

In this issue:

Conflict, Violence, War: Echoing the Conference Theme

pages F1 – F24

Ambiguous loss and disappearance of loved ones; violence and the NFL; reintegration and military families; resolution in South Africa; sexual violence in DR Congo; and more

Next issue: Best of Report



Annual Conference 2015 Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada November 11-14

This year's conference provides insights into the most timely topics in family research in more than 125 paper sessions, symposia, workshops, and focused poster sessions. **See a sampling of the highlights from each NCFR Section, page 8.**

Preconference Workshops – Tuesday, November 10

Don't miss these state-of-the-practice workshops. Visit www.ncfr.org/conference and follow links

Eradicating Sexual Violence on Campus
Theory Construction and Research
Methodology

MAXQDA: hands-on qualitative research workshop

See descriptions in the Executive Director's article, page 5.

Conference 2015: From the Program Chair

Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth, Ph.D., CFLE

As chair of the upcoming NCFR annual conference, I am very proud of the all that NCFR members and section leaders have accomplished over the past few months. Thanks to you, I think the upcoming conference promises to be a very meaningful experience for all who attend. I hope that you will travel to Vancouver, stay, and participate actively!

When I proposed the theme for this year, I did so with trepidation. "Conflict, violence and war" are not only weighty topics, but also politically sensitive and in many cases personally painful. For this reason, I also have worked with the section chairs and plenary speaker to emphasize the positive face of each element . . .

Not just conflict, but also connection.

Not just violence, but also empowerment.

Not just war, but also peacemaking.

And many of you have submitted conference presentations on these topics, which will be valuable inclusions on the program.

I intentionally chose the three words to represent the conference theme to

acknowledge the multilevel nature of the phenomenon. What children learn in their homes can set them up to engage in violence and war later in life; when war happens, it affects every level of society down to individual children.

Having recently returned from a trip to Europe, Ann Frank's home in Amsterdam is a sad reminder of this truth. No matter what you study or teach, it is very likely that the conference theme is relevant to your work, whether it be bullying at school, harassment at work, or peacemaking in the community.

I'm very grateful to our plenary speakers for agreeing to share their perspectives with us. Each one brings a global reputation, and has a great deal to teach us.

>The first day of the conference is Veterans Day in the United States, Remembrance

conference 2015 continued on page 8



Shelley MacDermid
Wadsworth

Letters to the editor—NCFR Report

Letters to the editor on topics and activities relevant to NCFR member interests may be submitted to *NCFR Report*. The following procedures apply:

- Only letters submitted by members will be accepted.
- Length is limited to 250 words; letters may be edited for space and clarity.
- Letters must be signed and include contact information; submissions are verified.

- Letters that are deemed libelous, malicious, or otherwise inappropriate will not be published.

Submit letters to the editor via e-mail to charlescheesebrough@ncfr.org.

Or by mail:
Charles Cheesebrough
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Attention: NCFR Report
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Report

of The National Council on Family Relations

Mission Statement for 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.

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NCFR 2015 Annual Conference

NCFR appreciates the support provided by our many conference sponsors.

Still available: Sponsorships are open for the Newcomers Reception; the CFLE Reception; Legacy Circle; some Sections, including Advancing Family Science and Research and Theory. Inquire immediately: charlescheesebrough@ncfr.org or 888-781-9331, extension 2885.

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Claiming more than we know

Paul R. Amato, Ph.D., NCFR President, paulamato00@gmail.com

A decade ago, John Ioannidis, a bio-statistician, published an article in *PLOS Medicine* titled, “Why most published research findings are false.” In this article, he argued that the majority of findings reported in medical journals (up to 90% in some subfields) are wrong, and that many widely accepted conclusions reflect nothing more than the prevailing biases of researchers.

Although it would be easy to dismiss these claims as the work of a crank, Ioannidis is no lightweight. He holds the Rehnborg Chair in Disease Prevention and is a Professor of Medicine and Health Research and Policy at Stanford University, the director of Stanford's Prevention Research Center, and the co-director of Stanford's Meta-Research Innovation Center. When someone with these credentials makes strong claims, people pay attention, and his 2005 paper became the most heavily downloaded article in the journal's history. (I've included the reference below for interested readers.)

Ioannidis presented a set of equations to demonstrate that false positives (statistically significant results when the null hypothesis is true) are more common than most researchers realize. He argued that false positives are especially likely if (a) the sample size is small, (b) the effect size in the population is modest, (c) multiple hypotheses are tested in the same study, (d) alternative ways of conceptualizing and analyzing the data are possible, (e) financial, personal, or ideological incentives to find a particular result exist, and (f) the topic is popular among researchers. Because these conditions are common in many fields, and because journals tend to publish only statistically significant findings, false positives accumulate in the research literature. As a result, many innovative studies that appear to be groundbreaking at the time of publication turn out to be worthless in the long run.

Ioannidis's analysis has some disturbing implications for family science. If medical research, which relies largely on experimen-

tal trials with random assignment (the gold standard for inferring cause and effect relationships), is frequently wrong, then what about family research? Most of the topics we study cannot be studied experimentally, so cause and effect relationships are difficult to establish. Moreover, most family research occurs under the same conditions that (according to Ioannidis) produce an abundance of false positives.

A strong motivation to obtain statistically significant findings exists among family scholars, just as it does among medical researchers. Researchers want to publish their work in peer-reviewed journals to obtain tenure and promotion; publication also is the established path to becoming a respected and influential scholar. But because publication requires statistical significance, researchers have a strong incentive to find $p < .05$. Many researchers also have strong personal or ideological investments in particular hypotheses, especially in the social sciences, where political beliefs can affect the choice of research topics. Although outright fraud is rare in our field, “data dredging” or “p hacking” is common—testing one hypothesis after another until a coefficient is statistically significant and therefore publishable. When reading journal articles, however, we rarely know how many hypotheses were tested because this information is not reported.

Although my comments are focused on quantitative research, similar concerns about false positives are relevant to qualitative studies. These considerations suggest that many of the currently accepted “facts” of family science are wrong. We can be reasonably confident about some things, of course, because some hypotheses have been replicated so often that they are almost certainly true. For example, studies have repeatedly shown that poverty is linked with many problematic dimensions of family life and child development. And it seems pretty clear that exposure to conflict and violence

are not good for children (or adults). But despite some well-replicated and reasonably certain findings, most of our accumulated knowledge about families is less certain than we would like.

Although we can rarely be 100% confident about research conclusions, there are steps we can take to increase our confidence in what we know. First, researchers can report the results of alternative specifications in their research articles. That is, researchers can describe how their results change when using different statistical models, methods of measuring variables, and samples or subsamples. Alternative specifications allow readers to understand how robust (or ephemeral) particular findings are. Second, we can relax the requirement of statistical significance for publication, especially for papers describing studies with strong theoretical foundations, exemplary methodologies, and a high level of statistical power. Third, we can rely more heavily on meta-analytic reviews before reaching firm conclusions about particular phenomena or hypotheses.

The most important step we could take, however, would be to increase the number of published replication studies. Unfortunately, replication is not popular. Graduate students are steered away from it because replications are not seen as original contributions to knowledge and have low status. Most manuscript reviewers do not like replication studies (“I don't see much that is new here”), and journal editors are reluctant to publish them. It also is difficult to obtain funding for replication research. Big funding agencies like the National Institutes of Health value *innovation* rather than replication—even though innovative studies tend to generate more false positives.

Despite these challenges, scientists are beginning to re-evaluate the importance of replication. A good example is the *Many Labs Replication* (Klein, et al., 2014)—a 36-site, 12-country effort to replicate 13

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Inclusion and Diversity Committee news and conference update

NCFR's Inclusion and Diversity Committee (IDC) invites you to attend two important sessions at the NCFR Annual Conference in Vancouver!

The first session is an invited panel discussion, entitled "Social Justice Strategies of Family Researchers and Professionals in the Age of Ferguson," and it will take place on Wednesday, November 11, 8:30–9:45 a.m. It is a follow-up to the "I Can't Breathe: A Call for Dialogue and Action" article that appeared in the Spring 2015 *NCFR Report* (<https://www.ncfr.org/ncfr-report/current-issue/i-cant-breathe-call-dialogue-and-action>).

Recent events in Ferguson, MO; Staten Island, NY; Cleveland, OH; Baltimore, MD, and several other cities and towns in the U.S., in which unarmed Black men and boys were killed by police officers, have sparked international attention and dialogue. This panel discussion aims to further that dialogue by bringing together family scholars and practitioners who have reflected on problems in the relationship between law enforcement and communities of color that have sparked widespread discussion and protests. Panelists will discuss how their work has been affected by these recent events and will suggest strategies for increasing social justice for communities in the U.S. and beyond. The conversation will likely delve into broader issues of institutionalized racism and race relations in general, as our nation grapples with incidents such as the June 2015 shooting deaths of nine African American church members in Charleston, SC. The session will conclude with time for questions and answers, and attendees will be encouraged to join in this critical dialogue.

Confirmed panelists include Dr. Antoinette Landor from the University of Missouri, Dr. Bethany Letiecq from George Mason University, and Dr. Bill Allen from the University of Minnesota (other panelist invitations are pending). The session will be moderated by Dr. Anthony James from Miami University (Ohio). Please come and share and gain ideas for action. We urge all family scientists to consider their scholarship, classroom activities, and/or professional practices in order to take advantage of the "teachable moment" afforded by these frustratingly tragic events:

- What conversations are you having about these topics?
- How do these incidents affect you and your families?
- How have these events influenced your work—in your classrooms, in your research, in your various professional settings?
- What role can we play in changing this lived reality for families, for our students, and for ourselves? What can and should we do, both personally and professionally, to make our societies more just and safe for all its members?

This session is sponsored by the Students and New Professionals Section and cosponsored by the IDC, Research and Theory, Feminism and Family Studies, Family Therapy, Ethnic Minorities, Family Policy, Religion and Families, and Advancing Family Science Sections. We hope you'll join us in this important discussion.

The second event is the annual "Continental Breakfast and Active Conversation on Diversity and Inclusion" on Friday, November 13, 7:45–9:15 a.m. This session provides an opportunity for NCFR members and the

nationally elected IDC members to come together to discuss issues and concerns and will be facilitated by Dr. Robert Reyes. It includes a "conversation and reflection" activity designed to enhance the inclusion and diversity of NCFR. If you have thoughts, suggestions, or insights for helping to move our organization forward in regard to inclusion and diversity, please come to this breakfast session!

About the Inclusion and Diversity Committee

The IDC is a Board committee whose duties include (a) making recommendations regarding inclusive and diverse approaches; (b) examining programs, activities, policies, publications, and practices to determine intentional or unintentional exclusiveness; and (c) engaging members in scholarly dialogues.

The IDC members want to work with all of you to make NCFR a preeminent leader in regard to inclusion and diversity as well as a professional home where we all feel welcome and proud of our organization's commitment to inclusion and diversity. Please join us for both of these sessions in Vancouver, or contact us anytime using the IDC webform at <https://www.ncfr.org/idc-webform>, where you can share your thoughts, questions, ideas, and suggestions anonymously (if you wish). Alternatively, you can contact any member of the IDC Section; our names and email addresses are listed below.

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NCFR on Facebook is absolutely the easiest way to keep up with family-related research, family life education resources, members in the news, NCFR announcements and opportunities, and much more. Updated often...you should visit, www.facebook.com/ncfrpage



Updates and opportunities

Diane Cushman, Executive Director, dianecushman@ncfr.org

Preconference workshops in Vancouver

We have an amazing line-up of pre-conference workshops this year (which I've described below), all of which have come about as a result of member interest and action. And these are just a portion of what attendees can expect, so . . .

- > Take a good look at the conference program (www.ncfr.org/ncfr-2015/conference-schedule) as well as the special opportunities noted in the schedule.
- > Book your flight and guest room (discount rates apply but space is limited). (<https://www.ncfr.org/ncfr-2015/hotel-and-city-information>)
- > Complete registration before late fees apply (<https://www.ncfr.org/ncfr-2015/registration-details>).

If you're not planning to attend the conference this year, consider participating via the Online Conference; watch for details in Zippy News and your email inbox.

How to get your work in front of the public

Dr. Stephanie Coontz has accepted our invitation to share her successful approaches to getting the word out to the media about Family Science in *Media Training: Translating Family Science for the Public*. This workshop will focus on taking your research to the public. Topics include how to identify

what parts of your research will appeal to a broader audience, how to construct an op-ed piece, and how to prepare for interviews.

This limited-enrollment preconference workshop filled quickly. However, we will offer similar hands-on opportunities in the future so that you will have the skills and knowledge needed to expand the reach of your work. You can help determine the topics and formats of NCFR's offerings by completing the post-conference survey or simply sending your ideas to info@ncfr.org.

Take action to eliminate sexual violence on campus

Thank you to **Drs. Elizabeth Sharp, Shannon Weaver** (FFS Chair), and **Anisa Zvonkovic** who are organizing a workshop, on behalf of The Feminism and Family Studies Section (FFS), about **sexual violence and assault on college campuses**.

We expect that this preconference will result in a set of recommendations and action steps for colleges to eradicate on-campus sexual violence. Some of the invited presentations include:

- Framing Sexual Assault from a Feminist Lens
- An Overview of the Research on Sexual Violence on College Campuses
- Campus Administrators' Knowledge & Impact

- Teaching: Human Sexuality Courses in the HDFS Curriculum (including Triggers)
- Greek Life: Engaging Sorority Women
- Grief, Trauma and Response
- Student Voices: Responses, Resources, and Ideas

A special thank you to the workshop sponsors who are making it possible to offer it to you at a very low price: Virginia Tech, Texas Tech, the University of Connecticut, the University of Missouri, and Miami University.

Training on MAXQDA

NCFR is pleased to partner with **Dr. Áine Humble** who will offer her popular **Introductory MAXQDA** workshop. This full-day workshop will provide deep insight into MAXQDA qualitative data analysis software version 11. The workshop is entirely interactive and at its conclusion, you will be ready to start your own data analysis. Plus, you will receive an 80-page training manual, consisting of screen shots, instructions, and tips.

Vet your research methodology with the experts

Our fourth preconference workshop is **Theory Construction and Research Methodology (TCRM)**. A long-standing tradition, this one-and-one-half-day workshop is a conference highlight for researchers. Research works in progress are reviewed, discussed, and strengthened in this unique, interactive environment.

This year's TCRM co-chairs are **Drs. Erin Holmes** and **Claire Kamp Dush**. The TCRM sessions take place during the day on Tuesday, November 10, and on Wednesday morning, November 11. This year's major sponsorship for TCRM is again provided by Auburn University. NCFR also thanks the *Journal of Family Theory & Review* and editor Dr. Libby Blume for continuing support of TCRM.

For complete descriptions on the preconference workshops described above, please see <https://www.ncfr.org/ncfr-2015/conference-schedule/preconference-workshops-2015>.

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Thank you, donors

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classical findings from the field of psychology. Interestingly, this program of research successfully replicated 10 of the original 13 studies (77%). Some observers will be reassured by the fact that the majority of effects were confirmed, whereas others will be concerned about the one-fourth of replications that failed. What is especially interesting to me, however, is not the number of successful replications but the fact that so many behavioral researchers took replication seriously. (Note that efforts by some labs to replicate published drug studies have yielded even more troubling results, with the large majority of replications resulting in failure.)

Concern about the verification of research findings has been growing in recent years, and journals in a variety of fields have initiated procedures to facilitate replication. For example, *Nature* now has an 18-point checklist for authors to ensure that research results can be reproduced by other scholars. *Science's* guidelines for publication require authors to submit raw data and computer codes for independent verification of results. *Perspectives on Psychological Science* publishes an entire section devoted to replication research. And a biomedical organization, the *Science Exchange*, in conjunction with the journal *PLOS ONE*, is helping researchers to obtain independent verification of their results prior to publication.

The lack of attention to replication in family science places practitioners in an awkward situation. Although responsible practitioners base their work on research, it is not always clear how much confidence they can place in particular findings. Note that textbooks are not necessarily good sources for identifying well-substantiated findings. Publishers usually encourage textbook authors (especially in revisions) to include references to as many recent studies as possible. Although citing recent publications makes textbooks up to date, it also guarantees that they are brimming with false positives. Unfortunately, we have few guidelines to help family practitioners determine how much confidence to place in large portions of the research literature.

A potentially useful approach would be to identify some of the key research findings that inform family practice and arrange for independent teams of researchers to conduct replications using diverse samples, measures, and analytic methods. Only results that stubbornly refuse to go away would be eligible for the *gold seal* of research

confidence. (Another useful outcome of this process might be discovering that some well-known effects exist only for certain populations.) Adopting this approach would yield a curious outcome: We would know less than we did before, but we would be more certain of what we know. In my book, that would be a good tradeoff. ■

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Update on the Future of Family Science Initiative

"Family Science" in department names

When the Future of Family Science Task Force met in May (2015), three of the members reported dropping "studies" and adding "science" to their department names since August 2014.

Dr. Larry Ganong at the University of Missouri commented that while he was pleased to have his department become *Human Development and Family Science*, an unexpected benefit was students identifying as "family scientists." Standardizing nomenclature for the family life discipline and professions is an objective of the Future of Family Science Initiative. The need for visibility and identity for our scholars and practitioners is a driving force behind this work.

Family Relations title change

In our ongoing efforts to standardize the name of the discipline, we are exploring a title change for *Family Relations: Interdisciplinary Journal of Applied Family Studies*. Current editor Dr. Ron Sabatelli and incoming editor Dr. Jason Hans are leading

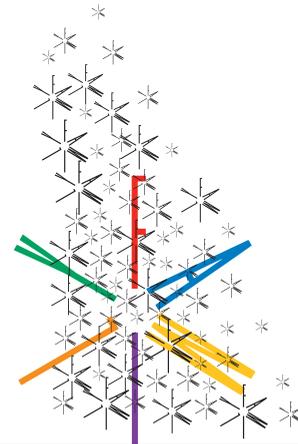
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- Ioannidis, J. P. A. (2005). Why most published research findings are false. *PLOS Medicine*, e124.
- Klein, R. A., et al. (2014). Investigating variation in replicability: A "Many Labs" replication project. *Social Psychology*, 45, 142-152.

the way for this change. If you are called upon to assist with the market research for a possible name change through an interview or a short survey, please participate. As always your thoughts are welcome at info@ncfr.org.

One last update...

While we continue to plan the 2015 conference, we are pleased to announce that Dr. Bahira Sherif Trask was recently appointed by the NCFR Board to chair the 2018 conference in San Diego. Congratulations, Dr. Trask! ■



On the Bookshelf

"On the Bookshelf" features books recently published by NCFR members. You're encouraged to submit notification to NCFR whenever a book you authored or edited is released. Your book may also be listed in the NCFR authors section on Amazon.com.

Requirements: At least one author must be an NCFR member; follow the format given here; send to jennifercrosswhite@ncfr.org. (Inclusion in this section does not constitute endorsement by NCFR.)

Jing J. Xiao. (2015). *Consumer Economic Wellbeing* (International Series on Consumer Science). Springer.

Twyla J. Hill. (2015). *Family Caregiving in Aging Populations*. Palgrave Pivot.

Gary R. Lee. (2015). *The Limits of Marriage: Why Getting Everyone Married Won't Solve All Our Problems*. Lexington Books.

Paul C. Rosenblatt. (2015). *Restarting Stalled Research*. Sage Publications.

Toby L. Parcel and Andrew J. Taylor. (2015). *The End of Consensus: Diversity, Neighborhoods, and the Politics of Public School Assignments*. The University of North Carolina Press ■





Do your job better with the Professional Resource Library

Dawn Cassidy, M.Ed., CFLE, Director of Education, dawncassidy@ncfr.org

One of the reasons that people join professional associations like the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) is that it provides reciprocal opportunities to share knowledge and resources relevant to the field. It avoids duplication of effort and can increase the likelihood that best practices are followed.

Recently NCFR member Julie Zaloudek posted an inquiry on the Education and Enrichment (E & E) Section listserv asking members to share their suggestions for teaching a class in family resource manage-

ment. Several section members responded by sharing their course syllabi.

Perhaps encouraged by the willingness of others to share their resources, Julie soon after posted information about an assignment that she and colleague Amanda Barnett created to provide students the opportunity to examine families in poverty at various systems of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory and through a family resource management lens. Several members responded with appreciation and enthusiasm about the assignment.

I contacted those who had shared their syllabi via the E&E listserv to ask their permission to post them on the NCFR Professional Resource Library (PRL) and was pleased, but not surprised, to see how willing people were to share their resources. Julie and Amanda were both also happy to grant permission for a link to their assignment to be posted. This quote from Julie reflects the frequent attitude NCFR members have about sharing their work.

"...we would be delighted to have it shared out in whatever way you think is best. It has been a rewarding assignment for us and our students, and it is gratifying to think that others might find it useful for students or that it could inspire more ideas for learning activities."

Find or share helpful resources

NCFR has hosted the Professional Resource Library for several years now and the number of resources has grown to nearly 1,700. The PRL provides an opportunity to find and/or share resources related to family science organized through a number of categories including *article, book, curriculum, DVD/video/webinar, podcast, research brief, syllabus, textbook, website, and other*. You can filter by *Content Area* or *Search by Keyword*.

Many of the resources posted on the PRL are accessible to anyone visiting the NCFR website. However, there are a number of resources that are only accessible if you are logged in as an NCFR member or as a Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE). You do not need to be the author or creator of a resource in order to share information about the resource through the PRL. The intent is that you share information on resources that you have found helpful in your practice. If there a book, textbook, or curriculum, for example, which you have found to be especially relevant to your work, check to

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Certified Family Life Educators

The following is a list of Certified Family Life Educators designated between April 1, 2015 and June 30, 2015. Provisional unless otherwise noted.

Alabama Alyssa McElwain FULL	Massachusetts Alyssa Marie McElrath	Oklahoma Misty Dawn Beason Todd Spencer
Arkansas Cassandra Marie Morlock	Michigan Savannah R. Freeman Mistie Lamb Judith Schroeder Billie Spicer	Rhode Island Courtney Lynn Miner
California Elizabeth Anne Bourne Damara S. Simmons	Minnesota Elizabeth Manteuffel	South Dakota Kaitlyn Rose Britz
Georgia Carla Kabwatha Emily Marie Rodgers	Mississippi Karleshia Nychelle Ball Julie Norman FULL Sage Sowell FULL	Tennessee Sinead Angela Doherty Brandy Freeman Le'Freida Victoria Gatlin
Idaho Andrea R. Englehorn	Nebraska Rochelle L. Dalla FULL	Texas Tammy L Cartier Darren Daugherty FULL Leah Williams Amy Beth Willis
Illinois Amber N. Kuhn	Nevada Ann Marie Wilson	Utah Jessica Anne Diamond Mandy Johnston Janey Lyn Luck Karee Stosich Brogan Joan Van Patten Jonathan Vandenberg
Iowa Katherine N. Mossie FULL Amber Smit Kelli L Weiland	New Jersey Niki Ehrenkranz	Washington Ashley Xagoraris
Kansas Kali J. Summers FULL	North Carolina Ashley Denise Alvarez Deanna Marie Sweigart	CANADA British Columbia Vivian H. Cheng FULL
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Day in Canada, and a day of remembrance in many other countries. It will also be a day of remembrance at the conference. What better way to commemorate the day than to hear from David Finkel, a Pulitzer prize-winning journalist who was embedded for months in Iraq? His complex examination of the lives of service members and their families is almost ethnographic rather than journalistic in its approach and will, I believe, educate us all in the best spirit of multidisciplinary.

>Mark Cummings is an outstanding scholar who has not only delved deeply into conflict within households and its implications for children, but is now addressing political conflict at the societal level in Belfast and Serbia/Croatia, and Israel.

>Lee Ann De Reus, a long-time NCFR member and leader, has taken her scholarship 'on the road' to Africa, helping women in the Democratic Republic of Congo who

were raped as a weapon of war. The lessons here are not just about victimization, but also about empowerment. As a scholar, an educator, a feminist, and a mom, Lee Ann has much to tell us about praxis!

>Ann Masten will provide the last plenary of the conference, sending us hope with new insights about resilience. Her compelling book *Ordinary Magic*, reminds us that resilience is very much within the grasp of everyday functioning, and anyone who is interested in promoting positive outcomes should be sure to plan to stay to hear her remarks.

Perhaps even more than other family-related topics, diversity in our perspectives is essential to recognize in relation to this year's conference theme. I expect that everyone at the conference will have been touched by conflict, violence or war. For some, these experiences will have been traumatic, and for some they may be very recent. This

conference will be a very good opportunity to listen to and learn from each other. It will be a very good opportunity to support each other as we learn and reflect.

I hope the conference will be meaningful to you as researchers, as educators, and as citizens. I hope you will be educated, stimulated, provoked, challenged and motivated. I hope you will be changed!

One final note. I especially want to welcome students to the conference, and if you come, I want to challenge you to make the most of the experience. I hope you will commit to attending at least one section business or focus group meeting. If you want to learn how NCFR works, if you want to explore how to volunteer for activities that will build your vitae, if you want to meet others whose work you've admired – section meetings are where it's at!

I look forward to seeing you in Vancouver!

NCFR Sections – A sampling of sessions

Excellent research and practice are featured in each section's offerings this year. A few are cited below. See the Conference Schedule web page for links to collections by topical areas, <https://www.ncfr.org/ncfr-2015/conference-schedule>. Or use the search function in the online schedule to find sessions by keyword.

Education and Enrichment

Divorce Education—Program Evaluation (symposium)
Growing Health—Early Childhood Education and Care Training (symposium)
Resource Exchange—Best Practices/Ideas
Navigating Sex, Sexuality, and Sexual Violence on College Campuses (symposium)

Ethnic Minorities

The African American Men's Project: Emerging Findings (symposium)
Risks and Resilience among Asian American Families (symposium)
Latino Families: Exploring Facets of Parenting, Conflict, and Resilience (lightning paper)
Online Violence: The Journey from Exclusion to Inclusion (Special Session featuring the Atira Women's Resource Society of Vancouver, BC)

Family Therapy

MFT Multisite Clinical Research: A Case Study (symposium)
Intimate Partner Violence Assessment and Intervention: Effects on Well-Being (symposium)
Family Therapy with LGBTQ Clients (paper session)
Treating Complex Trauma (Special Session with Linda Stone Fish)

Students and New Professionals

Speed Mentoring Session (Workshop)
How to Prepare Manuscripts for NCFR Journals (Workshop with the NCFR journal editors)

A Toolkit for Preparing Competitive Graduate School Applications (Students and New Professionals roundtable)

International Section

Interpersonal Violence and HIV Across the World (lightning paper session)
Family Relationships Across Global Contexts (paper session)

Family Policy

Foster Parenting, Adoption, and Families (poster symposium)
As the States Turn: Marriage and Relationship Recognition in a Changing Legal Context (symposium)
The Battlefield at Home: Homelessness and the Female Veteran (poster)

Religion and Families

Sexuality and Religiosity: The Religion-Family Associations for LGBTQ People (symposium)
Working With Former Child Soldiers (Special Session)
Impacts of Religion and Spirituality on Romantic Relationships: A Qualitative Study (poster)

Families and Health

Couple Relationships and Health (paper session)
Post-Deployment Families and Emotional Health (poster symposium)
Improving Health and Well-Being for Teen Parent Families (symposium)
Risk and Resilience Factors on Rural Low-Income Family Health (poster symposium)
Obtaining Grant Funding For Family and Health (workshop)

Research and Theory; Translational Research

Research and Theory on Military Families (paper session)
Relationships and Technology (poster series)
Sexual Assault and Dating Violence (poster symposium)

Religion and Families Section news



Julie Zaloudek, Section Chair, zaloudekj@uwstout.edu

The Religion and Family Life Section will be offering some exciting programming for the 2015 Annual Conference that is relevant to scholars and practitioners. It includes a symposium on “Sexuality and Religiosity: The Religion–Family Associations for LGBTQ People”; a roundtable on how the biblical direction to not exasperate children can be translated into evidence-based parenting programs; and a paper session on topics related to grief, loss, coping, and resilience.

A special session with the founders of Exile International will focus on their work with former child soldiers in Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Exile International is a nonprofit organization dedicated to “restoring former child soldiers and war-affected children to become leaders for peace through art therapy and rehabilitative care” (see <http://exileinternational.org/aboutus/>).

The professionals at Exile International provide comprehensive rehabilitative care for child victims as well as training for local counselors and professionals, and they advocate for peace. Founder Bethany Haley Williams will be joined by trauma counselor Matthew Williams to share their work and outcomes for children, families, and communities. The Religion and Family Life Section will be joined by the Education and Enrichment and International Sections to sponsor this special session. ■

Education and Enrichment Section News: “The Rest of the Story”



Deb Berke, Section Chair, debra.l.berke@wilmu.edu

The Ernest G. Osborne Award, sponsored by the Education and Enrichment (EE) Section, recognizes and encourages the following:

- individuals who demonstrate excellence in teaching of family studies and distinguished service to families through teaching at any level;
- outstanding teachers in the field of family studies, and
- individuals who have demonstrated outstanding leadership and excellence in the teaching of family relationships.

In odd-numbered years, the EE Section presents the award to an NCFR member who is an outstanding educator.

Ernest G. Osborne was a three-time NCFR president and a Professor of Family at Teachers College at Columbia University who excelled at innovative teaching methods. But who is the man behind the award? How did he teach? What innovative methods did he use?

I did not have the pleasure of knowing Osborne, so I did a little research to see what I could learn. I discovered a wonderful article in the May 1965 *Journal of Marriage and Family* by Richard Hey titled “Ernest G. Osborne, Family Life Educator.” Interestingly enough, Dr. Osborne started out earning his AB degree in zoology in 1926 and worked as a recreation club leader, sixth-grade teacher, director of recreation, and director of a family camp before earning his PhD in educational psychology at Columbia University in 1937. He was known for

two courses—Psychology of Family Relations and Parent Education—both of which he taught at Teachers College.

Hey (1965) provided the following description of Osborne as an educator:

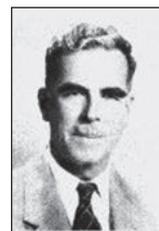
[He] was seemingly unconcerned about establishing claim to originality of methods and materials, but as to his adapting and developing them, there can be no question. He organized material from various disciplines, translated research findings into concepts suitable to various levels of education and experience, and refined educational procedures to facilitate self-discovery in his students. He utilized the case history and the diary and reading reactions and, by putting them on the “installment plan” (each installment returned with written comments), made of them a vehicle for insight and understanding through meaningful dialogue. (p. 135)

Osborne believed that self-understanding and self-disclosure were key for educators, particularly those who taught about families, and he challenged his students to explore their feelings and attitudes, biases and defenses.

Throughout the years, Osborne utilized many ways to educate, including radio, television, newspapers, magazines, informal groups, and formal classrooms. He also demonstrated outstanding leadership both nationally and internationally through his work for organizations such as NCFR; UNICEF; the White House; and the China Aid Council, an affiliate of United Service to China, to name a few.

Perhaps my favorite quote of Hey’s entire article is the last sentence: “It is very likely that his lasting contribution to the field of family life education in the United States is the continuing of warmth, encouragement, and acceptance which his presence over 30 years gave to this emerging field—qualities which were Ernest Osborne himself.”

This sentence paints a picture of who Ernest G. Osborne was as an educator, a champion for the field, and a person. He sounds like a guy I would have enjoyed getting to know. ■



Love the book? Don't miss the movie!

Take the one-minute conference tour, www.ncfr.org/ncfr-2015/great-family-get-together

Plus, dozens of NCFR members, presenters, and conference attendees have shared their conference experience on video. See the NCFR [wecareaboutfamilies](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwecareaboutfamilies) channel on YouTube. And there’s more . . .

- The “Video Lexicon” series featuring family research/practice insights from many well-known members including Pauline Boss, Bill Doherty, Bob Milardo, Jean Illsley Clarke, and Stephen T. Russell.
- Plenary excerpts (and complete videos) by David Williams, Barbara Fiese, Ben Karney, Stephanie Coontz, and Kristen Moore.
- Dave Demo discussing the importance of the *Journal of Marriage and Family* as he concluded his five-year tenure as editor of JMF.

www.youtube.com/user/wecareaboutfamilies





Working with legislation: a success story

Jennifer Crosswhite, Ph.D., CFLE, Director of Public Affairs, jennifercrosswhite@ncfr.org

As part of the effort to provide family science professionals information about the policymaking process, NCFR will share occasional updates about proposed legislation, member work related to policy, and other family policy news through a new item in *Zippy*, NCFR's weekly newsletter, titled "Family Policy Watch."

In the May 2015 installment of Family Policy Watch, an Oklahoma bill was summarized in which NCFR members Kelly Roberts, Ph.D., LMFT, and Ronald Cox, Ph.D., helped to draft the original language. Dr. Roberts and member Matthew Brosi, Ph.D., LMFT, continue to work on the implementation of the law.

In addition to the Family Policy Watch, many individuals are asking for specific

resources and stories on how to work with legislators. To provide a success story with tips, Dr. Kelly Roberts graciously agreed to write about her experiences trying to pass legislation.

The following portion of this article was

written by Kelly Roberts, Ph.D., LMFT, University of North Texas.

When I finished my marriage and family therapy degree in 2002, I knew two things about legislative processes: (1) "The West

Wing" was the greatest show on television; and (2) on some level I could handle legislative work because I was an NPR and current events junkie. It's now 2015 and I can attest that one of those two ideals remains true. The other may never be.

The Rookie Years

Master's degree in hand I thought, "Note to self: investigate turning my thesis into a statewide survey. There may be some policy implications for divorcing couples. How invasive might a law be requiring therapy prior to filing for a divorce if a couple has minor children? Would it pass?" Having only just defended my research, I was eager to propose a study to the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative, now known as Project Relate, as part of their efforts to strengthen marriages.

Following multiple meetings with multiple stakeholders and major revisions, my "Oklahoma Help Seeking Survey" was funded. Upon analyzing the results, I engaged a legislator to author a bill requiring married couples with minor children to attend a minimum of two sessions of marital therapy prior to filing for divorce. After several hearings, a bill requiring "at least one 2-hour session with a licensed behavioral health professional or member of the clergy" was heard on the Senate floor. Debate ensued for several minutes with one senator decrying that this legislation "invades the bedrooms of our citizens." The senator spoke passionately for her fully allotted time subsequently turning the debate narrative 180 degrees.

Those who had vocalized support before began agreeing with her views. As I sat in my university office watching the live vote online, I quietly experienced painful defeat.

A month later, the senator who killed the marital therapy requirement bill filed for divorce. In that real world family policy moment, I realized legislators are humans who may be passing or opposing laws about their own lives, much less the lives of those they represent.

Legislative Coming-of-Age

Soon after the legislative session adjourned sine die, I received a call to serve as Legislative Chair for the Oklahoma Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (OKAMFT). Their top legislative priority was to pass a bill requiring insurance companies to allow customers to seek behavioral health services from their preferred licensed professional. At that time, many companies only contracted with licensed clinical social workers (LCSWs) and psychologists. Unless licensed marital and family therapists (LMFTs) were allowed to bill for services, the profession would never be allowed to fully develop in Oklahoma, and families could not access the services best suited for their needs.

I accepted this appointment with deep hesitation about my effectiveness. Resolved to try again, I reflected and created a "Plus/Delta" list (Helminski & Koberna, 1995), focusing on personal and process areas of

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Longitudinal Perspectives on Parents (symposium)
Intercepting Historical Trauma: Intergenerational Transmission of Risk and Resilience in Families Affected by Political Violence (Special Session with Kaethe Weingarten)

Family Science

Innovative Strategies for Teaching Family Theories (symposium)
How to be Productive in a 40-Hour Work Week: Four Keys to Productivity as an Academic (workshop)
Preparing Graduate Students to Teach Diversity Courses (resource exchange roundtable session)

Planning for and Executing a Successful Sabbatical (workshop)
The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) in Family Science Academic Careers (Special Session)

Feminism

Hidden Diversity among LBGTQ Individuals (symposium)
Reaching Across Generations: Using a Popular Press Book to Engage Young Women in Feminist Research (Roundtable)
Power, Coercive Control, and Violence in Adolescent and Young Adult Relationships (lightning paper session)
Campus Rape Culture: Potential and Actual Roles of Family Studies Faculty and Students (symposium)

improvement. When the list was finished, the corrective plan seemed daunting:

1. *I had been running a sole proprietor shop.* I had personally decided what our state needed based upon one study that I conducted. I had approached a single legislator, co-created the language with only him, and created a sheet of talking points I single-handedly distributed to legislative aides, speaking in person with only a handful. Big lesson number one: I can't do this alone. People who are not included are unengaged. I needed to risk trusting and respecting others to join the process of creating positive change.
2. *I wasn't even sure the bill was the best way to address the problem I had identified.* As a systems theory aficionado, I had forgotten a key lesson in creating a solution: perspective taking. Unless all those involved in the system had been heard, the full problem couldn't be understood. And if a problem isn't understood, then any solution created is akin to spitting into a strong wind. No wonder one representative reflected: "I'm wondering who wins with this bill other than the therapists. It seems to me that all we're doing is boosting their bottom line." A decade ago I felt a strong sense of indignation and hurt after that remark. Today, I think he may not have gone far enough with his criticism. Big lesson number two: The problem must be understood in order to attempt a solution as lasting as legislative action.
3. *Every step of the process had been rushed.* The business of legislation runs on a strict calendar. By the time I found out there were filing deadlines and that legislators are limited in the number of bills they sponsor, it was almost too late. My bill was filed on the second-to-last day possible by a legislator who had not yet used up his allotted number. The bill was heard late in the process in both the House and Senate committees, and didn't reach the final floor for a debate until before sine die. As a professional, I fully understood this premise: "If it's not right, wait. Better to make it right than pay for fallout later." As someone shepherding her first bill, none of that mattered to me. I was emotionally invested and was making compromises to my personal integrity. I wanted the legislators to do the same. Big lesson number three: If it's worth doing, it's worth doing right. Effective planning is essential!

Prime of policy life

I learned a lifetime of lessons from those "big three" Plus/Deltas which eventually resulted in success at my second attempt to pass legislation.

After I agreed to take the Legislative Chair position, I worked on driving a bill with the understanding that I would need help. OKAMFT's general lobbyist and I strategized to create, shepherd, and pass "The Freedom of Choice" bill. A strict planning calendar was created and begun a year in advance of our target pass date. We planned meetings, called OKAMFT members to explain the bill and ask for their involvement, provided newsletter updates, and more. It took six months and about 20 drafts before we agreed to appropriate, cohesive, fair and clear language, and all of this work had to occur *before* we identified the right sponsor for this important legislation.

Much time and energy was spent on perspective taking. There were only 550 LMFTs in the state at that time but there were 2,500 Licensed Professional Counselors who were in the same situation. Once leadership meetings were held with the Oklahoma Counseling Association we had our first allies. We then approached the Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselors and successfully engaged ally number two. And, after three meetings and a private lunch with the executive director of the National Association for Social Workers Oklahoma Division (NASW-OK), I received a key message we needed for our bill to pass: NASW-OK would "not oppose" the Freedom of Choice Bill. I wanted to shout out loud; I think I calmly took a long drink of my iced tea and expressed my deep appreciation, perhaps twice. Immediately, I called our lobbyist who said, "Now...now it's time to find the right sponsor for your bill." And we did. We found the right sponsor, and the right co-sponsors in both the House and Senate. Soon, a working draft of the bill began moving through the committee process.

Simultaneously, time was spent with the membership educating them on how to help build momentum for a bill. We wrote phone call scripts. We made sure members knew who their legislators were, and we gave them talking points that were proactively supportive of Republican and Democratic platforms, depending upon which party representative they were engaging. At that point, the Psychiatric Nurses Association approached us and we had our fourth ally, but there

was a hitch. Although the House committee process went smoothly, the Republican-controlled Senate was not receiving the bill favorably. Many senators were supporters of free markets and believed insurance companies should have limited oversight, that they should be able to make their own decisions about who they contract with and why.

The hardest conversation I had that year was with our OKAMFT leadership, our lobbyist, and our ally leadership about whether to pull the bill. A rule in the Oklahoma legislature states that if you bring a bill to the floor for debate and it is defeated, you cannot bring it again for three years. After much "perspective taking," we pulled the bill. That night I cried like a baby.

The following year, we formulated better arguments for the Republican Caucus and the bill passed. As I sat in the gallery watching red and green lights illuminate one by one on the voting tally board I cried like a baby again. This time, the tears were joyful. The "big three" had worked, over 4,000 clinical professionals could now contract with insurance companies, and hundreds of thousands of Oklahomans could access formerly unreachable services.

Legislative reflections

These were hard, quiet, emotional lessons learned and are lessons I hope you can take away from this particular article. In closing I want to share with you some words that our lobbyist shared with me when I asked, "Do you ever get to the point where you genuinely feel you can handle the legislative processes? She wrote:

[Legislative processes] taught me a new definition of failure and success. One day's success can be tomorrow's failure. You cannot own either outcome. If you do, depression would be your best friend. Sometimes when you least expect it, you win for the people. The truth I count on is: never underestimate the power of one committed individual; they can change the world. You can never quit, and sometimes, you have to retreat and regenerate your passion.

And, I agree with every word she wrote.

Reference

Helminski, L. & Koberna, S. (1995). Total quality in instruction: A systems approach. In H. V. Roberts (Ed.), *Academic initiatives in total quality for higher education* (pp. 309-362). Milwaukee, WI: ASQC Quality Press.

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Managing the drunken monkeys

Robert Milardo, Ph.D., University of Maine, rh360@maine.edu



Successful writers are superb at risk management. This is nice to know, because writing is a risky business: the risk of being found out that I'm not that talented a scholar; that I have nothing much to say that hasn't already been said better; that what I've written is all gibberish; and that others who once thought so highly of me will now regard my written work and my entire person as questionable and that, when you come right down to it, I'm just a fraud with nothing much to say. And, to boot, there are the criticisms of reviewers and journal editors in pdf files, indisputable and unchangeable.

In the miasma of the internal critics, what writer Anne Lemott (1994) called the *drunken monkeys*, there is always a chatter of critics, someone to confirm all fears. Stephen King in his memoir, *On Writing* (2000), observed, "If you write, someone will try to make you feel lousy about it." At a later point he adds, "Writing is a lonely job. Having someone who believes in you makes a lot of difference. They don't have to make speeches. Just believing is usually enough" (p. 50).

Regardless of how successful the writer, there are drunken monkeys and a continuous internal chatter of self-doubt as well as a few external critics who will question your

work. In my experience as an editor, whether I'm working with a new professional or a well-established scholar, writers experience doubts about the quality of their work. The entries in my writing log speak of my typical experience and, I suspect, that of many others as well, including Stephen King.

May 6: The chapter is rolling. Wrote about half or more of the section on risk today.

May 7: About two pages written today. Progress but I'm not at all happy with it. Still stuttering along.

My experience of writing is much like this; regardless of whether I'm writing a brief article or a monograph, there are good and bad days, and whether the day is good or bad doesn't have much to do with what is written but more with the momentary ambiguities of direction and worth. It is not always a simple matter to decide how to organize an argument, chapter, or section on risk. At times—and, to be honest, this is more often true than not—it is not at all clear how to proceed with a chapter, how to theorize a set of findings, or how to correct an ill-defined concept. Sometimes (in my experience, nearly always) writing is difficult intellectually as well as emotionally. I surely enjoy the former and the challenge of making a contribution to a field of inquiry, but I can't say that about the drunken monkeys. I have simply learned to expect their appearance and control their influence; they are quite predictable. Once the sense of risk and doubt are corralled, writing is a welcome challenge, but it is not exactly fun, like hanging out with my buddies at the Martini Club. I'm just guessing that most writers are more like me than not.

A foundation of successful writing means knowing your particular process and developing strategies for managing risk and doubt. Doing so is more likely to lead to consistency in productivity, higher quality manuscripts, and success in publishing. If writing a new piece begins with trial and tribulation, it ends with a welcome sense of accomplishment.

My friend and colleague Heather Helms commented about her own experience:

Writing and being published is really, really hard. Sometimes it's all day for a paragraph. Then sometimes I'll go back and read what I've written and feel "Wow, I really wrote that." So that is a nice experience. That's the fun part. I have to write for my job but I'm really doing it because it's stimulating.

Heather's experience is similar to my own. At the moment a section is written, I am not always sure of the quality or worth of the writing, and in part I think that has to do with the residuals of ambiguity. It is only later—usually, the next writing session—that I can judge the quality of the previous session's work. This experience has remained unchanged over the course of my career, and the only difference is that it is predictable, and I know the drill. I know how the writing will go and how I'll feel about it. When beginning an article or chapter, the ambiguity and doubt are ever present and heightened. I know the precise arrangement of arguments may be unclear, the conceptual model still a bit fuzzy, the attendant analyses a bit incomplete, the final outcome of the work unknown. In all of this initial work I actively avoid any sense of paralysis and at the same time continually remind myself that solutions to each issue will appear. I can safely ignore the doubts and keep working. It's often uncomfortable, always has been, and always the work gets written and published.

To aid my initial work, I limit writing sessions to 2 to 4 hours; decide on a specific stop time; plan something more immediately enjoyable following the session; and set my goals or number of words per session fairly low, about 250 words. Social psychologist Harry Reis called this phase of writing: "butt to chair." I know, too, that once a piece begins to take shape I'll find the writing easier and more rewarding. As a consequence,

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Additional resource

For an example of how one individual helped to advocate for Family Life Education, see Dawn Cassidy's CFLE Network column *A Family Life Education Advocacy Success Story*; <https://www.ncfr.org/cfle-network/current-issue/cfle-directions-family-life-education-advocacy-success-story>

If you are interested in helping develop resources for impacting family policy or advocating for the profession, please email Jennifer Crosswhite: jennifercrosswhite@ncfr.org.

Elections council seeks leaders for NCFR

NCFR's future is inextricably tied to the quality and dedication of its leaders. We need you!

As the Annual Conference in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, approaches, the Elections Council asks you to think about the leadership opportunities in NCFR that would be a good match for you. Speak with colleagues, mentors, Section leaders, or Elections Council members about your desire to serve and your willingness to be nominated for a position. Also consider nominating colleagues who you think would be a good match for the positions available in the next election cycle:

- Board President-Elect (2017–2019; President 2019–2021)
- Board Members-at-Large (2017–2020); three positions
- Affiliate Councils President-Elect (2017–2019; Affiliate Councils President 2020–2021)
- Elections Council members (2017–2020); two positions
- Inclusion & Diversity Committee Members-at-Large (2017–2020); three positions
- Inclusion & Diversity Committee Students and New Professionals Representative (2017–2019)
- Annual Conference Program Chair-Elect (2017–2018; Program Chair 2019)

Each year, we begin our work on the next election cycle at the Annual Conference, asking Sections to nominate potential candidates for the organizational-level positions that need to be filled and encouraging individuals to nominate either themselves or others. Last year we were more than pleased at the number of candidates who offered to run for office, and we are excited about the outstanding list of potential candidates we have before us.

In the spring, we will meet to identify and discuss possible candidates for 2017 who have been identified by nomination or who have previously served in leadership positions. We consider not only the experience of individual candidates but also the structure of the overall slate, asking ourselves if we are building a slate that reflects the strength and diversity of the organization and its members.

The Elections Council's responsibility is to help NCFR members match their leadership abilities to the leadership opportunities that abound within our organization, and we

take seriously the NCFR Board's charge to find the right people who are willing to have their names placed on the ballot each year. We are guided by the operating values outlined in the NCFR by-laws and the Elections Council Policies and Procedures. Our desire is to build a slate that represents the entire

NCFR membership and that reflects and promotes the mission and goals of NCFR.

NCFR Elections Council

Abbie E. Goldberg and Mihaela Robila (Co-Chairs); Mick Cunningham, Gladys Hildreth, Claire Kamp Dush, Alan C. Taylor, Hilary Rose (Board Liaison). ■

Family Therapy Section update



Shayne Anderson, Chair, shayne.anderson@uconn.edu

The Annual Conference is quickly approaching, and we are in for quite a treat this year! The conference program is full of paper and poster presentations across a wide array of topics relevant to family therapists.

In addition to the regular slate of presentations, we will be hosting a Family Therapy Roundtable Symposium. Last year we experimented with this format for the first time and were thrilled with the feedback we received from those who presented and attended the session. Come join us on Thursday November 12, 10–11:15 a.m., for this unique session.

The Family Therapy Section will also be sponsoring two special sessions at this year's conference. The first session, entitled "Facilitating Family Resilience in the Wake of Traumatic Loss," will feature Dr.

Froma Walsh, one of the world's foremost experts on family resilience. In the second special session, entitled "Treating Complex Trauma," Dr. Linda Stone Fish will present her recent innovative work on using family therapy to help individuals and families recover from complex trauma.

Mark your calendars now, and plan on attending both of these special sessions. Dr. Walsh will be presenting on Thursday, November 12, at 11:30 a.m., and Dr. Stone Fish will be presenting Saturday, November 14, at 8 a.m.

If you can't join us in person, both of these special sessions are tentatively scheduled for live streaming as part of the Online Conference registration option. Watch for details in NCFR's Zippy News.

I look forward to seeing you in Vancouver for another outstanding conference! ■

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see if it is posted. If not, click on *Contribute to the Library* and provide the requested information. It is important to recognize copyright restrictions so in most cases, the resource should not be downloaded to the PRL. Instead, a link to where more information about the resource can be found can be included in the posting. If you don't want to complete the *Contribute to the Library* form you can just send information about the resource to me at dawncassidy@ncfr.org and I will see that it is posted.

Recommend a resource

If a resource you like is already posted, you can show your support for it by clicking on the *Recommend* button (viewable only to those logged in to the site). This hasn't been a feature that a lot of people have been using, but we are hoping to increase its use

as it is a great way to get a general feel for which resources other professionals value.

New category: Lesson Plans/Assignments

A number of years ago NCFR published three very successful collections of family life education lesson plans. They have been out of print for some time but I have long wanted to resurrect this valuable resource. The Professional Resource Library provides the perfect venue for such a collection. Toward that end, I engaged the services of Taylor Crowser, a student from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota, working as an intern for NCFR this summer. Most likely you received one or more emails from Taylor asking you to share lesson plans and teaching assignments relevant to various family life education content areas for

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sessions will be longer when time permits, and the writing may go faster. The drunken monkeys are still present, but less active.

Robert Boice (2000) compared two groups of writers early in their academic careers: one group who wrote irregularly, typically in binge sessions (e.g., over semester breaks), and another group, who wrote more routinely as part of their weekly schedule. Both groups reported surprisingly high levels of self-doubts about their writing and their progress toward completing a work. The group of new professionals who wrote regularly did not differ in the degree of negative thoughts; instead, they simply directed more self-talk at quieting the negative intrusions (e.g., “This will be pleasant enough once I get going”). My own interviews with successful academic writers, some of whom are quite established professionals, indicated that they were often highly skilled at recognizing negative intrusions and containing their influence. It did not appear that they experienced fewer drunken monkeys; they simply didn’t let the primates distract their end game.

At all phases of writing, success comes from perseverance, and this means expecting doubts about quality and worth, and then designing writing sessions that take these feelings into account. Plan for the drunken monkeys, and trust in the force.

Mindful writing practices

A variety of practices accompany successful writing, and they all require a certain degree of self-observation, what Boice (2000) referred to as a *mindful* approach to writing. In his observations of new faculty, which span many years, productive writers evidence a persistent consistency in their approach to writing. They write regularly with moderate expectations. They eschew expectations of experiencing great insights,

preferring to simply work steadily at their craft. They have occasional bouts of peaceful “not doing” or periods when they are planning a project or thinking through an argument or conceptual model. All of this activity is part of the writing process, and it is largely welcome and integrated into writing sessions. Great work derives from consistency of effort—but in chair. Readers who take a mindful approach avoid negative emotions—the drunken monkeys—or at least set them aside as much as possible and seek moderation in their emotional responses to writing. This requires that one suspend doubt, self-criticism, and disbelief, placing one’s trust in the efficacy of constant effort. Then, too, a mindful practice means knowing that a first draft is apt to be less than stellar but still a necessary part of the process. Such writers transform criticism into a welcome process, one that has the potential to improve the quality of their work. They are not angelic, or necessarily immediately embracive of criticism, but simply persistent.

Often, we assume great writing, a great theoretical insight, or impressive new analysis derives from some spectacular insight. The muse visits, and “Presto!”: An article spills forth. Sometimes insight is helpful, but it doesn’t get the writing done. Insights are more typically derivatives of writing, of working through draft after draft, each improving on the other. Insight is most often the outcome of a writing session. Our friend Stephen King commented, “Amateurs sit and wait for inspiration, the rest of us just get up and go to work.”

Concluding thoughts

If you are anything like me, you rarely talk about your writing process, not necessarily what you’re writing but how you experience

directions *continued from page 12*

inclusion in the PRL. Whether working in an academic setting or teaching families in the community, I hope you took the time to share one or more lessons plans or teaching assignments you have found to be successful.

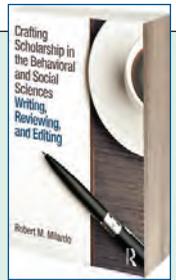
I encourage you to take advantage of all that is available through the PRL. Not only is it a source for tools and information that can help you in your work, but it also provides the opportunity to share your recommendation for specific resources or to see what



resources others have found helpful. Please help me in continuing to share the work and knowledge of NCFR members and CFLEs by contributing to and accessing the Professional Resource Library. ■

More “Crafting Scholarship,” our continuing series on academic writing by Bob Milardo

Enjoy this insider’s guide to improving your professional writing by Robert Milardo, Ph.D., NCFR Fellow and the founding editor of the *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, who has over 35 years of experience in teaching, research, and academic writing. “Crafting Scholarship” is a regular *NCFR Report* column where Bob addresses insights useful to anyone engaged in scholarly work and journal article preparation. His new book, *Crafting Scholarship in the Behavioral and Social Sciences*, provides a comprehensive look at writing, editing, and reviewing processes in academic publishing. (Fall 2014, Routledge); www.routledge.com/books/details/9781138787841/



writing and all the messy drunken monkeys that writing entails. Having an awareness of your writing process, of how and when the drunken monkeys appear, and your reaction to them, are important parts of any successful writer’s process. In the effort to understand your own writing process, it can be helpful to share your observations with other writers and to learn of their process. I’m ever curious about how other writers work, and it helps knowing I’m not the only one who sometimes gets a little nutty. Then, too, I sometimes learn new techniques for writing more comfortably or with greater awareness. I’ve summed up a few best practices below, but really you need only be mindful of your process (or *self-reflective*, if you prefer) and perch at the screen regularly.

Best practice: Managing risk and writing mindfully

- Know thyself, which is to say your writing self; the other selves can wait.
- Practice mindful writing strategies.
- Cage the drunken monkeys.
- Expect criticism, and seek out kudos
- Never let bits of foul weather disturb your vision.
- Compare your writing practices with a colleague.
- Remember, writing produces insight, not the converse.
- Keep writing. ■

Advancing Family Science Section update



Robin Yaure, Section Chair, r2y@psu.edu

By the time this issue of the *NCFR Report* comes out summer will be over and the fall term will be in full swing, at least for some of us. Summer always holds so much promise, with unscheduled days looming and to-do lists yet uncompromised. What I find is that time flies unheeded, and to-do lists become modified and expectations altered. Sometimes these changes are welcome and productivity and relaxation are at full tilt. Other changes are less desirable, but then, that seems par for the course. On the other hand, it is important to rejuvenate after a busy academic year, and so sometimes one must allow for more mental breaks than originally planned. On the third hand (?), sometimes colleagues have more time to get to their to-do lists, and thus things that had been started early on are followed up, and so the back-and-forth progress is very welcome during these quickly waning times.

What I *am* thrilled about—with progress for the Advancing Family Science (AFS) Section—has to do with what others were working on during this summer. After hav-

ing such great volunteers step up to work on the social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook, blog) as well as preparing for the AFS Section resource exchange, our Section is seeing the fruits of their summer labors. Tonya Ricklefs of Kansas State University has been regularly posting and tweeting updates and information of interest to our Section members (Twitter: @NCFRFamSci, Facebook: NCFR Advancing Family Science Section). Eboni Baugh, of East Carolina University, has kept busy with blog posts, including one by Jakob Jensen (<https://www.ncfr.org/sections/fs/blog/impact-sharing-marital-problems-friends-lessons-training-future-therapists>) that was featured by the Institute of Family Studies in its “Friday Five” post.

NCFR Section business such as voting on the previous Section meeting minutes and by-law changes and the like have now moved online, so Section meetings at the Annual Conference will be more focused on substantive matters. Given that the AFS Section has clarified its role to focus on

pedagogical and administrative aspects of the discipline of family science, the Section meeting will emphasize these matters.

The first half of the Section meeting, scheduled for Thursday, November 12, 6:00–8:00 p.m., will provide an opportunity for Section members to share ideas. Last year’s Section meeting was very fruitful in terms of the activities that have been occurring this year, and I am sure that this year’s meeting will have additional great ideas that can help direct future activities as well.

The second half of this Section meeting will be a combination of a set of roundtables held in conjunction with the Education and Enrichment Section and a more informal resource exchange. More on the resource exchange will be forthcoming from Silvia Bartolic, of the University of British Columbia, and Lauri Etheridge, of the University of North Texas. The plan is to ask Section members to bring materials and ideas that they can share with others regarding courses they teach. Materials relating to teaching family theory, developmental courses, therapeutic techniques, and more will be shared. Watch your e-mail, our Facebook group, and the Twitter feed for additional information.

It is sad to be thinking about the end of summer already given that, at the time of this writing, I still have many more weeks to go. However, the fact that the conference is approaching quickly, and because I am looking forward to meeting many more of you at the Section meeting and conference events, take the sting out of the passing of another summer. I do hope the remaining time is productive but also open ended enough to satisfy my mind’s need for relaxation. Having a sense of renewal at the beginning of each academic year has not gotten old for me even though I have been at this for many years. I look forward to seeing many of you in November and can’t wait to see what you will be sharing with us! ■

Bahira Sherif Trask named 2018 conference chair

The NCFR Board of Directors has appointed Bahira Sherif Trask, Ph.D., as the program chair for the 2018 NCFR Annual Conference, scheduled for San Diego, California, November 7–11. The program chair’s primary duties are to select the theme, identify the plenary speakers, and prepare the Call for Abstracts.



Bashira Sherif Trask

on the relationship between globalization and family change in Western and non-Western contexts, with a particular focus on economic changes, work and gender roles, and policies that can assist and strengthen low-income families. She has represented NCFR at the United Nations and participated in the 2014 White House Summit on Working Families.

As part of her appointment, she will also serve as a member of the 2017 conference program committee prior to serving as program chair for 2018.

“The Elections Council is delighted to see the complexity of proposed topics” in Dr. Trask’s program proposal, wrote NCFR Elections Council members in their recommendation to the NCFR Board of Directors. “The council is also impressed with the proposed speakers and believes that the conference will present itself as a forum of rigorous and intellectually stimulating exchanges.” ■

Dr. Trask is professor and associate chair/graduate coordinator in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Delaware. She is also affiliated with the university’s Center for Community Research and Services.

Dr. Trask, who is an NCFR Fellow and was a plenary speaker at NCFR’s 2014 conference, is globally recognized for her research

Northwest Council News

Duane Dowd, NWCFR Past President, Dowdd@cwu.edu

The Northwest Council on Family Relations held another successful conference this at Portland State University in Oregon with nearly 100 attendees participating in a variety of informative presentations and events. We were particularly thrilled to have Terry Cross deliver a keynote address on “Culture and Resilience,” and to participate in a workshop put on by employees of the Dougy Center for grieving children and families. We are now excited to be planning the agenda for next year’s conference on April 21-22 in Portland.

Also on the horizon are elections of new board members. As the immediate NWCFR past president, I have had a wonderful history and experience with the Northwest Council. For six years now, I have been

involved with this group and have seen terrific professional development opportunities for students and professionals at all stages of their careers. I have learned so much from the conference presenters and sessions, I would strongly recommend to others the opportunity to be involved.

The highlight of my time with NWCFR has been the relationships that I have developed with the terrific group of professionals that have been along the road with me. Renee, Drew, Kathleen, Sarah, Doris, and Jana have worked so passionately and diligently. I consider our association and their friendship to be among my most treasured professional experiences!

If you are within the area of the Northwest affiliate (Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Mon-

tana, British Columbia, Alaska), please get involved! Elections for new officer positions will be held this fall. The following positions will be elected for terms to begin January 1, 2016.

President Elect (two-year term, followed by two-year term as president)
Membership/Communications Chair (two-year term)
Secretary/Treasurer (two-year term)
Oregon State Representative (three-year term)
Idaho State Representative (three-year term)
Montana State Representative (three-year term)
Alaska State Representative (three-year term)
If you are interested, please contact me. ■



Family Policy Section news

Bethany Letiecq, Section Chair, bletiecq@gmu.edu

Greetings! I hope this report finds you enjoying the last vestiges of summer and looking forward to the start of a new academic year and, of course, the NCFR Annual Conference, in Vancouver. The Family Policy Section has put together an exciting program, including the sponsorship of a preconference policy workshop on media engagement, led by Stephanie Coontz. Organized by Jennifer Crosswhite, NCFR’s Director of Public Affairs, this workshop will focus on translating research for public consumption via the media, and in particular how researchers and practitioners can make an impact through Op-Ed articles.

Since June, many have been digesting the consequential SCOTUS rulings on same-sex marriage and health care, among others. For the upcoming conference, the Family Policy Section is pleased to present several sessions that will contextualize the meanings of these rulings for families and consider the legal and policy implications for family well-being.

Inspired by their paper, entitled “As the States Turn: Marriage in a Changing Legal Context,” for our first symposium Brian Ogolsky, Ramona Faith Oswald, and Kale Monk will discuss the changing legal context of the institution of marriage and individuals’ legal knowledge. Claire Kimberly will join

the panel to discuss the legal rights of same-sex and transgender individuals and their families. And we are pleased that Professor Courtney Grant Joslin, of the University of California, Davis, School of Law will be joining us to share her research on family and relationship recognition among same-sex and nonmarital couples. Professor Joslin received her law degree from Harvard Law School, where she was an executive editor of the Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review. Prior to joining the faculty at the University of California, Joslin served as an attorney at the National Center for Lesbian Rights, where she litigated cases on behalf of LGBT families. This timely panel will forecast what the future holds as LGBT families and nonmarital couples (among others) seek rights and recognition under the law.

A second symposium, chaired by Rachel Farr, will focus on risk and resilience in

diverse adoptive families. Panelists will present their research on co-parenting, birth family contact, socialization practices (including racial socialization), and adjustment among lesbian, gay, and heterosexual adoptive parents and their children. During this panel information will be shared regarding legal protections beyond same-sex marriage that are needed for the optimal well-being of diverse adoptive families.

The third symposium, chaired by Elaine Anderson, will focus on health policy matters by presenting three family-centered health impact analyses of violence- and trauma-related policies, including The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, The Violence Against Women Act, and the federal government’s Strengthening Our Military Families initiative.

In addition to the preconference media workshop and symposia there will be an excellent lineup of poster symposia, poster sessions, and other Family Policy–cosponsored sessions. Also, please make sure to come to the Family Policy Section meeting from 7:00–8:15 a.m. on Thursday, November 12, 2015. Coffee and light breakfast fare will be served. We look forward to seeing you in Vancouver and engaging with you in all things family policy! ■





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