while others emphasize internal family processes and the building of family strengths through involvement within the family and faith community. What all these families have in common, however, is the ideal that parents should exemplify the standards and beliefs they profess, especially in connection with their children. In other words, the parents strive to "practice what they preach."

Similarly, there seems to be a general willingness of most youth to delay self-gratification in order to live in harmony with their family's religious value system. Nevertheless, youth know that they are doing things that are often inconvenient, difficult, and different from many of their peers.

In spite of the heavy involvement and investment in their faiths, few families speak about wanting their religious activities to diminish. Rather they desire fewer secular demands and pressures.

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, religious practices are identified as a means by which a sense of relationship with God is established, maintained, and accessed. This sense of relationship with God, in turn, reportedly influences relationships with others, particularly family members.

#### Religious beliefs

Many couples identify some religious beliefs that benefit their marriage, including the shared values and culture that a mutual faith offers and a strong belief in marital fidelity. Strong religious beliefs reportedly increase the commitment couples have to work on their marriages, and some couples claimed that they likely would have divorced without their faith-based resources.

Many families state that religious belief increases selflessness and focus on others, as well as a "shared vision" for

marriage and family life. This shared vision seems to prevent some conflict, give them direction for "weathering the storms" that life brings, and provide a template for how to work through marital and family conflict when it does arise.

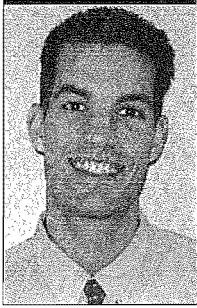
Over and over, family members speak of their beliefs about the nature of the divine, specifically God's "reality" and "relational" nature, and the meaning these beliefs hold for them as individuals and in their family lives. Many mention personal benefits (joy, confidence, security, forgiveness, etc.) they receive from their own relationship with God. Men discuss ways their relationship with God motivates and encourages them to be better husbands and fathers. Adolescents often speak about being more respectful toward their parents because of their sense of needing to follow religious teachings to honor parents (even if they are angry with their parents or strongly disagree with them). Conversely, some families report profound sorrow and tension that result from a family member rejecting cherished beliefs and the accompanying lifestyle. In such

cases, a shared family vision is fractured into a "di-vision."

#### A common message

For many Americans, religion holds little personal and familial significance. But the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim families in our study identify their religious community, practices, and beliefs as meaningful, influential, and even inseparable from family life. Further, they specifically explain how and why the different dimensions of religious experience matter in their lives in ways ranging from the personal to the familial, and from the practical to the profound. These families are of different world faiths and many different races, but they share the common message that there is much we can learn about why religion matters to families. We will become better scholars and practitioners as we listen.

For more information, contact [LMarks@agctr.lsu.edu](mailto:LMarks@agctr.lsu.edu).



Loren D. Marks, Ph.D.



### Religion Plays a Positive Role in Lives of Teens

In 1998, researchers conducting the Add Health study reported that adolescents who said that religion and prayer were important to them were less likely to use unhealthy substances or have premarital sex.

Add Health is a congressionally mandated, federally funded survey examining the health-related behaviors of adolescents in the U.S. It was directed by investigators from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



# Spirituality and Family Resilience

by Leanne M. Sponsel, M.Ed., Instructor, Northwestern College, St. Paul, Minnesota, and Licensed Family Educator, Mounds View School District



As professionals in the field of family education, we strive to help families find ways to manage the various aspects of their lives. The question "Is parenting harder now than it used to be?" is a common one. The answer is less important than the reasons for asking: parents are anxious about handling issues with which they have little or no experience (including a lack of experience in their own childhood), and many of today's challenges are related to drastic, sometimes life-threatening, consequences.

Our world has changed rapidly and dramatically in the last couple of decades. Crisis and stressors abound, and parents are surprised at how soon their children begin asking about life and death, good and evil, danger and safety. Parents must cope with multiple, intense situations and questions about sexuality, job loss, racism, unfamiliar family patterns, war, drugs, and other topics. Since parents themselves are often at a loss when it comes to understanding many of these situations, they have difficulty finding explanations for their children. As professionals trying to determine best practices for helping families buffer themselves from disruptive forces, cope with stressful circumstances, and lead healthy lives, we are remiss if we fail to discuss how spirituality can help families discover their resilience.

"Spirituality" is defined as an individual's belief system that finds meaning and purpose in a belief in something (or someone) greater than oneself, and which may or may not be connected to a specific religion. For me, "spirituality" speaks of an essential element in resiliency: belief in a higher power combined with hope.

"Resiliency" is the ability to bounce back from adversity in a way that goes beyond mere survival. Resilient people are able to heal the wounds of adversity, and are eventually able to enjoy life again. Resilient individuals and families do not evade risk—they engage it and manage it successfully.

## Strengthening family bonds

I've often heard people say things like "a crisis brings you closer together." But in fact, it is not the experience of crisis that brings family members closer. Rather, it is the experience of having moved through a crisis successfully that strengthens family bonds. The high divorce rate for couples with children who have special needs shows that difficulties do not assure connectedness. It is not the fact of co-parenting a child with special needs that bonds a couple, but rather the successful adaptation that makes the connections stronger. Resilient families who can bounce back and adjust to this unexpected life style do become stronger. And for many, it is their spirituality that allows them to do so.

Many parents have told me that it is their faith that allows them to persevere. They found relief when they acknowledged that they had done all they could do for their children and began to trust in a higher power. This process of "letting go" created hope and encouragement, not a sense of giving up. Families were able to bounce back and move on with their lives.

There are, of course, many other situations when families lean on their faith: the death of a family member or friend, an economic crisis, or a conflict between family members—these are just a few. A

crisis foster parent once said that the only significant difference between herself and the mother in crisis was a sense of hope. The mother in crisis saw no possibility for a positive outcome. The foster parent had a faith foundation that protected her from a pessimistic attitude about life. Her spirituality enabled her to tap into her resiliency.

## Families "at-promise"

The history of resiliency research is based on assessing whether or not someone is resilient. This is a deficit mode of

thinking because it assumes that some people are not resilient. It also implies that resiliency can be taught and

learned. Newer thinking recognizes that everyone has a core of resiliency—an innate positive mental health or a self-righting mechanism. This strength-based mode of thinking helps families and professionals move from the label of "at-risk" to one of "at-promise." The at-promise view not only holds that the individual or family has potential, it encourages an essential element of resilience: hope.

For years, educators have been helping families develop communication, parenting, and other life skills. We have encouraged families to create and use social supports, to utilize professional advice, to build on family time and shared activities, and other strengthening activities. I am suggesting professionals who work with families need to acknowledge and respect that a family's a belief system, or spiritual core, is a crucial protective factor in times of stress. Research has found evidence that

A family's spiritual core is a crucial protective factor in times of stress.

Family Resilience continued on page F6

# Faith as a Resiliency Factor for Rural, Low-Income Mothers

by Bonnie Braun, Ph.D., Extension Family Life Specialist; and J.R. Marghi, R.N., B.S., Master's Candidate, Department of Family Studies, University of Maryland

Focusing on faith as a resiliency factor is not common among social scientists. Faith was not the primary emphasis of family social science researchers who conducted a multi-state, multi-year study of rural, low-income families known as "Rural Families Speak." However during an analysis of the first wave of interviews religion and spirituality, it became clear that faith was a source of strength, protection, and recovery for some families and that it contributed to their resiliency.

## The centrality of faith

The faith community has historically been central in rural communities and to people of diverse ethnicities and cultures. Yet, little is known about the roles faith and faith communities play for rural families in the 21st century. An understanding of those roles could benefit both practitioners, who strive to support families coping with the stressors of financial and other challenges common to many rural residents, and researchers who seek to understand the lived experiences of rural families.

Some psychologists acknowledge that spiritual faith can play a supportive role in people's lives and that an intrinsic emotional attachment or personal devotion to the higher being or God as expressed through prayer can help individuals deal with stressors. Sociologists acknowledge that extrinsic religious activities such as attendance at services, along with a focus on the social and behavioral aspects of religion, can also assist in dealing with stressors.

## Faith and well-being

As we analyze the data we have collected in our study of rural mothers, we are trying to understand both the intra-personal and inter-personal aspects of faith. This examination of religiosity and spirituality focuses on the role of faith as

a resiliency factor for rural, low-income mothers who face daily strains, stressors, and crises. Reported here are the emerging findings about the relationship of faith and the perceived well-being of 199 rural, low-income mothers living in eleven states. Quantitative data measuring religiosity, spirituality, and life

satisfaction form the basis of the examination to date.

For this analysis, we defined spirituality as the expression of a connection between the individual and some larger, usually supernatural, reality. Spirituality was measured by evidence of prayer and belief

*Faith as a Factor continued on page F8*

## FAMILY RESILIENCE *continued from page F5*

spirituality helps sustain an individual's life force and facilitates a sense of inner peace. It has also been found that people with a strong sense of spirituality handle adversity better and recover from crisis faster.

### Key elements

Froma Walsh, in her book *Strengthening Family Resilience*, discusses three elements that are key to a family's ability to bounce back: communication processes, organizational patterns, and belief systems. Within the category of belief systems, she notes three important aspects:

- **Transcendence and spirituality**, including the ability to see the larger purpose, faith, rituals, inspiration and transformation.
- **Positive outlook**, including initiative, perseverance, courage, and encouragement as well as the ability to sustain hope, master the possible, and focus on strengths and potential.
- **The ability to find meaning in adversity**, including normalizing and contextualizing adversity; life-cycle orientation; a sense of coherence; and appraisal of crisis, distress, and recovery.

Spirituality is a protective factor in a variety of ways. As previously noted, spirituality brings hope and a sense of relief because a higher power is helping to carry the load. Spirituality also protects through the identification of priorities

and life choices. In a sense, it creates a mission statement that provides direction for the family.

### A legitimate question

Family educators who work within public school districts may be apprehensive about mentioning spirituality as a resource. But keep in mind that families educators do not teach families how to practice their beliefs. They need only to point out that beliefs and spiritual orientations can be a significant resource in times of difficulty. "Do you have a faith community where you could find support?" is a legitimate question, even in the public schools. It is not only acceptable to discuss spirituality as one of many factors that exist to strengthen and protect families; it is ethical as well.

In a sense, to ask whether or not parenting is more difficult now than in the past is really beside the point. What is more helpful is to help families discover that they have both external and internal resources to draw on as they strive to become more resilient and live hopeful and happy lives.

For more information, contact [lms-consult@juno.com](mailto:lms-consult@juno.com).



Leanne M. Sponsel, M.Ed.

# Spiritual Resiliency in Later Life: Implications for Family Educators and Practitioners

by Rosemary Blieszner, Ph.D., Alumni Distinguished Professor, Department of Human Development, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg; Janet L. Ramsey, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Congregational Care Leadership, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota

Whether they work directly with older adults or focus primarily on younger persons, family educators and practitioners do well to remember the diverse and compelling contributions of spirituality to well-being. This intangible but potent aspect of family life has great potential as both a powerful coping resource, enabling many older adults and their family members to move effectively through stressful life events, and as an identity builder, facilitating the creation of meaningful narratives, symbols, and rituals. Family spirituality has the capacity to define us as kin, enrich our daily existence, and stitch our ever-changing lives together.

## Older adults as models

Our interest in individual and family strengths led us to explore the dynamics of spirituality in the everyday lives of older adults. We sought out examples of resiliency (the ability to bounce back) and wisdom (crystallized intelligence) and worked cross-culturally, interviewing elders from the United States and Germany. Participants represented a variety of ages, health and socioeconomic statuses, marital situations, living arrangements, and locations on a rural-urban continuum. To avoid confusing our analyses through a mixture of denominational theologies, we restricted our sample to old persons who were lifelong members of the Lutheran Church (in the United States, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America). Because we wished to find exemplary models of the integration of spirituality into everyday life, we sought participants who were known by their peers and pastors as deeply spiritual persons. Our

on-going research project has enabled us to uncover important dimensions of spirituality for family life, particularly in the lives of elderly family members. Our research has also provided strong evidence that confirms a significant relationship between spirituality and human resiliency.

We interviewed eight women and eight men aged 65 year or over. All are models of hardiness

whose lives offer inspiration and encouragement both to younger persons and to their contemporaries. Our interview questions focused on how their faith has helped them manage anxieties about growing older, difficulties in family and other relationships, health problems, and a variety of daily losses and challenges. Many had suffered dramatic traumas as well as the more typical exigencies of life: they had survived World War II, the death of loved ones, serious betrayals, and losses in physical strength and mobility.

## Emotional and spiritual maturity

We found richness, depth, and complexity in the participants' narratives. These spiritually strong elders exhibited courageous honesty, and they were still seeking deeper personal integrity, even at an advanced age. They were not spiritual superheroes who, with the power of God, could leap over the handicaps of life in a single bound. Instead they often faced concerns, sorrows, and losses. They did not, however, become bitter or mourn endlessly. These elders did not see the worries, failures, and challenges in their lives as unmanageable catastrophes. Instead they viewed these problems as opportunities for growth,

increased maturity, and deeper trust in the promises of God.

Hans, a German participant, spoke of how his spiritual discipline of daily prayer with his wife had strengthened his marriage and also prepared him for daily life in his vocation: "That's why I can

begin the day early with my wife, that we open the Bible and talk about the scripture and pray together, 10 or 15 minutes. And now it's good with us... and all problems

that we have, we can discard early, 'Throw all your cares on Him.' "

Indeed, the emotional maturity of these elders was matched by their spiritual maturity. They recognized in their suffering the potential for growth beyond their own doing. At the same time, they recounted many instances of deep joy, pleasure, and gratitude throughout their lives. They told us of triumphs and failures, false starts, and spiritual homecomings.

## The importance of relationships

A reoccurring theme in their narratives was the importance of personal relationships with family, members of their faith community, and with God. Their spirituality was closely interwoven with relationships that, in turn, buoyed their morale and gave meaning to their lives. As they talked about their faith, we found that their children, spouses, parents, grandparents, nieces, pastors, coworkers, and friends appeared, disappeared, and reappeared in their stories.

Lovey, an American, had assumed responsibility at age 16 for rearing her younger siblings when her mother died;

Resilient elders serve as models for those who face challenging circumstances.

*Spiritual Resiliency continued on F8*

### SPIRITUAL RESILIENCY *continued from page F7*

the household also included her bachelor uncle and her father. She is now 89, and widowed. Through all her troubles, she always felt God's presence. She believes that, "You know you have to take the sad with your joys." Lovey has close and very positive ties with her daughter and son and their families. Her family is a source of joy for her; she sees family members almost daily and delights in spontaneous outings with them.

Likewise, other interviewees cared deeply about family and friends, appreciated other members of the community who

were their role models, nurtured and assisted community members, and hoped that their children and grandchildren would find the same joy and strength in spirituality. These elders suffered over conflict in their families and rejoiced over the successes of special people in their lives. Children were particularly important to the women, and those who were or had been married spoke often about their husbands. The men emphasized the role of their wives in bringing them to deeper spirituality and faith practice and often focused on their concerns



Rosemary Blieszner,  
Ph.D.



Janet L. Ramsey,  
Ph.D.

about social justice issues in the greater community. Within their congregations, the personal relations these elders had

*Spiritual Resiliency continued on F9*

### FAITH AS A FACTOR *continued from page F6*

in support, strength, and or guidance from that supernatural reality. Religiosity was defined as the expression of that connection via participation in organized, or institutionalized, activities and religious services.

Most of the rural mothers both identified with and engaged in religious and spiritual practices. Those who identified themselves as religious or spiritual were more involved in religious practices. The answer to the question, "Do these mothers receive benefits from their spiritual practices?" is yes. Most did find prayer and God's guidance to be a source of strength and support. The numbers who reported engagement in spiritual practices is consistent with the concept that rural women identify with a spiritual belief system in a supernatural power or God.

The question, "Are these mothers engaging in religious practices?" produced an affirmative answer. Most attend services, participate in religious activities, and have their children participating. Even with limited resources, many contribute both financially and non-financially to places of worship. These contributions are an indication that the families are willing to use scarce finances in exchange for support from their communities of faith. That so many of these mothers reported that they were engaged in religious practices indicates that organized religion continues to be central to the lives of 21st-century rural women.

#### Positive correlations

Given that the majority of these mothers live below, at, or just above the poverty level, it was important to determine their level of satisfaction with life. We asked the mothers to select the best descriptor of their current level of life satisfaction. Two-thirds of all the mothers were satisfied or very satisfied with their lives. Positive correlations emerged between life satisfaction and:

- Frequency of attendance at religious services.
- Frequency of participation in religious activities other than services.
- Getting strength and support from God, receiving help from prayer, and seeking God's guidance when making important life decisions.

These findings support research that shows a correlation between life satisfaction, spirituality and religiosity. They also confirm the influence of faith on an individual's sense of well-being. More studies are needed to determine reasons for these correlations. Examinations are underway to better understand the role of faith in relation to social support as well as mental and physical health.

#### Acknowledging the role of faith

We and our associates in this multi-state study intend to continue exploring the data. We will be looking at change over time as data collected over three years

become available. To provide specific recommendations, we need a better understanding of the extent to which the religiosity or spirituality of these mothers is maintained or changes over time, the effects of their social support network, and the impact of their employment and income on their well-being. We need to learn how these different aspects of their

lives interact to influence how these mothers respond to stressors. For now, we know from these rural mothers that faith is a factor in their challenging lives.

Acknowledging, rather than ignoring, the roles of faith and faith communities as sources of strength in coping with life stressors may be a tool for assisting low-income, rural families. As more is known about the impact of faith and faith communities, practitioners in mental and physical health or education may be better able to treat or educate the whole person. Helping professionals, including those in the faith communities, may be better able to support low-income, rural families. Family social scientists should consider expanding their investigations of resiliency among low-income mothers and their families to include faith as a factor.

For more information, contact BBraun@umd.edu. To learn more about "Rural Families Speak," visit [www.ruralfamilies.umn.edu](http://www.ruralfamilies.umn.edu)

**Organized religion continues to be central to the lives of 21st-century rural women.**

# Religion in African American Families

by Harriette Pipes McAdoo, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Family and Child Ecology, Michigan State University

**R**eligion has always played an important part in African American family life and the raising of African American children. A strong spiritual core has always contributed to the vitality of the African American community. Spirituality is a central component in close personal relationships among individual members of the community. Such a spiritual sense can be found in African Americans' warm and interactive body styles, their consistent love of music and dance, and the joy they take in everyday life. All of these elements can be seen in most African American churches during Sunday morning worship, as participants praise and thank the Lord.

There have always been African American Catholics, Muslims, Buddhists, atheists, and practitioners of African traditional religions. But the majority of Black families have traditionally belonged

to the Baptist Church, although many also participate in other Protestant denominations. For these families, Sunday morning has always been a time of worship. Even atheists have tended to come from a Protestant background.

## Roots of spirituality

Why has religion and spirituality been such a focus in Black life? Part of the answer lies in the African, Caribbean, South American and Southern U.S. roots of most African Americans. In each of these settings, enslaved Africans and their African American descendants relied upon an African-based understanding of life, death, and creation to help them adjust to an unpredictable social environment.

It was common to separate enslaved Africans from their cultural and religious communities, and mix them with others of different faiths, languages, and cultures. This was done to ensure compliance with their new owners. Africans were forced to



accept the religion of these owners and learn new a language and culture.

Enslaved Africans brought with them many diverse systems of belief. They believed in many gods or in one god. Some were animists and believed in the power of the natural elements like trees and animals. Over a third were Muslim. Yet despite these differences, the commonality of their experiences allowed them to create new African American cultural and spiritual forms in the Caribbean, Brazil, and the United States.

These African-based cultural practices and religious traditions have survived into the 21st century. Practices such as voodoo (voodoo) and Santería are experiencing tremendous growth, even though most traditional Christian bodies either do not recognize them or acknowledge them only as religious oddities. In some areas of the Americas, such as Louisiana, Cuba, Haiti, and Brazil, these cultural traditions are particularly strong. In urban centers like New York, Los Angeles, Houston, Miami, Dayton, San Francisco, and Detroit, the practice of African-based traditions is a regular occurrence.

## Church families

African American families tend to be multigenerational. The extended family support system has been an on-going pattern in families of all social classes, regions, and religions. The presence of fictive kin — non-relatives as close and involved in the family as blood relatives — is common.

Religious and church activities reinforce this pattern. In many cases, warm church involvement erases the line between family and friends. The church and the extended family become one and the same. Shared functions include the socializing of children, the actual raising

## SPIRITUAL RESILIENCY *continued from page F8*

with others were multifaceted and interdependent. They lived according to a belief in mutuality, a back and forth between giving and taking, and thus they were able to perform acts of kindness for others and to receive gifts and assistance from others graciously. They unanimously expressed the conviction that it was their relationship with God that gave them strength to cope with life events and transitions, which, in turn, led to greater faith for the next challenge.

## Implications for educators and practitioners

Educators and practitioners—regardless of their particular family focus—can learn from these spiritually resilient elders. They teach us that participating in family and community life, drawing upon

beliefs and practices related to faith and spirituality, retaining a sense of hope despite difficulties and crises, and seeking opportunities for sustaining hardiness can be effective coping strategies for persons of all ages. Our study participants—and the myriad resilient elders residing in all communities—serve as models of strength for those who face challenging circumstances. Embracing these older community members as examples of spiritual resiliency can be enriching and empowering for others. We encourage educators and practitioners to acknowledge the importance of spirituality and to recognize community elders as valuable resources for promoting family well-being.

For more information, contact [rmb@vt.edu](mailto:rmb@vt.edu) or [jramsey@luthersem.edu](mailto:jramsey@luthersem.edu).

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# Reaching Rural African American Families: Creating Strong Partnerships between Family Life Educators and Churches

by Angela R. Wiley, Ph.D., Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist, Family Life, Department of Human and Community Development; and Cassandra Chaney, M.A., Doctoral Student, Department of Human and Community Development, University of Illinois

**D**espite impressive strengths, African American residents in poor rural communities often need intervention and educational support. Unfortunately, many face challenges (for example, unemployment, transportation and childcare) that prevent them from taking advantage of conventional assistance. Meeting basic needs may prevent many from attending non-church meetings or gathering information on their own. These circumstances and absence of infrastructure have contributed to a chronic lack of service to rural African American communities.

## Collaboration and conflict

Many rural African American families rely on their churches for various forms of support. Those not in congregations often benefit from a tangential relationship through which the church provides support to congregants' extended kin and other community members who do not regularly or ever attend. Practitioners, such as family life educators (FLEs), who hope to reach these underserved families would be wise to form partnerships with the most central and often the only institution with social capital in many rural African American communities.

Such partnerships could be advantageous for service and program delivery, but there are a number of areas for caution. FLEs and churches have a shared interest in meeting the needs of rural families but often use different approaches. It might not always be possible or even advantageous for FLEs and churches to use the same approach. There may be times where different means can reach a common goal. Nevertheless, even though FLEs and churches have not had a historically strong or systematic relationship, greater collaborative efforts are possible. We can

begin to move toward this by identifying areas where goals and interests overlap and areas where conflict can arise.

## Definitions of "family"

First, FLEs and churches recognize that "family" is a basic unit of society and that strong families contribute to strong

communities. Both target families, and their members, as audiences. Most FLEs are trained in family functioning and development. They create and deliver programming on optimal family functioning. Churches also aim programming

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of non-relative children, and the sharing of resources when times are difficult.

In present-day African American communities, there is a high proportion of women with children who are divorced or have never married. Out of necessity, these women depend on the extended family to help them raise their children. The church family plays an especially important role for these single mothers, since African American women, both married and unmarried, cope with difficulties, hardships, and lack of

resources through the use of religion. A number of studies have shown that African American women who attend church regularly and who are more spiritual tend to be more satisfied with their lives, to be happier, and to be less depressed. It is known that religiosity and religious participation often enhance both physical and mental health.

## Male leadership

Yet even though women make up the majority of most Black churches, church leadership has generally remained in the hands of men. On a Sunday morning, the majority of attendees are female, the monies are raised for the most part by women, and women do the hard work.

But men are still officially in charge. Only a few denominations have accepted female leadership. One hindering element of Black religious communities has been this continued suppression of women within the churches. This has meant that many women have found that the church is as restrictive as the wider environment.

As a result, some women have begun to espouse a "feminist" or "womanist" interpretation of the Bible. These women

— as well as a few men — are committed to the betterment of all people — women, men, and children. This movement is growing slowly, and has spread so far to only to a few churchgoers.

## Changes in participation

Church attendance continues to be an important part of African American family life, especially for those who live in rural or more stressed urban centers. But an increasing number of families are becoming less active in the church that their extended family has traditionally attended. Many of these families maintain their church membership, but do not regularly attend services. Others have broken off completely from their "home church."

There are many possible reasons for these changes. Some African American

For many African Americans, church and extended family become one and the same.

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and materials at the family unit based on theological concerns. Many believe that "the family that prays together stays together," and so work to strengthen the family unit.

While FLEs and churches have a similar concern for families, they do not necessarily give legitimacy to the same family structures. Most FLEs address the concerns of "traditional" two-parent families and some "non-traditional" families (for example, single-parent, cohabiting, divorced, teen parents, gay and lesbian). Programming to non-traditional families is not prescriptive (aimed at changing their structure) but rather focused on prevention or amelioration of difficulties. Some churches regard some non-traditional families as problematic and detrimental to the future existence of more traditional families. Their central theological teachings may discourage or prohibit certain family structures, and they may focus more on preventing or reforming these. This basic difference in assumptions can lead to conflicts between FLEs and churches.

FLEs and churches are both interested in strong couple relationships. Both recognize that healthy marriages can lead to strong, stable families and communities. Based on research showing

that ineffective communication predicts divorce, FLEs often teach couples communication skills to strengthen marital relationships. These skills involve active, non-defensive listening and validation. While acknowledging the importance of communication, many churches focus more generally, teaching a theologically based or biblical template for couple relationships. This often begins with premarital counseling where couples should adjust their expectations of marriage to fit this template. Counseling sessions are often tailored to identify and address the most problematic issues that might threaten the future stability of the marriage. The goal is to help partners understand how they must individually and collectively change to make their current relationship and future marriage a stronger one.

#### Marital roles and parenting

While FLEs and churches share a concern for couples, they do not necessarily agree on the role of men and women in successful marriages. Using recent marital research and theory as their guide, FLEs

may stress not only the importance of open and equal communication but also the need to work toward mutually satisfactory division of household and childrearing work. Churches may believe that such approaches weaken and

challenge the position of men, who are often viewed to be God-ordained family heads, and women, who are God-ordained supporters of

husbands and children.

Both FLEs and churches recognize that parenting is important and difficult. Based on child development theory and parenting research, FLEs acknowledge the critical input that parents have in children's development. Churches, too, recognize that parents provide a context for the growth of the next generation and often view parenting as one of the most important God-given responsibilities.

FLEs and churches often do not share views of discipline. FLEs teach parents to use a combination of warmth and structure and to avoid power-assertive and punitive techniques. FLEs may encourage the use of discipline strategies such as time-outs and withholding privileges. Many churches focus on the theological responsibility of parents to love their children and train them to respect godly and parental authority. Many churches teach that power-assertive discipline and corporal punishment are biblically based strategies that in moderation are often in the best interest of children.

#### Balanced collaborations

A first step in partnering with African American churches in rural areas is to identify overlapping interests and potential areas of conflict. Once this is done, FLEs can work with churches to establish balanced and respectful collaborations.

Effective collaborations must empower members of the targeted community, in this case, the churches. Intensive effort should be paid to securing and building

Family life educators would be wise to partner with the most central institution in many rural African American communities.

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families have become "middle class" and have moved to non-ethnic neighborhoods. These new residents may not feel as comfortable in predominately white churches as they did in their African American "home churches." Research has shown that families who want to maintain their cultural ties and religious may have to commute for up to an hour to attend their former church. Over time, their attendance becomes less frequent.

Other families have moved from the South to northern cities, where African American churches may not play such a strong role in the community. In addition, the increasing number of inter-cultural and inter-racial marriages has led to a broadening of religious expression and culture. Many changes have taken place

within African American communities and churches. Yet for the many families who remain active in the traditional African American church, the extended church family with its common spirituality and religious beliefs is as important as ever. Even individuals who no longer regularly participate in a church community often say that they are still intensely spiritual in their orientation.

For more information, contact [mcadoo@pilot.msu.edu](mailto:mcadoo@pilot.msu.edu).



Hariette Pipes  
McAdoo, Ph.D.

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# Family Strengths in Islam Perceptions of Women in the United Arab Emirates

by Annita Sani, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, College of Family Sciences, Zayed University, United Arab Emirates; and Nadia Buhannad, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, United Arab Emirates University, United Arab Emirates



In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Oh mankind! We have created you from a single soul, male and female and made you into nations and tribes, so that you may come to know one another. Not so you may despise one another. (Holy Qur'an, 49:13)

**I**t is generally agreed that the quality of family life is crucial to our happiness, emotional well-being, and mental health, and that strong families strengthen communities and strong communities move us closer to global peace. Family life educators and social scientists in Western countries have made significant contributions to strengthening families in many different parts of the world. However, many of us have limited knowledge about the strengths of families in

regions of the world that play a critical role in achieving global peace. This became apparent after we searched the literature for family strengths studies and found studies for every major ethnic group in the United States, as well as for families in at least 26 different countries, but only one study about Middle Eastern family strengths.

Researchers interested in studying families in the Middle East, where Islam is the most widespread religion, have faced many obstacles. For example, religious and cultural norms limit the contact of Muslim women with non-relatives. Additional obstacles have meant that social scientists could gain only limited knowledge about Muslim women's direct views about family life.

Since both of us are Muslim women and social scientists who live and work in the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) and one of us is a native of that country, we realized the importance of using our professional and personal relationships with U.A.E. national women to let the voices of Muslim women be heard.

## An imperative for Western social scientists

Islam, which means "complete submission to the will of God," is considered a complete way of life. Islam plays an important role in the formation of family, as well as cultural and political structures that impact the quality of family life for a large portion of the world's population. One in every four

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balanced partnerships with church leaders. In balanced partnerships, both partners recognize the other's unique contributions. Churches have a lot to bring to a partnership, including historic social capital and established trust within the community, congregants and community members, experienced leadership, and a space that is familiar and comfortable to most community members. Church leaders often are knowledgeable about community needs and preferences and can be an invaluable resource in preparing programming. Finally, clergy and staff generally know how to communicate within their communities. They are accustomed to advertising their own programming and, thus, have a ready network. To this partnership, FLEs can bring up-to-date information and supportive resources on many relevant topics.

Areas of common interest and potential conflict must be navigated carefully but also in a transparent way. Educators might begin by make completely clear what is covered in programming (preferably by sharing copies with church leaders). They might offer to share a lay-accessible version of the research base of their programming. If some changes are requested, FLEs might oblige if these can be made without damaging the research-based reliability of the information. Otherwise, professionals might suggest that other topic areas would be better suited to a collaborative model. After all, collaboration does not imply complete agreement on means or ends—instead, it implies respect and consensus building around areas of agreement. This process should be undertaken in a spirit of respect for the belief systems on which many church members base their lives.

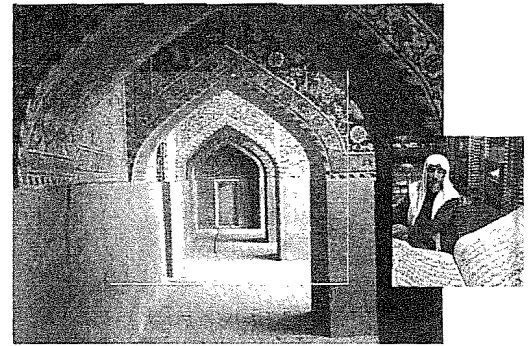
Such frank and forthright conversations can help both groups to recognize the reasons why each adheres to a particular approach. While greater discussion will not invariably lead to complete agreement, it can be a start in slowly removing the bricks of suspicion and misunderstanding that over time have built walls between these two supporters of families.

Note that our discussion here concerns rural African American families and the Protestant, evangelical churches that are most common in their communities. Those seeking to form partnerships with other types of churches or religious communities can amend our guidelines and examples to fit the specifics of their situation.

*For more information, contact  
awiley@staff.uiuc.edu.*

# Re-Covering Islamic Identity in the U.S. after 9/11

by Hoda Badr, Ph.D., Post-Doctoral Fellow, Department of Behavioral Science,  
M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, University of Texas, Houston



Shortly after the Taliban was linked to the September 11th terrorist attacks, pictures and media reports emerged focusing on the Taliban's human rights abuses—particularly their treatment of women. The images were striking—young girls peaking out from behind walls and doorways, burka-clad women on donkeys. These faceless creatures were behind the veil, behind their husbands, and behind the times compared to their Western counterparts.

## A marker of Islamic identity

Some have argued that the media's negative stereotypes create an image of Muslim women as ignorant and not part of Western society. Yet, it is estimated that between 6 and 7 million Muslims live in the United States. Although not all American Muslim women veil, many cover their heads with a scarf. The "hijab," as this scarf is called in Arabic, serves as a physical marker of Islamic social identity, and any woman wearing hijab is readily identifiable as a Muslim.

In the highly emotionally charged atmosphere following the September 11th attacks, the Council on American Islamic Relations reported over 1,717 hate-crimes against Muslims in the United States. Many of these crimes were committed against Muslim women wearing hijab. Even people who were not Muslim, but who "looked Muslim" were objects of hate crimes. Most notably, a Sikh man wearing a turban was killed in Arizona because the killers thought his turban was similar to Osama bin Laden's.

In the events after 9/11, the role of the hijab as a physical marker of Islamic identity may have become more salient due to the largely negative portrayal of Muslim women overseas. In fact, some

have argued that this continued media focus has actually reduced Muslim feminine identity to the veil. Few studies, however, have examined the effects of this portrayal on Muslim women themselves.

As part of a larger study on Muslims after 9/11, we conducted qualitative interviews with 67 Muslim women residing in Houston, Texas, to determine their attitudes toward wearing hijab. Forty-five percent were first generation immigrants (30 of the 67), and 55 percent (37) were born in the United States. Fifty percent of the first generation and 70 percent (26) of the second generation wore hijab. Ethnically, 67 percent of the sample was South Asian, and 33 percent was Middle Eastern. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 63.

## "Walking examples"

Although 85 percent of the women who wore hijab reported being afraid to go out in public after September 11th, only four reported taking it off, citing fear for their safety: *I was afraid...may Allah forgive me, but I took it [my scarf] off. Only for the first few weeks though...I thought, "What if someone with a shot gun pulls up beside me at night and sees me? What will happen?" I didn't want to take chances...*

Interestingly all the women who took off their hijab were first generation immigrants. On the other hand, the three women in the sample who reported they began wearing hijab after 9/11 were all from the second generation. When asked why they decided to wear hijab, the majority of the first generation reported wearing it for either cultural purposes or because they believed it was a commandment from God.

The majority of the second generation mentioned hijab in conjunction with identity. Summing up this idea, a young college student whose parents emigrated from Pakistan said: *I think Muslim women in American society have a very big task on their heads—literally and*

*figuratively! We have to prove so many things which are being misinterpreted about Muslim women...all the time.*

Another student added: *It is very*

*different because over here we are walking examples. People are always watching us, "Oh my God, she's Muslim and she's covering." Every step we take, everything we do in public or even in our homes, everything we do, everything we say, people look at us—people judge us. And people form an opinion about our religion on that basis. I think it's a big responsibility, it's hard.*

## A symbol of purpose

Muslim women are, to some extent, marginalized in their local mosque communities. Due to cultural practices that divide men's and women's spheres into public (men) and private (women), participation by women in the decision-making bodies in mosques and local community organizations is limited. Particularly in the largely immigrant mosque in which these interviews were conducted, cultural attitudes toward women are largely conservative; women generally have little input other than cooking at community dinners or teaching in the Sunday schools.

One benefit of wearing the hijab during times of crisis is that it may provide marginalized Muslim women with a

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who wear hajib are  
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people in the world is a Muslim. Islam is numerically the fastest growing religion in the United States, and the world's more than 1.2 billion Muslims include a vast range of races, nationalities, and cultures. Given the significance of Islamic beliefs and practices for such a significant portion of the world's population, it is imperative that family life educators and social scientists in Western countries learn more about healthy family relations in Muslim families in order to be able to promote the well-being of all members of society within a culturally relevant framework.

#### Conceptual framework

The Family Strengths Model proposed by Stinnett and DeFrain for studying strong families throughout the world provided the conceptual framework for this study. This model also informed the development of the following data collection tools administered to study participants. These tools included:

- Written responses to open-ended question surveys completed by 75 U.A.E. national women enrolled in two different universities in the U.A.E.
- Individual interviews conducted with 20 U.A.E. national married women in their homes.
- Field observations of family life collected over a two-year period.

We also used grounded theory data analysis techniques to gain an understanding of the ideas and themes that emerged from data that were not fully explained by the Family Strength Model. Data management and analysis were also aided by the software package NUD\*IST, which stands for Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorizing. Data presented are a summary of women's responses that highlight the importance of Islamic beliefs and practices in their daily family life.

#### Family strengths

In Islam, the family is a divinely inspired and ordained institution. Faith or Islamic beliefs constitute the bedrock for the strengths and success of the family. Muslim women most frequently reported

that adhering to Islamic beliefs and practices is the basis for healthy family and community relationships. As one woman explained:

*Family happiness comes from the relationship with Allah. If the relationship with Allah is wonderful, the family will be happy. We know that the source of love is the heart, and the heart is not owned by the human being, but it is owned by Allah, so stronger the relationship of the human being with Allah, the stronger the relationship will be between the married couple and this will lead to a happy family.*

Verses from the Holy Qur'an confirm the importance of faith for Muslims in determining the quality of family life:

*Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has Faith, verily to him will We give a life that is good and pure, and We will bestow on such their reward according to the best of their actions. (Holy Qur'an, 16:97)*

*But whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a life narrowed down. (Holy Qur'an, 20:124)*

#### Family cohesion

Cohesion is an important family strength for Muslims. Muslim women describe family cohesion as being an emotional bond or closeness that has spiritual origins and is expressed in a variety of ways. Cohesion is considered vital to promote psychological, emotional, physical and spiritual companionship between couples and family members. The emotional bond or connection between family members is believed to be reinforced by maintaining close physical contact with one another. Muslim women reported that the cultural tradition of patri-locality or living with the family of their husband's father for a period of time after marriage and afterwards residing nearby, is an optimal context for developing the emotional bond between family members. Patri-locality was described as providing a source of economic and social support for family members, encouraging group pride in individual accomplishments and providing opportunities for socialization and value orientation.

In Islam, the family is a divinely inspired and ordained institution.



Annita Sani, Ph.D.



Nadia Buhannad, Ph.D.

This verse from the Holy Qur'an emphasizes the importance of cohesion for family and community members:

*Serve God, and join not any partners with Him; and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbors who are near, neighbors who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer [you meet]. (Holy Qur'an, 4:36)*

#### Stress management

Muslim women believe that hardships are a fact of life and sometimes a test from Allah. If women persevere, not only will they come out of any suffering stronger, but their sins will also be forgiven. Coping strategies include praying and asking Allah for help and patience to endure, using personal and family resources to help each other, accepting crises as challenges rather than denying them, and growing together by working through crises. Muslims believe that hardships are in proportion to their coping skills and that ease follows hardship. According to the Qur'an:

*Allah puts no burden on any person beyond what he can bear. After a difficulty, Allah will soon grant relief. (Holy Qur'an, 65: 6-7)*

#### Implications for family life educators

Family life educators working with Muslim families need to understand that many Muslims emphasize that individual spiritual development is a prerequisite for improving family relationships. Family life educators working with Muslims may initially spend time with individuals exploring and discussing discrepancies between religious beliefs and practices rather than work directly on improving family relations and dynamics.

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sense of purpose as well as a means of social mobility. Said one Indian woman: *I think I have a job now. Before 9/11, I felt like Muslim women really didn't have a mission or direction [here in the US]. But now...there are so many stereotypes about Muslim women. I think it's a duty on me to try and break those stereotypes so it [the hijab] has become a very important thing for me.*

This increased sense of purpose has had an effect on Muslim women's strength and determination as well as their Islamic identities. A second generation student whose father is Pakistani and whose mother is an Anglo-American convert to Islam said: *It [September 11th] brought out my strength...it has made me more confident and more and more proud of being a Muslim, of being a Muslim woman, and I see myself and the other muhajabas [women who wear the hijab] as sort of being...almost a leader—being the leaders of the Muslim community. The reason I say that is because of the identity—what I feel is the identity if being a muhajaba is much more...it comes across much more than for a man. It just sends more out to people the identity of a Muslim woman with herself covered.*

In response to September 11th, several participants reported being afraid, but then decided to take a more active role in response to the media portrayals of Islam and Muslims. A Pakistani woman remarked: *Muslim women...in the beginning they wanted to go back and hide but then they realized their fight, and they have to come forward to show that Islam is a religion that does not oppress them. In my personal experience, I have seen that women have become more vocal and want to show that Islam is a religion of*

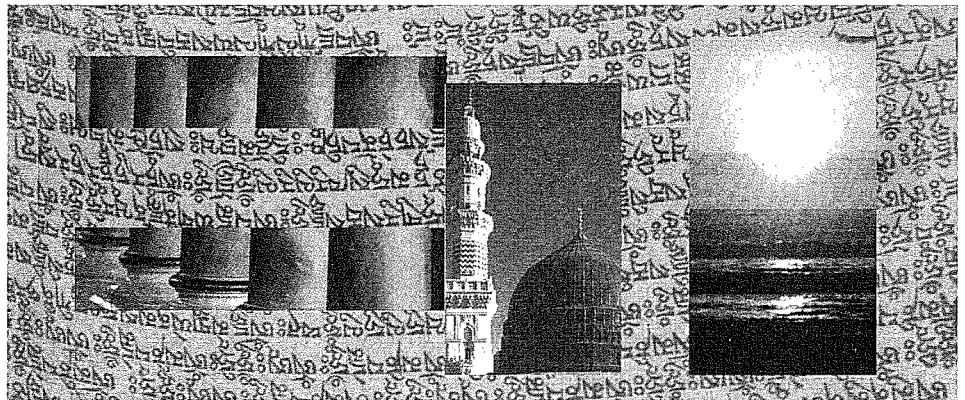
*peace and it's not what the media portrays and I think that they are doing it for the sake of their children.*

#### Changes in mosque communities

Muslim women who wear the hijab in America face a paradox. Stereotyped by the media and society as being downtrodden and oppressed, many cling more dearly to their hijab to dispel these stereotypes. Because the hijab is a physical marker for Islamic social identity, Muslim women who wear it are in a position to serve as representatives of their respective Islamic communities—particularly when

*scenes. When it comes to doing Islamic activities or attending classes there's a lot of times more women at these classes than there are men. So I would hope to see Muslim women continue becoming more involved because it is very important to be out there...Now is the time for us to be in front of the scenes.*

And, perhaps, things are changing slowly. One woman reported: *[Since September 11th] women have become a lot more active, very vocal...and men have, I think, realized they need to bring women forward because they are, in my opinion, an*



interacting with other religious groups and the media. Voicing her frustration with cultural practices that persist in the mosque communities, one woman said: *If we Muslims want to become more involved in the political process—a big part of that is going to have to be getting rid of our cultural attitudes toward Muslim women. A lot of politics is the social aspects...of getting to know people in your community and reaching out to others. ...Muslim women are excellent representatives of the community and we need to utilize those skills.*

Another said: *Women do more Islamic work, they do everything that's behind the*

*untapped resource. And finally, in my opinion, the men have realized that. The mosque I come from recently had an election and they elected a woman as the treasurer for the first time. Women were always very active but they never had a woman in the executive committee so after September 11th women had a lot of interaction with the media and we thought it was a good time to try to put a woman forward, and I think we did a very good job. When you put a woman forward as a spokesperson for the Muslim community I think it breaks down the stereotype instantly, so I [definitely] see a change.*

Finally, with regard to the future, a second-generation woman remarked: *It's going to take a lot of work. We have a lot of wasted time to make up for...But, I think we're going to see more Muslim women getting involved. I think we're going to have a really strong [Muslim] community here in America. We're gonna grow. This is what I see.*

*For more information, contact  
hbadr@mdanderson.org.*

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Professionals who understand family cohesion from a Western perspective may not initially understand the Islamic perspective, which stresses group interdependence and decision-making rather than individuality. These professionals may incorrectly see the behavior of family members as enmeshment. Family life educators should not discourage Muslims from high levels of family cohesion. Instead, they should help the family to prioritize its needs.

*For more information, contact Annita.Sani@zu.ac.ae or dr\_nadia@emirates.net.ae.*

# Interfaith Marriage and Communication over Religious Issues

by Patrick C. Hughes, Ph.D., Texas Tech University; and Rebecca Greene, M. A. Candidate, Honors College, Texas Tech University



**T**he occurrence of interfaith marriages has risen dramatically from the 1930s to the present. The divorce rate in America has also risen significantly. Research indicates that interfaith marriages end in divorce up to nine times more often than marriages between couples of the same denomination.

## Religious conflict or poor communication?

Much research has focused on conflict that may result from the partners' different religious beliefs and systems. Many faith traditions have zealously opposed interfaith marriage based on the premise that partners with disparate beliefs would clash, and this conflict would eventually destroy the relationship, leaving children confused or one partner alienated.

Clearly there are some problematic patterns, which can be observed in a significant percentage of interfaith marriages. But it isn't certain whether these patterns result from a lack of shared beliefs. Divergent faith traditions may play a role in the marital satisfaction of these couples, but even among people of the same faith there are different ways of thinking about and observing the tenets of one's religion. Regardless of similar or dissimilar beliefs, communication patterns between the spouses are one of the best predictors of marital satisfaction. In our study, we looked at the partners through the lens of religious orientation and tried to determine how this affects couple communication both in general and during conflicts over religious issues.

## Two orientations

Prior research argues that there are two primary religious orientations, intrinsic

and extrinsic. Intrinsically religious persons are characterized as being strongly committed to their faith. Their religion is of primary importance to them. It helps them gain a sense of meaning in their lives. They tend to be unprejudiced and tolerant of different viewpoints, more mature, consider their religion as a unifying principle in life and important to mental health, and attend religious services more frequently. Extrinsically religious persons view their religion

as a means to an end. For example, religion tends to be viewed as a means to a personal benefit and toward promoting social relationships with others. In addition, religiously extrinsic persons often attend religious service irregularly and tend to be more prejudiced, dependent, utilitarian, and in need of comfort and security.

The findings of this research on interfaith marriage found that intrinsic religious orientation was associated with more constructive communication and marital satisfaction, and less demand-withdraw communication (a communication pattern positively associated with distressed marriages) during conflict over a religious issue. Extrinsic religious orientation was associated with less constructive communication, more demand-withdraw communication, more social support satisfaction from a social network (often, interfaith couples have separate social networks because of the need to practice religion in public and group settings), and less marital satisfaction. It was also found that constructive communication was the strongest predictor of marital satisfaction among interfaith couples.

It may be that intrinsically oriented people discuss conflict over religious issues more effectively than those who are religiously extrinsic. Because an intrinsic orientation is strongly related to religious commitment, those individuals who are strongly committed to the doctrines of their religion may internalize the doctrines in terms of general social behavior and expectations for marital communication. It may be that during a conflict, intrinsically oriented

Interfaith marriages may not necessarily be problematic or doomed to failure.

individuals may apply their faith to how they

manage and communicate with each other during marital conflicts. This suggests that religiously intrinsic partners may be particularly successful in interfaith marriages. Additionally, intrinsically oriented partners may be more tolerant and accepting of religious differences in others. They tend to be individualistic toward their faith, which means that religiously intrinsic partners may bracket off their religious practices so they may not necessarily interfere with how others practice their own faith.

Religiously extrinsic partners tend to practice in an interpersonal or public setting—they use religion to meet social and interpersonal needs such as relationship development. Prior research has found that in terms of demand-withdraw communication, a desire for change in one's spouse predicts this pattern. It may be that religiously extrinsic partners expect their spouses to attend services and participate in religious practices with them or in general express a need to overlap religious experiences. This may suggest that religiously extrinsic

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# Parent-Daughter Relationships and the Expression of Faith

by Linda S. Behrendt, Ph.D., CFLE, Assistant Professor, Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, Indiana State University



To explore the influence of church culture and the family system in shaping female identity formation, I interviewed 20 Midwestern college women between ages 19 and 22. These interviews generated insight into how they experienced growing up in mainline Protestant churches and how their family of origin influenced the development of their gender identity. During the interviews, many of the women spoke about the influence of their parents' spiritual beliefs on the parent-daughter relationship. These women freely shared their feelings about their rapport with both their mother and their father, and the role that faith played in their overall appraisal of those relationships.

During the interviews, the women were asked whether there were differences in the way their parents expressed their faith. Since all the interviewees considered themselves to be Christian, I had assumed that their faith had been nurtured in their family of origin. I learned, however, that not all of their parents were believers.

## Lack of faith as an impediment

Of the 20 women who participated in the study, four had at least one parent who was a nonbeliever. What came across very clearly was that these women considered a parent's lack of faith as an impediment to their relationship with that parent. Donna succinctly expressed how her parents' lack of faith has negatively affected her relationship with both of them:

*Well, I would say just them not having faith or religion has affected our relationship. Because I really don't tell my parents a lot. Especially my mom, I don't like, I don't, I haven't had that relationship*

*where I can just talk to her about anything and ask her questions about anything. I've always had to go to people inside the church, if I'd wanted to ask certain questions.... So I'd say it affects us, because it's a touchy subject since my parents aren't practicing, and so it did probably affect our relationships.*

Three of the four women said they had difficulty relating to the nonbelieving parent.

Said one woman: *Yeah, my dad, I have a hard time relating to him about things, you know, just talking...*

## Relationships founded in faith

Many of the interviewees mentioned that faith provided the foundation for their relationship with their parents. The women said that they had less in common with parents since they no longer lived at home, and that faith had become a common bond. Developmentally the participants were at a point where they were making choices that would shape their adult lives (for example, college majors, internships, dating, and marriage), and their faith

guided them in the decision-making process. These women confided in parents who shared this faith-based belief system and sought their advice when making decisions. Said 19-year-old Carrie: *My mom, I think maybe it made her feel like we had something in common, and it's something we can do together.*

All women agreed that differences in their parents' expressions of faith had made a difference in their relationships with them. Nine women stated that their mother and father expressed faith in different ways, and that

Shared faith helped strengthen these women's relationship with their parents.

because of this difference, they were closer to their mother, who was usually more willing to talk about her faith. The choice of the mother as closer parent was always qualified and was generally based on the perception that the mother was more verbal or expressive of her feelings. Lee Ann describes this perspective: *Yeah, well my mom's always been very open, well, she likes to talk about everything.... And my dad just, doesn't really want to talk at all...*

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## INTERFAITH MARRIAGE continued from page F16

partners may repeatedly ask for this type of participation, whereas religiously intrinsic partners may be less likely to encourage joint religious participation.

## The need for candid exploration

This study suggests that interfaith marriages may not necessarily be problematic or doomed to failure. Couples in which both partners are intrinsically oriented, nonreligious, or proreligious did not report significant levels of conflict in regard to religious

issues. However, extrinsics may consider agreement over religious practices necessary in order for a satisfying interpersonal relationship. Couples who are planning to marry may benefit from finding out their religious orientation. If both partners are extrinsically oriented, they could explore this issue candidly and honestly with counselors or other human services professionals.

For more information, contact [patrick.hughes@ttu.edu](mailto:patrick.hughes@ttu.edu).



# The Effects of Extreme Religiosity on Academic Achievement and College Adjustment among College Students

by Gregory P. Hickman, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Human Development and Family Studies, The Pennsylvania State University

Going off to college ushers in a new stage of life as many adolescents face a new level of independence, uncertainty, and anxiety. Recent studies have found that approximately 60 percent of entering college freshmen drop out of college without obtaining a degree, and most do so during the first two years of college. Why do some adolescents fail in a college setting even though they may have the academic preparation and ability to succeed?

Some researchers have begun to examine psychosocial factors in college adjustment just as rigorously as they examine cognitive factors. The role of religiosity, however, remains understudied even

though Family Life Educators (FLEs) have long challenged researchers to examine its role. Despite such recommendations, very few measures have been developed to examine the dynamic role of extreme religiosity in adolescent life transitions.

Research on religiosity has historically been based on demographic (denominational), descriptive (church attendance), and non-empirical studies. Such studies fail to address the impact of extreme religiosity. The study of extreme religiosity is warranted since, for some families, religiosity is far more than just attending church, denominational preference, and prayer. For these families, religiosity cuts across multiple domains of life, including

decision-making, family life, and societal interactions.

## What is "extreme religiosity"?

I define "extreme religiosity" as a level of religiosity that negatively effects the processes necessary for assimilation and adjustment to everyday life. Hence, extreme religiosity is seen in support for parental rejection of children who have developed differing views; the belief in traditional and often rigid gender roles; the use of conditional love as a form of discipline; and the rejection of alternative family, personal, and religious life styles. Extreme religiosity may also mean that individuals are discouraged from

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## PARENT-DAUGHTER *continued from page F17*

Kara explained how faith has strengthened her relationship with her mother while her father's lack of faith expression has hampered her relationship with him: *Well, my mom will talk about it whenever I want to talk about it; she'll bring it up sometimes...and my dad doesn't really talk about it much...he'll just kind of go along with everything, and he'll just kind of nod. He doesn't really have much input, I guess...*

Many of the women noted that when it came to feeling close to a parent, personality as well as faith played a role. Several women noted that their father was generally quiet—not just on the subject of faith—and that for this reason, they had difficulty relating to him.

### Faithful fathers

Some women, however, felt closer to their father, and in these cases, the feeling of closeness clearly resulted from his expression of faith. From their responses, it appeared that this closeness was encouraged specifically by the

father's ability to profess his faith. Libby explained it like this: *My dad is much more like...I can't think of the word. He expresses his faith much more....more expressively (laughter)! I can't say it right. My mom is more like, reserved, and keeps to herself about her faith pretty much.*

Nicole described her father's faith expression this way: *Yeah, um, my mom doesn't express much, and my dad does. Well, he's not, uh, he's really liberal in his beliefs, but yeah, my dad's more religious than my mom.*

A few women said that there was no difference in their relationship with either of their parents. These women did not note any differences in their parents' expressions of faith. In a few cases, neither parent professed a faith. Lucy, for example, perceived few, if any, differences between her parents: *I think that they had very similar ways, but I mean, I can't really think of anything where they were different in their beliefs and how they went about doing it.*

During young adulthood, individuals undergo many changes. For most of the young women who participated in this study, faith was a stable element in their relationship with their parents.

But the role of personality must also be acknowledged, since a parent's ability to express faith is determined in part by his or her overall introversion or extroversion.

The fact that women did not feel close to parents who expressed no faith offers support for the role of faith in helping to create close bonds between parents and their daughters.

For more information, contact [hebehren@isugw.indstate.edu](mailto:hebehren@isugw.indstate.edu).



Linda S. Behrendt,  
Ph.D., CFLE

# Online Resources

## WEB SITES

**Baylor University Center for Family and Community Ministries** exists to strengthen families and their communities, and to increase their capacity for nurturing faith, through the ministry of congregations. [www3.baylor.edu/CFCM/](http://www3.baylor.edu/CFCM/)

**Center for Public Justice** is an independent civic education and policy research organization that grounds its research, publications, training, and advocacy in a comprehensive Christian political perspective. [www.cpjustice.org](http://www.cpjustice.org)

**Center for the Study of Latino Religion** was founded in 2002 within the Institute for Latino Studies at the University of Notre Dame as a national center and clearinghouse for ecumenically focused social-scientific study of the U.S. Latino church, its leadership, and the interaction between religion and community. [www.nd.edu/%7Elatino/csrlr.htm](http://www.nd.edu/%7Elatino/csrlr.htm)

**Hartford Institute for Religion Research** at Hartford Seminary has a 27-year record of rigorous, policy-relevant research, anticipation of emerging issues and commitment to the creative dissemination of learning. <http://hrr.hartsem.edu/default.html>

**National Study of Youth and Religion**, a four-year research project funded by Lilly Endowment Inc., began in August 2001 and will continue until August 2005. [www.youthandreligion.org](http://www.youthandreligion.org)

**Pew Trusts** fund eight "Centers of Excellence," each bringing a unique perspective to the relationship between religion and public life. Find links to the centers at <http://religionanddemocracy.lib.virginia.edu/partners/pewcenters.html>.

**Polis Center**, through its Project on Religion and Urban Culture, which is supported by grants from Lilly Endowment Inc., examines and encourages discussion about the role of religion in Indianapolis—and, by implication, in other mid-sized American cities. [www.polis.iupui.edu/ruc](http://www.polis.iupui.edu/ruc)

**Program for Research on Religion and Urban Civil Society** at the University of Pennsylvania is a professional and graduate-level interdisciplinary and inter-university empirical research center dedicated to exploring "the role of religion in contemporary urban America," including but not limited to, "how local congregations, grassroots ministries, and other communities of faith matter in the daily lives of disadvantaged children, youth, and families." [www.crrucs.org](http://www.crrucs.org)

**Roundtable on Religion and Social Welfare Policy**, coordinated by the Rockefeller Institute of Government, at the State University of New York in Albany, conducts in-depth nationwide research on the role and efficacy of faith-based social service programs. [www.religionandsocialpolicy.org](http://www.religionandsocialpolicy.org)



## PUBLICATIONS

"Can an Office Change a Country: the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiative, A Year in Review," a report prepared for the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life by Kathryn Dunn Tenpas of the University of Pennsylvania, studies the issues involved in the participation of faith-based organizations in the delivery of federally funded social services. Download as a PDF file at <http://pewforum.org/issues/display.php?IssueID=3>.

"Three Faith Factors," a 2002 paper by John J. DiIulio, Jr., Nonresident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, studies how religion improves the lives of disadvantaged urban children and families. [www.brookings.edu/views/articles/diiulio/pi\\_fall2002.htm](http://www.brookings.edu/views/articles/diiulio/pi_fall2002.htm)

### EXTREME RELIGIOSITY *continued from page F18*

learning new information that conflicts with their religious beliefs. For example, students who have been taught that God created the world in six days may refuse to consider evolution as a possibility, even in the face of scientific evidence.

The theoretical underpinning for studying extremes of religiosity harkens back to the economic principle of "diminishing returns." Specifically, a point exists when "overdoing it" may become harmful (for example, overeating, over exercising). At the other extreme, a point exists when "underdoing it" may become harmful (for example, undereating, under exercising). It is proposed, therefore, that the effects of religiosity on developmental outcomes may be seen in an inverted U-shape distribution.

#### Measuring religiosity

The Extreme Religiosity Measure (TERM) is a 32-item, 5-point Likert-type scale designed to measure the extremeness of one's religious beliefs, values, and convictions. Responses range from 1 ("not at all like") to 5 ("very much like"). TERM is comprised of three subscales (family, religious, and social) and an overall scale. Religious dimensions are derived by combining the scores of the respective subscale and overall scale items and creating a mean score. High scores indicate extreme religious beliefs, values, and convictions. Sample questions include: "My life revolves around God as opposed to my family" (Family Scale), "I judge others according to my religious beliefs, values, and convictions" (Religious Scale), and "My religious beliefs, values, and convictions restricts my actions and participation in social situations" (Social Scale).

The Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ) is a 67-item measure used to assess how well a student is adapting to college. The SACQ

has four subscales (personal-emotional adjustment, social adjustment, goal-commitment adjustment, and academic adjustment) and an overall scale. Respondents were asked to indicate on a 9-point Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 ("applies very closely to me") to 9 ("doesn't apply to me at all"). Respondents were asked how applicable each statement was for them at the present time. Adjustment dimensions were derived by combining the scores of the respective subscale and overall scale items and creating a mean score. Higher scores indicate better adjustment.

#### Adjustment and GPA

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of religiosity on grade point average and indices of college adjustment among a sample of 77 college students enrolled at an Evangelical Christian college. The participants were categorically split based on the following mean values of TERM:

those at or above the 75th percentile were categorized as the high extreme, those at or below the 25th percentile were categorized as the low extreme, and those between the 25th and 75th percentiles were categorized as the middle group. Independent ANOVAs (analysis of variance) examined differences between the groups GPA, indices of college adjustment, and levels of religiosity.

As hypothesized, the more extreme a student's religiosity, the lower his or her academic achievement and college adjustment. Students in the middle group had a higher GPA (3.50) than students in the lower extreme (3.19) and the higher extreme (3.39). The academic adjustment (5.95) of those college students in the higher extreme

was significantly lower than those in the lower extreme (6.29) and middle group (6.26). The personal-emotional adjustment (5.84) of those in the higher extreme was significantly lower than those in the lower extreme (6.42) and middle group (6.10). Although non-significant, those in the lower extreme (6.51) were less committed to college compared to those in the middle group (6.92) and higher extreme (6.95). The same trend was demonstrated for social adjustment: as those in the lower extreme (6.09) were less socially adjusted to college than those in the middle group (6.22) and higher extreme (6.30).

#### Directions for further study

This study supports the theory that too little or too much religiosity may negatively impact the adjustment process of college students.

Perhaps students in the lower extreme show less commitment and social adjustment because of anxiety caused by the conflict between religious dogmatism and new experiences with subject matter and people that do not conform to the students' dogmatic views. Future studies on extreme religiosity might examine the attitudes of students at secular universities. In addition, studies that link problem behaviors to extremes in religiosity would greatly enhance the knowledge base of FLEs, family researchers, community leaders, and professionals involved in creating intervention strategies for such children.

For more information, contact [gph10@psu.edu](mailto:gph10@psu.edu).



Gregory P. Hickman, Ph.D.

Too little or too much religiosity may negatively impact the adjustment process of college students.



NATIONAL COUNCIL ON FAMILY RELATIONS

3989 Central Ave. N.E., Suite 550, Minneapolis, MN 55421

Phone: 763-781-9331 • Fax: 763-781-9348 • E-mail: [ncfr3989@ncfr.org](mailto:ncfr3989@ncfr.org) • Website: [www.ncfr.org](http://www.ncfr.org)

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