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National Council
on Family Relations
2016 Annual Conference
November 2-6
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Families and Human Rights:
Promise and Vulnerability
in the 21st Century

Awards 2015

An important part of NCFR’s work and mission is to recognize excellence and service through awards. As an organization, we congratulate these deserving recipients of awards in 2015. For profiles of this year’s award winners, see page 12.

Plan for next year!

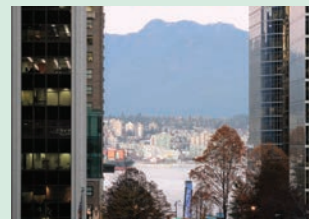
You are encouraged to apply for or to nominate members for NCFR awards. Most awards include recognition at the annual conference, sometimes a cash award or travel stipend, and a plaque. The awards brochure is distributed in late

winter/early spring. Award deadlines vary from mid-April for the Jessie Bernard Awards to May 1 for most NCFR awards. Some Section, Affiliate Councils, and Focus Group awards may have later deadlines. For a complete overview of awards, visit www.ncfr.org/awards



Award presentations at the 2015 annual conference included Roudi Nazarinia Roy presenting the Marie Peters Award to Adriana Umaña-Taylor and Bob Hughes presenting the Berardo Mentoring Award to Heather Helms.

Scenes from the annual conference



Report

of The National Council on Family Relations

Mission Statement for Report:

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

President: William D. Allen

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Family Focus Managing Editor:

Nancy Gonzalez, M.Ed., CFLE

News Editor: Charles Cheesebrough

How to contribute to the *NCFR Report*:

The magazine is member-written. Articles accepted for publication will be edited using standard editorial practice, and given priority based on (1) relevance to the Family Focus theme, or (2) brevity due to space limitations, and (3) how articles form a complementary collection. For information and guidelines, contact the editor, Nancy Gonzalez, at nancygonzalez@ncfr.org. **The contents of Report articles represent the views of their author(s), which may not represent the position of the entire organization.**

To advertise in *NCFR Report*, please see the specifications and price list at http://www.ncfr.org/adrates_report.html.

NCFR reserves the right to decline any paid advertising at our sole discretion.

Deadlines for each of the quarterly issues are: Spring issue—deadline December 21, Summer issue—February 21, Fall issue—June 21 and the Winter issue—deadline September 21. Send submissions to: Charles Cheesebrough at charlescheesebrough@ncfr.org. For all submissions, please supply an email address to allow readers to contact you.

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Diversity, ideology, and family science

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

NCFR has had a long-standing commitment to diversity—a commitment that was apparent when I joined the organization in the 1980s. But despite the valuable efforts that have been made over the years to foster a broad spirit of inclusion within the organization, NCFR is becoming less (rather than more) diverse in one important respect: the political and social values of our members. Like most social science organizations, the majority of NCFR members are politically liberal, and this has been true for a long time. But a gradual erosion of ideological diversity in recent years (exacerbated by the departure of many conservative scholars from our organization) has shifted our membership even more to the left.

A recent article by Duarte, Crawford, Stern, Haidt, Jussim, and Tetlock (2015) in *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* describes what goes wrong when social science fields are dominated by a single political viewpoint. As the authors argue, a lack of ideological diversity means that left-wing values and perspectives shape the types of questions asked and the manner in which data are interpreted. Correspondingly, potentially important (but politically less acceptable) questions are not asked and ideologically diverse interpretations are not offered. Moreover, the left-wing tilt of much work discourages talented but politically conservative (or moderate, or libertarian) individuals from joining the field.

As a political moderate, I often find that I fit uncomfortably with my peers in the social sciences. When I served as NCFR president, I received critical email from those on the left (complaining that I'm too conservative) as well as those on the right (complaining that I'm too liberal). This might seem like the worst of all possible worlds. An advantage of being in the middle, however, is that it is easier to spot instances of ideology (from the left or the right) intruding into research.

Have you ever noticed how many journal articles and conference presentations are heavy on rhetoric and light on evidence? People are often unaware of political biases

that creep into research. Social psychologists refer to this as *confirmation bias*: a tendency to embrace information that is consistent with our own worldview and ignore or downplay contrary evidence. Similarly, the *false consensus effect* occurs because we tend to associate with like-minded people and mistakenly conclude that everyone (at least everyone that is reasonable) thinks the same way that we do. Because of confirmation bias and false consensus, liberal scholars often have difficulty seeing the ideological underpinnings of many areas of family science. The same phenomenon occurs, of course, when conservative scholars read research that has a conservative spin.

Confirmation bias and false consensus are problems in a field that claims to have a scientific basis because both lead to distorted views of the world. For example, experimental studies have demonstrated that reviewers rate manuscripts more favorably that present data and conclusions consistent with their own political and social beliefs. Correspondingly, reviewers are quick to see methodological flaws in research that contradicts their beliefs. Because all studies in the social sciences have limitations, it is easy to disparage studies on methodological grounds if you don't like the findings. In this manner, a field populated primarily with left-wing (or right-wing) thinkers can produce a research literature deeply embedded with liberal (or conservative) assumptions about the world.

In an ideologically unbalanced field, we risk "getting it wrong" much of the time and misunderstanding the families we study—families that usually are more conservative, by the way, than the researchers who study them. We need ideological diversity in NCFR (and in family science more generally) to ensure that a variety of questions are asked, alternative perspectives are considered, and dominant views are challenged. Otherwise we find ourselves in a hall of mirrors, with our own ideological assumptions reflected back to us. Although sometimes messy, conversations between people

with divergent views have the potential to move us closer to the truth. Indeed, social psychological research has demonstrated that groups comprised of individuals with a variety of perspectives are the most successful at solving problems.

Although many of our members are proponents of diversity, fostering a broad range of perspectives within NCFR is not high on everyone's agenda. Supporting ideological diversity is tricky, especially when people are convinced that their way is the only way to achieve social progress. But diversity based on attitudes, beliefs, and values is necessary for an organization that wants to understand and help families in all of their bewilderingly complexity.

Here's a suggestion: At the next NCFR conference, strike up a conversation with someone on an important topic you disagree about. Now that would be diversity in action. ■

Duarte, J. L., Crawford, J. T., Stern, C., Haidt, J., Jussim, L., & Tetlock, P. E. (2015). Political diversity will improve social psychological science, *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 38, e130



Vote and nominate!

Mick Cunningham, NCFR 2016 Elections Council Chair

Get involved in the leadership of YOUR organization!

The vitality of NCFR depends on the dedication of its members to serve in leadership capacities at various levels of the organization. The charge of the Elections Council is to identify people who are willing to commit their time and energy for leadership positions. Please consider how your skills and gifts might benefit NCFR. In turn, we are quite sure that you will gain valuable leadership experience and will grow personally as well as professionally. Here are two ways to be involved.

VOTE

... in upcoming elections (February 2016)

The Elections Council wants to encourage all members to vote in February 2016. We have submitted a nomination slate (ballots will be e-mailed to members in February 2016) for terms that will be filled at the end of the national meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in November 2016. The nominees are as follows:

Board Member-at-Large (2016–2019)—two positions

Erin Kramer Holmes (UT) vs. Karen Guzzo (OH)
Wm. Michael Fleming (IA) vs. Stephen M. Wilson (OK)

Students and New Professionals Program Representative (2016–2018)

Katie Barrow (LA) vs. Jessica Fish (AZ)

Elections Council (2016–2019)—two positions

Dorothy Rombo (NY) vs. Kimberly Updegraff (AZ)

James Deal (ND) vs. Kevin Roy (MD)

Fellows Committee (2016–2019)—two positions

Norma B. Burgess (TN) vs. Leigh Leslie (MD)

Joseph Grzywacz (FL) vs. Ronald Sabatelli (CT)

Inclusion and Diversity Committee Board Member-at-Large (2016–2019)—two positions

Daphne Hernandez (TX) vs. Miriam Mulsow (TX)

Christopher Belous (GA) vs. TBD

NOMINATE

... yourself or others for the February 2017 slate (due January 31, 2016)

The Elections Council encourages all members to apply or to nominate others for the February 2017 slate. Here are the selection criteria to help you decide whether you would be willing to be nominated and/or to identify potential candidates for the upcoming election:

Eligibility for nominations

- Current membership in NCFR
- Knowledge and/or experience in areas reflecting broad trends in human development, family science, marriage and family practice, sociology, and related professions
- Knowledge and/or experience in leadership roles through Sections, Affiliate Councils, Elections Council, conference planning, publishing, public policy, or other committee work

As you think about who would serve NCFR well, remember that we are a multidisciplinary association—one that serves researchers, college faculty, practitioners, and students. A slate of candidates that reflects the membership helps engage more people in the election process.

Professional interests are another consideration in filling leadership positions, and our members' occupation titles reflect that: demographers, social workers, Certified Family Life Educators, college faculty and administrators, extension outreach agents, clergy, marriage and family therapists, pre-K/12 teachers, and more.

NCFR is committed to inclusion in creating opportunities for members to hold office. Candidates are sought that will reflect that commitment to diversity in culture, race, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, spirituality and personal beliefs, ability/disability, marital status and family structure, geographic location, and social and political views.

See the Nomination Information section of the NCFR website for more details about eligibility, forms, and the work of the Elections Council, <http://www.ncfr.org/about/>

[board-directors/ncfr-elections-process/nominations-information](#).

Keeping this in mind, we invite self-nominations and nominations of others for the following positions for the slate to be elected in February of 2017. The terms for these positions will begin November 2017 at the end of the annual conference in Orlando, Florida.

Board President-Elect, 2017–2019 (President 2019–2021)

The President-Elect shall assist the President and, in the event of the President's absence, incapacitation, resignation or death, will assume the President's duties (general management of the business of the NCFR Board). The President-Elect will serve on the Board Audit Committee and host the Newcomer's Reception at the annual conference.

Board Member-at-Large, 2017–2020 (three positions open)

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

Affiliate Councils President-elect, 2017–2019 (Affiliate Councils President 2019–2021)

The Affiliate Councils President-elect shall serve on the NCFR Board of Directors for a two-year term and will represent concerns of the members of the Affiliate Councils. This individual shall assume the presidency of the Affiliate Councils for a two-year term following his or her term as President-elect.

Elections Council Members, 2017–2020 (two positions open)

It is the responsibility of the Elections Council to prepare a slate of nominees for officers and members of the Board of Directors, Students and New Professionals Board Representative positions, Fellows Committee members, Program Chair-elect, Elections Council positions, and the Inclusion and Diversity Committee (IDC) positions and to ensure that the policies regarding recruitment as provided by the NCFR bylaws

vote continued on page 5



Demonstrating leadership

Diane Cushman, NCFR Executive Director, dianecushman@ncfr.org

Each year during the NCFR conference we welcome newly elected officers to the Board of Directors and bid farewell to those whose terms have come to an end.

This year we say goodbye to **Board President Dr. Paul Amato** and **Affiliate Council President-elect Dr. Rebecca Ward**. Among other achievements, Dr. Amato has skillfully led the Board through revisions of NCFR's governance policies. We wish him the very best in his retirement. Dr. Ward moves on to become the President of the Affiliate Council.

We welcome four new board members: **President-elect Dr. Anisa Zvonkovic, Af-**

vote continued from page 4

and the Elections Council policies and procedures are followed.

Inclusion and Diversity Committee (IDC) Member-at-Large, 2017–2020 (three positions open)

IDC Members-at-Large will serve to assist IDC to respond to the needs and desire of NCFR members. They also will help the committee send updates on the work of the IDC via webpage postings, *NCFR Report* articles, and other effective venues of communication. The Members-at-Large will provide information and suggestions to the IDC, ensuring that information is documented via a report.

IDC Students and New Professionals Representative, 2017–2019

The Students and New Professionals Representative shall act as a liaison between the IDC and the Students and New Professionals Leadership Council.

Again, we encourage you to become involved in leadership positions of our organization. Consider what your involvement will be. Send nominations to Jeanne Strand at jeannestrand@ncfr.org. For additional information, please review our website, www.ncfr.org. **Deadline for nominations is January 31, 2016.** ■

affiliate Council President-elect Dr. Nathan Cottle, Board Member-at-large Dr. Jennifer Kerpelman and Students and New Professionals Board Representative-elect Kimberly Crossman. These new board members join current members **Dr. William Allen, Dr. Sandra Stith, Dr. Karen Seccombe, Dr. Hilary Rose, Dr. Frank Fincham, and Dr. Rachel Engler Jordan** to form the 2016 NCFR Board of Directors.

In addition to the members who volunteer to serve on the Board of Directors, we have many more members who put their leadership skills to work as Section Chairs, Focus Group Chairs, Board Committee Members (Audit, Elections, Fellows, Inclusion and Diversity, and Journals), and Conference Program Chairs. We thank all those whose terms have come to an end and welcome those who recently stepped into new leadership positions. In case you missed the various announcements, here are the upcoming board-appointed annual conference program chairs:

2016—Minneapolis, **Dr. Lee Ann De Reus**

2017—Orlando, **Dr. Maureen Perry-Jenkins**

2018—San Diego, **Dr. Bahira Sherif Trask**

NCFR offers many opportunities for members to experience leadership and we

have been thinking of additional ways for members to develop leadership skills. For example, NCFR's Academic and Administration Leadership Focus Group is exploring a leadership training program in which participants would learn skills to lead from positions of university leadership such as dean, provost, chancellor, or president. If academic and administration leadership is of interest to you please visit the webpage of this Focus Group at <https://www.ncfr.org/focus-groups/academic-administration-leadership>. Focus Group membership is free to NCFR members. When you join a Focus Group your e-mail address is added to the online community platform and you will be able to communicate directly with others who have this interest in common.

Family science

Half of NCFR members have at least one degree in family science. As an interdisciplinary academic society, NCFR has members who represent many disciplines—more than 25—and even more professional positions with a wide range of job descriptions and responsibilities. Despite the significant diversity across the discipline, those whose educational backgrounds intersect with family science have a desire for this social science discipline to be visible, both within

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Thank you, donors

Your contribution can be designated to support specific awards or to help maintain reduced fees for students. To donate to NCFR, please visit <https://www.ncfr.org/donating-ncfr>.

William D. Allen
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Nancy Deringer

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Permanent committee to be formed for the CFLE exam and possible exit exam

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

Since the CFLE exam was first created in 2007, NCFR has held a number of exam update sessions. We've created a series of ad hoc committees to handle the job analysis, item writing and review, and scoring aspects of exam development. It has been a time-consuming process involving face-to-face meetings at the headquarters in Florida of our testing vendor, Schroeder Measurement Technology, as well as multiple virtual meetings via webinars.

During this last exam update we modified the process so that most of the item writing was completed online. This method proved to be very efficient. In fact, creating the exam questions via an online portal proved so successful that we are going to change the way in which we update the CFLE test bank going forward. Instead of creating large numbers of new exam questions every 3-4 years, I am creating a standing Exam Committee that will create and approve new questions on an ongoing basis.

Members of this committee will serve 3- to 5-year terms. The main selection criterion will be subject matter expertise (in the 10 family life content areas). NCFR has the advantage of having professors who are familiar with test creation available as subject matter experts, but it will also be important for the committee to reflect the CFLE population and include practitioners as well as college faculty. Training in item writing and review is provided, so no previous experience in test development is needed.

This change in procedure will enable us to regularly populate and update the CFLE exam test bank, ensuring relevance and security. It also will make it feasible for NCFR to consider the development of a senior exit exam.

I have been contacted by numerous schools over the past 5 or so years, inquiring about the possibility of using the CFLE exam as

an exit/assessment exam for their family science program. Through conversations with representatives from Schroeder Measurement Technology it became clear that using the actual CFLE exam was not an option and that it would be necessary to create and use a separate exam. If we did not have the CFLE exam infrastructure in place it would likely be too expensive for NCFR to create

and maintain an exit exam, but by creating a standing exam committee and carrying out much of the exam development and review process online this may be something we can do. It is possible the CFLE content outline would be used as the

directions continued on page 7



Certified Family Life Educators

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

Alabama Rebecca Bach Narr Courtney LaNai Otey Laura Swint	Michigan Steven Christopher Laura Corbin Kelsey L. Dovico Kelsey Harness James Allen Hutson Ashley Machacek Cassandra O'Brien Cassandra Stump Kendra Marie Woods Stacy M. Young	Nicola Dominique Rodrigues Jing Zhang Oklahoma Calli Marie Mills
Arizona RaNae Rowles	Minnesota Renee Butler Natalie Elizabeth Hogan	Pennsylvania Krista Daniels
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Indiana Suzanne E. Foreman	New York Keydra R. Johnson Kathryn Meiners	Washington Deborah Lynn Herendeen
Iowa Caitlin Rose Denning Jessica Jo Fink Bobbie Jo Sheridan	Ohio Matthew Wade Berg- stresser Grace Ann Brodberger Chelsea Taylor Craft Anne N. Hammel	Wisconsin Sigan L. Hartley Wendy Plehn
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Louisiana Barbara Boulet Bartlett Christie Houdek		
Maryland Brittney Michele Fruitt Taylor Brooke Stern		

foundation for the exam because the people I have spoken to think it is representative of much of the content of family science. (A review of the applicability of the CFLE content outline for an exit exam would be part of the exit exam development process.)

We distributed a survey to gauge the interest and support for an NCFR-sponsored exit/assessment exam and the response to date has indicated that there is strong interest. In addition to interest in an assessment exam however, it will also be important to determine if there is sufficient financial support as well given that there will obviously need to be a charge. We will likely administer a second, more detailed survey regarding logistics in the near future.

Development of a standing formal Exam Committee will proceed regardless of the outcome of the exit exam survey, and we'll begin the ongoing exam-development process in early 2016. If you are interested in serving on the Exam Committee, or want to follow up on the status of the exit/assessment exam, please contact me at dawncassidy@ncfr.org or 763-231-2882. ■

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
NCFR

Attention: NCFR Report
1201 West River Parkway, Suite 200
Minneapolis, MN 55454

Wiley's 2015 Alexis Walker Award goes to NCFR members

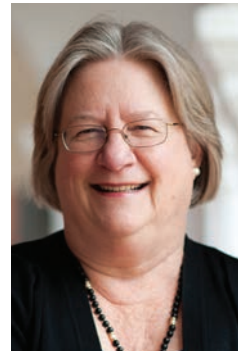
NCFR members Rachel H. Farr and Charlotte J. Patterson have been named the recipients of Wiley's 2015 Alexis Walker Award, which recognizes the best Family Science paper published in a Wiley journal in the preceding two years.

Drs. Farr and Patterson are receiving the award for their article "Coparenting among Lesbian, Gay, and Heterosexual Couples: Associations with Adopted Children's Outcomes," which was published in the July/August 2013 issue of the journal *Child Development*.

The article, according to Wiley, is particularly innovative in addressing an underrepresented and "double minority" population of sexual minority adoptive-parent families. It was the first study of family interaction to include lesbian, gay, and heterosexual couples and their young adopted children. The study was pioneering in its sample, methodology, and findings, revealing that aspects of co-parenting were more important correlates of child outcomes than parental sexual orientation. These findings contributed important information about



Rachel H. Farr



Charlotte J. Patterson

how co-parenting shapes child development in diverse families.

The Alexis Walker Award, sponsored by publisher John Wiley & Sons, was created in memory of the late Alexis Walker. Dr. Walker served as NCFR president and was editor of the *Journal of Marriage and Family* from 2002 to 2006. She was an NCFR Fellow, eminent scholar, and pathfinder in the family field. The initial Alexis Walker Award in 2013 also went to two NCFR members, Linda M. Burton of Duke University and Ingrid A. Connidis of the University of Western Ontario, Canada. ■

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and outside of the academy. This is the goal of NCFR's Future of Family Science Initiative and the new micro-website, family.science.

While the wearefamilyscience.org website is a work in progress and can be easily edited, we had to start somewhere to nail down a simple definition of *family science* and descriptions of the unique contributions family science makes to academia, families, and society. To date, the members of the Future of Family Science Task Force, NCFR staff members, and external consultants have worked together to create the family science website content. Now we are asking for your input and feedback.

Please visit the site at wearefamilyscience.org. Navigate through all the pages. Tell us what we got right; what could be improved; and whether you think this site communicates effectively to prospective employers of family science graduates, your colleagues across campus, high school teachers, students and their parents, members of the

families you serve, and policymakers. You can send your feedback directly to me at dianecushman@ncfr.org.

Be the change...

You've probably heard this adage many times: "Be the change you want to see in the world." Setting aside the controversy about who first said it and whether Mahatma Gandhi's lengthy comment about change and impact was shortened to better accommodate a bumper sticker, when you focus on the sentiment behind the statement, how does it speak to you?

I started this column by recognizing NCFR board members and other elected officers. But there are literally hundreds of members who step up to be the change they want to see in NCFR. By volunteering to lead projects or serve on task forces or other working groups they create a better organization to support those who choose to improve the lives of all families. Thank you all for investing in your NCFR and let me know if there is any way I can assist you to be the change you want to see in NCFR. ■



Tips for working with legislators

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

More and more of us are being asked to demonstrate why our research or work matters to families—how the research can make a positive impact in families' lives. One way to expand the impact of family science research is to provide research on families to policymakers using an educational approach. To develop a reputation as someone who provides research from an educational approach it is helpful to know how to form trustworthy relationships with policymakers. It also is beneficial to understand how to communicate and what to think about when meeting with legislators. The following are tips on how to begin working with legislators.

Choose your hat wisely. Two possible approaches to consider when approaching policy are (a) the educational approach and (b) the “big-A” Advocacy approach. The *educational approach* is scientific in nature and provides research-based information to help inform legislators' decisions without telling legislators for which bill or policy option to vote. The *big-A Advocacy approach*, also thought of as *lobbying*, involves asking legislators to vote for specific bills or policy options. (For more information, see my *Report* column in the spring 2015 *NCFR Report*.) Be mindful of the approach you choose when working with legislators, as consequences exist for both approaches (Bogenschneider, 2014). Wearing two hats can be confusing for legislators. Once she or he sees you as an Advocate (i.e., lobbyist), it is very difficult to remove that hat—the legislator will continue to see you as an Advocate, lobbying for specific policy options. Working from the educational approach increases the odds of being able to work with legislators from both sides of the aisle and being invited to testify in Congress (Bogenschneider & Corbett, 2010). If you are interested in working with legislators from an educational perspective, it is best to keep on the educational hat.

Know the legislator. Learn about legislators through personal websites and social media outlets like LinkedIn profiles, Face-

book pages, and Twitter accounts. Familiarize yourself with the topics of importance to the legislator as well as bills she or he has introduced and his or her voting record and committee assignments. Kelly Roberts, from the University of North Texas, wrote about her experience in a personal e-mail (July 2015) to me:

If there are themes across platforms, these are keys you should commit to heart. You may not be presented with the chance to use the research you've gathered [when eventually meeting with the legislator]. However, responding with a personalized comment such as, “Yes, I noticed agriculture and water resources are salient issues for you. I'd like to talk with you about families who manage the farms, and their children who drink the water...” will take you much further than driving your agenda without regard to the legislator's perspective.

Initiate contact. You cannot develop a professional relationship without initiating contact. It is up to you to do this. Pick up the phone to schedule a meeting. Each legislator's contact information can be found online (e.g., the U.S. House of Representatives site: <http://www.house.gov/representatives/>; U.S. Senate site: <http://www.senate.gov/senators/contact/>). Another option is to attend the legislator's listening sessions, town hall meetings, or office hours. (Check out the legislator's webpage for possible details.) Face-to-face meetings are still a very effective method to develop the desired trusting relationship (Wisconsin Council on Children & Families, n.d.).

Develop a relationship with the legislator. Bogenschneider and Corbett (2010) suggested developing a relationship with the legislator before providing research and policy recommendations. Inviting the legislator to speak in your class, participate in panels or seminars, attend conferences, or other nonpartisan events outside of the capitol can be beneficial. This low-key approach helps

create close proximity with the legislator; increase the legislator's knowledge of family research and exposure to other topics; and has the potential to open doors to other legislators—once the legislator trusts you, she or he is more likely to introduce you to other legislators.

Develop a relationship with the legislative staffers. Be mindful of the fact that legislators are busy. It is quite possible that some meetings will be with legislative staffers or aides. Some staffers serve as gatekeepers of the legislator's schedule. Other staffers have influence over the types of materials the legislators receive and the drafting of bills. Develop a trusting relationship with staffers, because they may be your foot in the door to meet the legislator. “If you overlook [the staffer], or treat them as if they're not important, then you're never going to get the access you want to have” (Bogenschneider & Corbett, 2010, p. 202).

Learn to speak the language. Legislators and academics live in two different worlds. Your message must be brief, concise, and clear. Avoid jargon and difficult-to-understand statistics, research methodologies, and nuances of findings (Bogenschneider & Corbett, 2010). Legislators have limited time to meet. An 8-minute message is too long. You may have only 30 seconds to present your information, and it must provide the main take-away message and pass the “So What?” test immediately.

Attend the meeting. Keep in mind your meeting with the legislator will be short (e.g., 15 minutes or less, according to the Congressional Management Foundation, 2014). The following tips will help make the best use of your time.

- **Dress the part.** “Business dress” is the standard wardrobe during the legislative session in state capitols. Kelly Roberts shared the following:

*[A] Senator or lobbyist has noticed my “nice suit” numerous times, or a com-
working with legislators continued on page 9*

ment has been made such as, “...why don’t you take these talking points into the hearing? You always look professional.” Hall meetings, or “walk and talk” meetings[,] are taken on the fly; the adage of “you don’t get a second chance to make a first impression” reigns supreme in this context. I have actually been given “the floor” because I was wearing my suit jacket. While this may seem shallow to academics, please remember that it’s better to remove as many barriers as possible so relationship-building can be more effective.

- **Be on time.** Arrive at the meeting about 5 minutes before the meeting. Arriving too early can crowd the reception area, and you risk not meeting at all by arriving late. Call ahead if you are going to be late.
- **Introduce yourself.** Start by introducing yourself and your expertise, along with anyone else who is attending the meeting with you. A small group of no more than four—including a constituent of the legislator with whom you are meeting, when possible—is recommended.
- **Follow a pre-established agenda.** Attend the meeting with a clear purpose and objectives; know what you are trying to achieve with the meeting. Have five or six clear talking points planned ahead of time, and stay on topic (Normandin & Bogenschneider, 2006; Wisconsin Council on Children & Families, n.d.). Remember, if you take an educational approach, focus on the research.
- **Include the following elements in your meeting.** State the purpose of your visit. When providing research-based information, use statistics such as means to illustrate your point rather than difficult-to-understand statistics. Provide family implications (Normandin & Bogenschneider, 2006). Legislators like to hear stories, especially from their constituents, about how your message affects their constituents. Never give inaccurate information. Tell the legislator whether the findings are well replicated or if inconclusive results exist in research. Be ready to respond to questions, and listen.
- **Remain positive and nonpartisan.** To work with legislators with varying, and possibly dissimilar, viewpoints from your own it is necessary to keep politics out of the meeting (Congressional Management Foundation, 2014). Arguing or showing

partisan beliefs will discredit you as a nonpartisan resource and prevent the development of a trustworthy relationship.

- **Conclude the meeting.** When the meeting is ending, ask the legislator if she or he has any questions for you; ask how you can be helpful to the legislator; and offer yourself as a resource for nonpartisan research-based information (Wisconsin Council on Children & Families, n.d.). Thank the legislator for meeting with you.
- **Provide leave-behind materials.** It is helpful to have a 1- to 2-page fact sheet or executive summary prepared before the meeting to leave with the legislator (Congressional Management Foundation, 2014). The fact sheet or executive summary can provide a summary of the research as it pertains to family policy,



a couple of talking points the legislator can use in speeches, and visuals to help him or her digest the data easily. Longer reports are less likely to be read and thus not useful. Keep in mind the legislator has limited time to read research.

After the meeting. Stay connected with the legislator. Send him or her a personalized handwritten thank you note after the meeting. E-mails work, but handwritten notes may have more impact (Wisconsin Council on Children & Families, n.d.). Kelly Roberts shared that, in her experience,

Some of the most human moments with legislators are when they begin a second meeting by referring to a hand-written note I sent. One Representative pulled a note I wrote out from his top desk drawer while referencing a point I had summarized. Another legislator stated, “You know . . . at the end of a long day in the

boxing ring, something like [a handwritten note] is like a good ice pack. They’re rare, but help me get out there and fight again.” A one-paragraph handwritten note including a thank you, summary of 1 to 3 points, and something you appreciated about the meeting will build your legislative relationships in ways you may not expect, but will always value.

In addition to sending the thank you note, plan to stay connected with the legislator. Be available to answer any additional questions the staffer or legislator may have (Congressional Management Foundation, 2014). Attend other events hosted by the legislator. Maintaining the educational approach during these additional events will further help to build a trustworthy relationship with the legislator.

As Normandin and Bogenschneider (2006) wrote, “The reward of learning the skills to work with policymakers is seeing your research applied.” The tips provided here are not exhaustive; many additional tips can be found in the References section.

Above all, be patient. Working on policy issues takes time and persistence. ■

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After the fall: managing criticism

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

My first reaction to criticism in any form is surely irrational. With regard to reviews of journal submissions, I rant, complain to friends, question the intellect of the reviewers (or lack thereof), question my own competence, and after a week or so get serious about how I might improve the manuscript and respond to the editor and reviewers. But the rant comes first; it is a necessary part of my process and, to a certain degree, part of the process of other authors. I have talked with authors whose initial reaction to reviews is emotional, and some who are not quite so affected. Here I present excerpts from my interviews with four leading scholars. You might compare your experiences of criticism with theirs. A bit of social comparison can be illuminating.

Harry Reis, a prominent social psychologist, former editor, and leader in the science of personal relationships, responded to my queries about his usual experience of reviews. I asked Harry how he typically responds when receiving reviews of his own journal submissions.

HR: *My initial reaction is usually to get upset. It will either be anger at the reviewers, irritation, annoyance, or sometimes it will be feelings of inadequacy. Any of those sorts of things, and even if the letter is positive by the way.*

I typically will be annoyed at the nature of the changes that are being requested. I am revising one today. The reviews are fairly positive actually, but the changes are substantial and I'm annoyed at having to do it. I always tell students "put it aside until

the emotional reaction is sort of washed away, and then start to deal with it."

RM: *How long do you have to put something aside? More than a day?*

HR: *Oh, absolutely more than a day. It's typically at least a week.*

Harry is by any measure a very successful social psychologist. Like myself, he has more than 30 years of experience in research and publication, and yet his response to reviews has changed little over his career. Like many of us, he finds reviews difficult to accept, at least initially.

I also asked Sarah Schoppe-Sullivan, a family psychologist and NCFR Fellow, about her experience of reviews.

When you see those emails [reviews] in your inbox. I don't know maybe when someone has published a zillion papers, which I certainly haven't, it doesn't affect them anymore. But when I see those emails, it's like my stomach drops. I still put them away for two weeks, maybe longer if it is a really harsh one. My mentor actually taught me that. What hurts most is you read it, and then think they are kind of right.

I don't think I'm very good at handling criticism. I mean I've gotten better over time but it doesn't just roll off my back.

Anisa Zvonkovic is chair of the Department of Human Development at Virginia Tech and, like Sarah, she has been enormously successful in getting federal grants to support her work. Anisa was recently elected President-elect of NCFR. I too asked her

about her experience of reviews.

I hate reviews and I put them aside, can't even read them. Or I read them real quick. But to be honest, when I get the reviews back, I may not even read the e-mail the first day, even though I'm less attached than I was as a new scholar. I'm less attached to the techniques, sentences, and paragraphs, but I'm very attached to wanting to be published.

When I look at [reviews] the next day or so, I am kind of furious at every criticism. I have to kind of go through that process [emphasis added]. I've noticed that not everyone is like that. Some of my students are not. They kind of roll up their sleeves and get to work. I have to kind of go through this process, and then when I've cooled down, which may only take a day or a couple of days, I'm ready to work.

I use to think of my initial reaction to receiving reviews as a personal weakness. Now I think of it as a process I have to go through.

Anisa is not alone in her reaction to reviews. Paul Amato, a three-time recipient of the Reuben Hill Award and current President of NCFR, responded:

PA: *Well, when I get a decision letter, I don't open it right away. I need to screw up my courage a little bit because nobody likes to be criticized and reviews are unpredictable. I have no idea what to expect. It's kind of a touchy subject with me.*

RM: *How long do you wait to open a decision letter?*

PA: *I won't open it up right away. I'll let it sit for an hour or two before I go back to it.*

RM: *What are your first reactions?*

PA: *Well it depends on the reviews of course. I think that there is probably some natural defensiveness. In an ideal world, everybody would love everything that*

after the fall continued on page 11



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we do, but as academics we are putting ourselves out there for criticism all the time. We get evaluated a lot. So this hour or two delay is kind of psyching myself up to realize that even if the article gets a revise and resubmit, there is going to be a lot of criticism; there are going to be a lot of suggestions that come up and I need to deal with that and think about that objectively. I need to be accepting of this and gracious about it, and think about this constructively and once I've talked myself into that frame of mind, then I'll look at the reviews. But I can't do [it] without that mental preparation. I think I might just be hurt by it. Every time you send an article out to a journal you know it is going to be criticized. Even if you think it is a pretty good article and eventually gets published and cited a lot it's going to be torn down. In some ways, it's kind of a harsh system.

The emotional stuff is really important. Intellectually you think about the reviews that we get and we try and assess in a fairly objective way the validity of the criticism, how we might deal with it, how we are going to respond. Emotionally there is all this churning going on. We're thinking: "How did this person not like my work? How come they didn't love it? I am deeply offended by this." Or, "I'm never going to write anything ever again, ever. That's it. I'm finished." So you have to deal with all this emotion that goes on and you have to get through it if you're ever going to have your work published.

Acknowledging our common experience

We often, and I hope routinely, begin with a carefully crafted manuscript that has been through countless revisions. We send off the manuscript to a journal with a belief that this work is nearly perfect and surely the reviewers and editor will have few if any suggestions, few if any criticisms. Honestly, I can't remember submitting a manuscript that I didn't feel would knock the socks off the editor and reviewers. In fact, they may find lots to like about the piece, but they will nearly always find room for improvement, and add some criticism to the mix.

What surprises me is that my initial belief about the perfection of an initial submission hasn't varied over my career and neither has my reaction to the inevitable critical reviews, or the reactions of Harry, Sarah, Anisa, and Paul. The only real difference between our experience as young scholars, and

now as more experienced scholars, is that we know the drill. We know our initial judgment about the quality of a first submission is inflated. We know that our initial reaction to reviews will be uncomfortable. We know that we have to deal with the emotional discomfort first and then we get to work.

I am glad these authors shared their experience so openly and honestly. It is comforting to know that my emotional experience of reviews is not that much different from that of some very successful authors. I don't mean to say that there is not some variation, that some experience fret more than others, but the underlying issues are similar. Being criticized is difficult and it underscores the emotional baggage of writing more generally.

All of these authors share a similar experience, and it includes a good measure of discomfort. They are clearly aware of their typical experience, anticipate their reactions, and manage to deal with discomfort in a productive way. In addition, they all went on to explain what they do after their initial reactions, and all had similar strategies. They mine the editorial letters and reviews for the key issues and decide how to address them. In fact, they are masters at strategizing responses, and I suspect that their ability to respond to reviews and successfully publish is contingent on being aware of their initial reactions and allowing for those reactions. They may be momentarily derailed when receiving a review, but not for long.

The emotional context of writing and the accompanying criticism that ensues is expected and is part of the writing process. We simply learn to gauge our own reactions, setting aside the self-doubts but not denying their appearance. And when all else fails, I sit at my screen until things start to happen; ideas emerge; words follow.

Working after the fall

In the routine of writing regularly and submitting articles, grants, and books for review, expect criticism. Your particular response may vary depending on the tone and content of the reviews and accompanying decision letter. Some reviews are more reasonable than others. Some scholars are more affected by criticism than others. Anisa comments on those of her students who seem to be little affected by the course of criticism. In my experience and that of my colleagues Harry, Sarah, Anisa, and Paul, reviews are unpleasant and, as Harry says "even if the [decision] letter is positive."

For new professionals this means expecting unpleasantities and planning for the crush when first opening a decision letter and accompanying reviews. The important point is to be mindful of your response and plan accordingly. Allow yourself a week or two to adapt, working through your personal response, and follow this with a commitment to begin strategizing your response. List the major issues raised by the reviewers or editor and begin by addressing each issue in turn. Never under any circumstance allow a bit of foul weather to derail your vision. I can assure you that every award-winning article, every article now considered a classic, had a heap of critical reviews in its history.

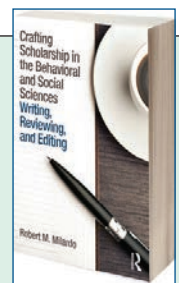
Among the most significant differences between a new professional just getting started and an accomplished, well-seasoned professional is a mindful approach to personal process. The old hats learn to manage ever-present criticism and the surf of discomfort.

Best practice: responding to reviews

- Rant first. Complain to anyone who will listen or pretend to do so. Strong negative reactions to reviews are normal.
- Get strategic. Once you calm down, think strategically. List every issue raised by the editor and reviewers and plan a strategy for decommissioning each concern. ■

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/



Kathleen Briggs Outstanding Mentor Award Christi McGeorge

NCFR and the Family Therapy Section recognize Christi R. McGeorge as the 2015 recipient of the Kathleen Briggs Outstanding Mentor Award, which is given to an outstanding mentor of students and new professionals in the area of marriage and family therapy.



Christi McGeorge

Dr. McGeorge, an NCFR member since 1994, is professor in the Couple and Family Therapy doctoral program at North Dakota State University and has been a faculty member in the NDSU Department of Human Development and Family Science since 2003. She has had the opportunity to mentor students and new faculty members. She is passionate about research and particularly enjoys helping students develop their own excitement and passion for research.

“Dr. McGeorge exemplifies what is right with education and mentorship today,” writes Candice A. Maier, a former student. “She is engaging in ways that help even the most reluctant and resistant learners become focused and involved in their individual career paths.”

Dr. McGeorge is currently the past chair for the NCFR Family Therapy Section and an elected member of the NCFR Inclusion and Diversity Committee. She is also an active member of NCFR’s GLBTSA Focus Group and the Feminism and Family Studies Section. Her research has focused on the influence of heterosexism and homophobia on clinical practice and training, gender equity in therapy, gender equity in higher education, feminist theories, and societal perceptions of single parents.

Kathleen Briggs, the namesake of this award, was a long-time member and leader of the FT Section. She was committed to mentoring marriage and family therapy graduate students and new professionals, and was known for her leadership, insight, optimism, and enthusiasm. ■

Reuben Hill Award

Meghan Gillette, Clinton Gudmunson

Meghan Gillette and Clinton G. Gudmunson are the 2015 recipients of the Reuben Hill Award, which is given to the author(s) of an outstanding article or book that combines theory and methodology to analyze and interpret a significant family issue. Their winning article is titled “Processes Linking Father Absence to Educational Attainment Among African American Females,” published in the *Journal of Research on Adolescence*.



Clinton Gudmunson



Meghan Gillette

Dr. Gillette is a faculty lecturer at Iowa State University. Her research focuses on maternal, infant, and adolescent health within familial and economic contexts, and often utilizes an evolutionary developmental perspective. She is also involved in scholarship on teaching and learning, exploring the effectiveness of pedagogical strategies in the classroom.

Dr. Gudmunson is an assistant professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at Iowa State University, where he teaches courses in retirement planning, family policy, and research methods.

His research examines financial socialization from a life course perspective and also examines the impacts of economic pressure in family life. Dr. Gudmunson earned his Ph.D. in family social science from the University of Minnesota.

Reuben Hill, the namesake of this award, was a university professor who pioneered the scholarly study of family. He is remembered for his determination to advance family theory for practical benefit. The author(s) receive a plaque(s), \$1,000 cash award, and \$750 travel stipend (shared if multiple authors). ■

Marie F. Peters Award

Adriana Umaña-Taylor

Adriana J. Umaña-Taylor is the 2015 recipient of the Marie F. Peters Award, which is given to an NCFR member who has made significant contributions to the area of ethnic minority families.

Dr. Umaña-Taylor is a Foundation Professor at Arizona State University in the T. Denny Sanford School of Social and Family Dynamics. She received her Ph.D. in human development and family studies from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Her research focuses on ethnic-racial identity formation, familial socialization processes, and culturally informed risk and protective factors among ethnic minority youth and their families. Her expertise lies primarily in the developmental period of adolescence, and her work is guided by an ecological framework, with an emphasis on understanding how individual and contextual factors interact to inform adolescent development and adjust-

ment. Much of her research has focused on Latino youth and families in the U.S.

Dr. Umaña-Taylor currently serves as associate editor of the *Journal of Research on Adolescence* and she is a current and former editorial

board member of several journals. She has been a member of the Executive Council of the Society for Research on Adolescence and of the NCFR Board of Directors.

Marie F. Peters, the namesake of this award, was a distinguished scholar, researcher, practitioner, and mentor, and an illustrious member of NCFR, an NCFR Board of Directors member, and Ethnic Minorities Section leader. ■



Adriana Umaña-Taylor



Adrienne Edwards



Andrea Roach

Jessie Bernard Awards

Contribution to Feminist Scholarship Paper Award

Adrienne Edwards

Outstanding Research Proposal from a Feminist Perspective Award

Andrea Roach

Contribution to Feminist Scholarship

Dr. Adrienne Edwards, University of Nevada-Reno, is the recipient for her paper, co-authored with April L. Few-Demo, titled "African American Maternal Power and the Racial Socialization of Preschool Children" and currently under review for publication in *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research*.

Dr. Edwards is a lecturer in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies. She earned a Ph.D. in human development with an emphasis in child and adolescent development from Virginia Tech. She earned a master's degree in counseling and development from Winthrop University and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Clemson University.

Her primary research interests include childhood racial socialization, mothering, and feminist pedagogy. She teaches courses on lifespan development, research methods, and family interaction and is involved in research projects on the use of feminist teaching methods in undergraduate classrooms and African American family relationships.

Outstanding Research Proposal

Andrea Roach is the Bernard Award recipient for her paper entitled "Parental Partner Violence and Adult Child-Parent Relationships."

Ms. Roach is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Human Development and Family Science at the University of Missouri-Columbia where she has focused on family relationships and domestic violence. She received her bachelor's degree in vocational family and consumer sciences (FACS) from Missouri State University in 2007. She then taught four years of high school FACS for the Ferguson-Florissant school district in Missouri. She earned her master's degree in child and family studies from Fontbonne University in 2011.

Ms. Roach has been an active member of NCFR since 2011 and is the Students and New Professionals Representative for the Feminism and Family Studies Section. ■

These awards honor Jessie Bernard, former NCFR Board Member and pioneer in the field of feminist family studies. She declared herself a feminist in 1970 and is known for her celebrated description of "his" and "her" marriages.

The scholarship paper award is given to a graduate student or new professional who has published or is about to publish a paper using feminist frameworks and methodologies in research. The research proposal award recognizes a graduate student or new professional who has demonstrated excellence in research and potential contribution to feminist scholarship. Both awards include support for conference attendance and reporting on the research.

Felix Berardo Scholarship Award for Mentoring

Heather M. Helms

The Felix Berardo Scholarship Award for Mentoring is given in honor of Dr. Felix Berardo, a well-known and beloved professor from the University of Florida, who went above and beyond expectations in mentoring many students to become outstanding leaders in the family field. The award recognizes an NCFR member for excellence in mentoring junior colleagues, graduate students, or undergraduates.

The 2015 Berardo Award recipient is Heather M. Helms, an associate professor of human development and family studies at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She has been a member of NCFR since 1991 and was the recipient of several early career awards, including NCFR's 1996



Heather Helms

Jessie Bernard Award for the Outstanding Research Proposal from a Feminist Perspective and the 1999/2000 NCFR Outstanding New Professional Award.

Dr. Helms has served NCFR in a variety of capacities, including as secretary/treasurer for the Research and Theory Section, chair of the Burgess Award Committee, and book review editor for the *Journal of Marriage and Family* (JMF). She has served on the editorial boards of JMF and the *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, and published scholarly work in each of NCFR's three journals.

"Before meeting Dr. Helms, no one had taken the time to talk to me about graduate school," writes Yuliana Rodriguez, a former student. "She is one of those rare professors that takes the extra effort to make sure all her students are heard and, in all my encounters with her...she has always been most concerned with helping me find my niche and inspiring me to reach my goals." ■

Ernest G. Osborne Award

Marilyn Flick

Marilyn Flick, 2015 winner of the Osborne Award, is chair of the Applied and Fine Arts/PE/Health Department at North Eugene High School in Eugene, Oregon, where she has worked for 31 years.

There, she teaches the popular human sexuality class and six other family and consumer sciences courses. She has been interviewed on radio and television and given more than 30 community presentations on teaching your child about sex. In addition to more than a dozen NCFR presentations, she has given presentations on teaching at several other state and national conferences.

As an NCFR member, Ms. Flick initiated a Teaching Technique Exchange in 1983 which continued for five years. At the NCFR conference, she has offered several teaching round tables and presented on several panels on family life education and sexuality education. She has served in numerous committee and leadership positions within NCFR, including three terms of service on the NCFR Board of Directors.

“Because of her ability to disseminate knowledge in a non-intimidating and interesting way, students lined up to take her classes,” writes Kara Walter, a former student who was inspired by Ms. Flick to become a family and consumer sciences teacher. “To this day she continues to provide a safe and thoughtful environment while teaching about families and relationships.”

The award is given in memory of Ernest G. Osborne, three-time NCFR President and Professor of Family at Teachers College at Columbia University.

The award, sponsored by the Education and Enrichment (EE) Section, recognizes and encourages excellence and distinguished service in teaching of family studies at any level. The winner receives a \$1,000 cash award, up to \$500 in travel allowance, and a plaque. ■



Marilyn Flick

Feldman Outstanding Research Proposal for Research in Family Policy Award

James Kale Monk

James Kale Monk is the winner of the Feldman Award, which recognizes a graduate student or new professional who has demonstrated excellence in research and potential contribution to family policy studies, particularly in the areas of gender/women's issues or poverty. His paper is titled “Contextual Relational Uncertainty Model: Understanding Ambiguity in a Changing Legal Context of Marriage.”

Mr. Monk is a doctoral student of human development and family studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He earned undergraduate degrees in psychology



James Kale Monk

and family studies, and a master's in marriage and family therapy from Kansas State University. He is also a Certified Family Life Educator.

Mr. Monk's primary research interest is relationship instability. Specifically, he is interested in how couples establish and maintain quality in relationships during stressful transitions, like the transition to adulthood and the transition to marriage. His secondary interest centers on the relational processes and mental health of military couples during transitions in the deployment-reintegration cycle.

Within NCFR, Mr. Monk serves on the Digital Scholarship Board of the *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, and is a member of several NCFR Section interest groups.

Margaret and Harold Feldman, the namesakes of this award, were pioneers in the field of family policy. ■

Cindy Winter Scholarship Award

Claire Kimberly

Claire Kimberly has been named the 2015 recipient of the Cindy Winter Scholarship Award, a biannual award that given to a student or new professional member of NCFR who has shown outstanding leadership or service in family studies, human ecology, human development, family science, or a related field.

Dr. Kimberly is an assistant professor at the University of Southern Mississippi in the Department of Child and Family Studies and has been an active NCFR member since 2009. At the national level, she has served as the Students and New Professionals representative and secretary of the Affiliate Councils Board. She has given 15 presentations at NCFR annual conferences and has chaired



Claire Kimberly

the affiliate councils awards committee, the national service project, and the Students and New Professionals Gathering Place.

Closer to home, Dr. Kimberly recently completed service as secretary of the Southeastern Council on Family Relations, and was integral in the establishment of a student affiliate at her university.

“Claire has exceptional professionalism and puts incredible energy into any task she takes on,” writes Rose Allen, current president of the Affiliate Councils Board. “She can be counted on to follow through on any task she accepts — and it will be done to the highest standards. ... Like Cindy Winter, she has put her heart into NCFR.” ■

NCFR Student Award (SNP)

Sara Mernitz

Sara Mernitz is the 2015 recipient of the NCFR Student Award, which is given to an NCFR graduate student member who has demonstrated excellence as a student and shows great potential for contributing to the family science discipline.



Sara Mernitz

Ms. Mernitz is a Ph.D. candidate of human sciences and an active affiliate of the Institute for Population Research at the Ohio State University. She received her undergraduate degree in psychology from the University of Minnesota and her master's degree in human development and family science at the Ohio State University.

Ms. Mernitz's primary professional interests center on adolescent and young adult relationships and health during the transition to adulthood. Specifically, she uses a life-course framework to explore reciprocal associations between mental health and romantic involvement, including dating relationships, casual relationships, and romantic unions.

The NCFR Student Award receives a \$500 cash award and a plaque. ■

2015 Affiliate Councils Awards

Affiliate Councils Outstanding Graduate Student Research Paper Award

James Kale Monk, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign: "Veteran Couples Retreats: Interventions for Military Veterans and Their Relational Partners" (co-authors Brian Ogolsky and Victoria Bruner)

Affiliate Councils Outstanding Undergraduate Student Research Paper Award

Hannah Newman, Samford University: "The Relationship Between Parental Conflict Tactics and Sibling Conflict Tactics"

Affiliate Councils Student and New professional President-For-a-Day Award
Sarah Bradshaw, Illinois State University ■

2015 Section Award Winners

Advancing Family Science Section

Wesley Burr Graduate Student Scholarship Award

Keondria McClish, Kansas State University: "Delivery of Family Diversity in Family Studies Undergraduate Programs"

Education and Enrichment Section

Student Proposal Awards

Jessie Gardiner, Kansas State University: "Utilizing Family Life Education as a Resource for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: A Qualitative Study"

Sandy Morrison, Auburn University: "Parental Status and Changes Following Relationship Education: Does Gender Matter?"

Nicole Krokosz, University of Wisconsin—Stevens Point: "Who Qualifies to Deliver Mandated Parent Education? A State-by-State Compendium"

Ethnic Minorities Section

Student Best Paper Award

David T. Lardier, Jr., Montclair State University: "The Resilient Voices of Inner City: Implications for Empowerment-Based Prevention Initiatives"

New Professional Best Paper Award

Norma Perez-Brena, Texas State University: "Parent Ethnic Socialization and Youths' Modeling in the Process of Acculturation"

Families and Health Section

Outstanding Professional Paper/Publications Award

Daphne C. Hernandez, University of Houston: "Gender Disparities Among the Association Between Cumulative Family-Level Stress and Adolescent Weight Status"

Outstanding Student and New Professional Paper Award

Diana R. Samek, Auburn University: "Parental Involvement, Sibling Companionship, and Adolescent Substance Use: A Longitudinal, Genetically-Informed Design"

Family Policy Section

Feldman Travel Award—Graduate Student

Woosang Hwang, Syracuse University: "Does Paid Maternity Leave Affect Infant Development and Second-Birth Intentions? The Mediation Effect of Parenting Stress"

Family Therapy Section

Best Research Paper Award—Student

Emily Corturillo, North Dakota State Uni-

versity: "CFT Faculty Members: Prevalence and Type of LGB Affirmative Therapy Training"

Best Research Paper Award—New Professional

Sara Waters, Washington State University: "Improvements in the Child-Rearing Attitudes of Women Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence Predict Greater Maternal Sensitivity Toward Their 6-Month-old Infants"

Best Poster Award—Student

Jose Michael Gonzalez, University of Arizona: "Approach-Avoidance Motivations of Sacrifice and Relational Quality." Co-authors Hilary Gamble, Melissa A. Curran

Best Poster Award—New Professional

Rebecca Cobb, Seattle University: "MFTs' Endorsement of Couples Treatment for Intimate Partner Violence"

Feminism and Family Studies Section

Alexis J. Walker Award for Mid-Career Achievement in Feminist Family Studies
Elizabeth A. Sharp, Texas Tech University

International Section

Jan Trost Award

Sylvia M. Asay, University of Nebraska—Kearney

International Section Annual Conference Travel Scholarship

Lucy Wandiri Mbirianjau, Kenya
Gizem Erdem, Istanbul, Turkey

Religion and Family Life Section

Outstanding Paper Award

Joe S. Wilmoth, Mississippi State University: "How Adults Caring for Aging Parents Want the Church to Help"

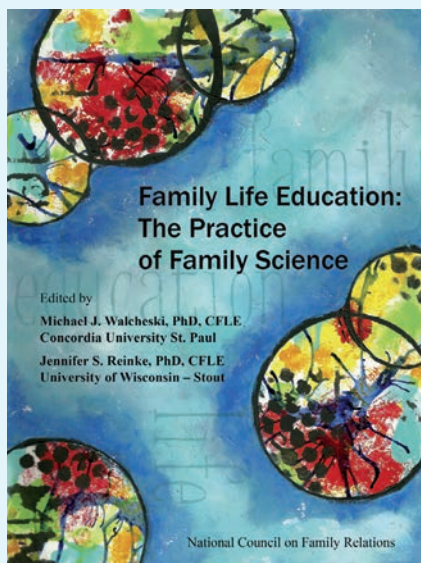
Student and New Professional Outstanding Paper Award

Lacey Bagley, University of Central Oklahoma: "Does Religiosity Influence Relationship Attitudes Differently for Young Adults?"

Research and Theory Section

Best Abstract by a Student and New Professional Award

Ashley N. Cooper, Florida State University: "Daily Relationship Quality in Same-Sex Couples: Attachment and Sacrifices" (co-authors Casey J. Totenhagen, Melissa Curran, Ashley K. Randall, and Natalie Smith) ■



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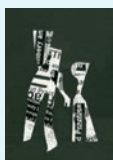
Family Life Education: The Practice of Family Science

**Edited by Michael J. Walcheski, PhD, CFLE,
and Jennifer S. Reinke, PhD, CFLE**

Now available through the NCFR Store!

<https://www.ncfr.org/store>

Useful and informative for seasoned and emerging professionals, as well as students, **Family Life Education: The Practice of Family Science** provides a comprehensive examination of the profession from the perspectives of many leading family scholars and educators. It includes three sections: *Current Themes in Family Life Education*; *Integrating Family Life Education Content Areas into Practice* (organized around the ten family life content areas); and *Family Life Education Teaching and Practice Resources*. Chapters include discussion questions supported by accompanying online Key Resources.



Here is a book that promises to be as useful and informative for seasoned, emerging, and rising professionals as it is for university students. The range of topics includes theoretical to specific practice settings. Such a book should be enriching for professionals in the field. Topics covered in the book also make it promising as a supplemental text. In either case, the book provides utility for preparing, updating, or further developing Certified Family Life Educators.
— Stephan M. Wilson, PhD, CFLE, Dean, College of Human Sciences, Regents Professor of Human Development and Family Science, Oklahoma State University



As a licensed parent educator and Certified Family Life Educator, I appreciate the detail that is spent in reviewing the foundations of family life education as well as the successes and challenges that strengthen our field. Family Life Education: The Practice of Family Science acknowledges the depth of knowledge I need to have on a variety of topics in order to meet the needs of the parents and family members I serve and reminds me that the best tools for guiding me in my practice are found within the 10 content areas of family life education. — Beth Gausman MS, CFLE, MN
Licensed Parent Educator



As a principal translational branch of family science, family life education is essential for promoting evidenced-based best practices among couples and families. Family Life Education: The Practice of Family Science provides a comprehensive examination of the profession from the perspectives of many leading family scholars and educators, and in doing so is certain to both advance the profession and become foundational reading for all aspiring family life educators. — Jason Hans, PhD, CFLE, Professor, Department of Family Science, University of Kentucky



Walcheski and Reinke's Family Life Education: The Practice of Family Science is a "must have" for family science professionals and all those engaged in family life education! It is a comprehensive resource covering all matters related to family life education with chapters written by outstanding leaders in the field. I can't wait to share it with my students! — Raeann R. Hamon, PhD, CFLE, Chair, Department of Human Development and Family Science, Distinguished Professor of Family Science and Gerontology, Messiah College

It is refreshing and helpful to find a high quality text precisely angled towards the professional interests and challenges facing family life educators. This book fills a void and is the "go to" text for courses in family life education.
— Clara Gerhardt, PhD, CFLE, Professor in Human Development and Family Science, Samford University

Focus Group Awards

QFRN Focus Group

Anselm Strauss Award for Qualitative Family Research

Carolyn L. Sandoval: *The Making of a “Star”: An Ethnodramatic Representation of Jasmine’s Story*

Anselm Strauss Award for Qualitative Family Research (Honorable Mention)

Corinne Reczek: *“Conducting a Multi-Family Member Interview Study”*

Men in Families Focus Group

Best New Professional Research Article Award

Sarah N. Lang, Sarah Schoppe-Sullivan, Letitia E. Kotila, Xin Feng, Claire M. Kamp Dush, Susan C. Johnson, *The Ohio State University: “Relations Between Fathers’ and Mothers’ Infant Engagement Patterns in Dual-Earner Families and Toddler Competence”*

Diversity and Inclusion in Men in Families Research Article Award

Brad van Eeden-Moorefield, *Montclair State University,* and **Kristen E. Benson,**

North Dakota State University: “A Conditional Process Model Explaining Partnered Gay Men’s Perceived Relationship Stability”

Best Research Article Award-Students and New Professionals

Henry Gonzalez, Melissa A. Barnett, *University of Arizona: “Romantic Partner and Biological Father Support: Associations with Maternal Distress in Low-Income Mexican-Origin Families”*

Issues in Aging Focus Group

Students and New Professionals Award
Hyo Jung Lee, *University of Massachusetts, Boston: “Well-Being After Widowhood: Does Pre-Loss Marital Quality Make a Difference?”*

Student Runner-up

Jessie Gardiner, *Kansas State University: “Utilizing Family Life Education as a Resource for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: A Qualitative Study”*

Professional Award

Amy Rauer, *Auburn University,* and **Claire Kamp Dush,** *The Ohio State University: “A Developmental Perspective on Couples in Conflict”*

Professional Runners-up

Lawrence Ganong, *University of Missouri—Columbia: “Exploring the Complexity of Stepgrandparent–Stepgrandchild Relationships”*

Margaret Manoogian, *Western Oregon University: “I Have So Many Regrets: Young Adults’ Experiences of Grandparent Death”*

Theory Construction and Research Methodology

Best Student/Early Career Presentation Award

Katherine W. Paschall, *University of Arizona: “Using Early Head Start Research to Inform the Family Stress Model.”* Coauthor Ann. M. Mastergeorge ■



NCFR Board of Directors

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Texas Tech University

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Families and Health Section update



Karina Shreffler, Section Chair, karina.shreffler@okstate.edu

Now that I have spent a year as chair of the Families and Health (FH) Section, I more fully understand the work that goes into planning the annual NCFR conference. I am very fortunate to serve the Section with such a great team of Section officers, and we look forward to continuing to work on your behalf to enhance our Section.

We hope you enjoyed the various Families and Health sessions and activities at the 2015 annual conference in Vancouver. We offered four symposiums on topics that included supporting teen parent families, evidence-based practice working with military families, child and adolescent adjustment, and mental health and parental obesity, as well as a workshop on obtaining grant funding for FH research. We also offered four

regular paper sessions on topics including couple relationship quality and health; grief, coping, and death; couple violence, trauma, and conflict; and emerging adulthood; as well as two lightning paper sessions on post-deployment families and parental mental health and child outcomes. We hope you were able to attend many of these sessions!

At the 2015 FH Section business meeting we recognized our Outstanding Paper Award winners, each of whom received a plaque and monetary award:

Diana R. Samek, Assistant Professor at Auburn University, received the Outstanding Student/New Professional Paper Award for her article, "Parent Involvement, Sibling Companionship, and Adolescent Substance Use: A Longitudinal, Genetically Informed

Design," published in 2015 in the *Journal of Family Psychology*.

Daphne Hernandez, Assistant Professor at the University of Houston, received the Outstanding Professional Paper Award for her article, "Gender Disparities Among the Associations Between Cumulative Family-Level Stress and Adolescent Weight Status," published in 2015 in *Preventative Medicine*.

We thank all of you who submitted proposals or papers for awards, as well as those of you who reviewed for our Section in 2015! The success of our Section depends on your engagement. In the upcoming months, please consider submitting a proposal to the FH Section for the 2016 conference in Minneapolis. We look forward to another fantastic year! ■

Advancing Family Science Section update



Robin Yaure, Section Chair, r2y@psu.edu

As I write this article, we are just a couple of weeks away from the 2015 NCFR conference in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. However, by the time this issue of the *Report* comes out, the conference will be over. The exciting presentations and great connections that were newly made, and others that were reestablished, will have slightly faded in our memories as finals and winter loom (or maybe winter is already here for those of you in the more northern climes). Work will be beginning on preparing for next year's conference and the activities of the Advancing Family Science Section for 2016!

As my first year as chair of the Advancing Family Science Section comes to an end I have been looking back at what we have accomplished as a Section and what I have learned as chair. I am pleased to see that one of our Section's main goals for this year is well underway: We have developed a social media presence, with a new blog (<https://www.ncfr.org/sections/fs/blog>), a Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/NCFRAdvanceFamSci>), and a Twitter account (@NCFRFamSci). I appreciate how different members of our Section (Ebony Baugh, East Carolina University; Tonya Riklefs, Kansas State University) stepped up immediately after I sent out an e-mail asking

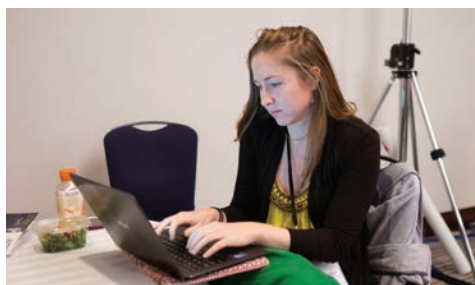
for help with these. It's exciting to see these ideas come to fruition so quickly. I would love to see more members posting and joining so that we can continue to work together as a group throughout the year.

Another goal for our Section was to increase the cohesion of the Section board and provide more opportunities for input from section members. I think the increased social media presence has helped make our members more aware of issues relating to family science, and I hope that members will feel free to share what they can through these sites. I would really love, for example, to see some more information disseminated about SoTL (Science of Teaching and Learning), which was a big topic this year at the conference.

Speaking of the conference, the third goal for our Section was to increase the Section's visibility there, which I am very optimistic

(as I write before the conference) that we will have accomplished. From the special session "The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) in Family Science Academic Careers" to the poster session "Family Science: The Art of Teaching and Education," to the concurrent session "Innovative Strategies for Teaching Family Theories" and the other wonderful programs sponsored by our Section, it looks to me that we are fulfilling our mission to "expand, strengthen, and enhance the Advancing Family Science discipline and profession." In addition, enhancing the business meeting to include a resource exchange (organized by Section member Silvia Bartolic, University of British Columbia, with help from Mallory Lucier-Greer, Florida State University, from the Education and Enrichment Section) and a set of roundtable presentations held in conjunction with the E&E section thanks to Deb Berke, University of Delaware, I expect we will see more interactions and exciting exchanges for our section.

As always, I will be looking for feedback about the conference as well as ideas from members for our future as a Section. Remember that this is *our* Section, and so it will function best as we work together to reach our common goals. ■



Family policy in the academy



Bethany Letiecq, Family Policy Section Chair, bletiecq@gmu.edu

When I began my career at Montana State University in 2002, there were few family-friendly policies in place for instructional 9-month faculty. Even though my work centered on family law and public policy, I hadn't investigated what policies were on the books until I became pregnant myself. What a shock it was to learn that I would not be eligible for any leave after the birth of my daughter because she was due in June and by then I'd be off contract. Through negotiations with my department head, I was offered a one-course release that fall if I wrote a grant and produced at least one manuscript.

During that first year as a new mother, I remember being exhausted, unfocused, out of balance, and in survival mode—not how I had hoped to experience my long-awaited role as a parent. And as I commiserated with others, we lamented not living in Sweden, not working for one of those Fortune 500 companies (who offer some of the best leave policies in the U.S.), not feeling good about our production as workers or as parents, and not feeling supported by the very academic institutions to which we had been so committed. Of course, I was re-minded that I had it better than many of my academic elders and others in the academy

or in the U.S.—I at least had accrued paid sick leave to take should my kiddo become ill, and I had a private office with a locking door, where I could express milk whenever I needed. No pumping in the bathroom stall for me!

Wondering what others were experiencing, I began to gather narratives from colleagues documenting how pregnant women negotiated leaves within their units, what (mis)information was being shared about leave-taking, how they felt about their circumstances, and how they perceived the academic climate as they transitioned to motherhood.

Giving voice to these experiences birthed a movement at Montana State University to advocate for better family policies for all parents and other caregivers. After a few years of organizing, advocacy, and sacrifice, we successfully saw our institution adopt more family-friendly policies and practices (including a paid “family advocate” position sponsored by the Provost's Office, tenure-clock stoppage, and a dedicated family care room).

In 2013, when I joined the faculty of George Mason University, I was again shocked to find that the institution did not have a paren-

tal leave policy for faculty (other than sick leave and the Family and Medical Leave Act). Again, we organized. We collected narratives, compared policies from our sister institutions, and began meeting regularly to strategize how we could move the university to expand definitions of a “well-being institution” beyond the individual level.

After two-plus years of faculty and staff advocacy, and with support from key administrators, I am thrilled to report that George Mason University (as of October 2015) now offers all instructional faculty (men and women) a 50% reduction in workload in the year following a birth or adoption. This policy, decoupled from sick leave and Family and Medical Leave Act, is offered in addition to tenure-clock stoppage.

I share these stories in the hopes that others will take up family policy education and advocacy in the academy. There remains a great deal of work left to do, and a growing body of resources is available to support these efforts (which are often linked to advancing women and other underrepresented faculty in STEM fields and in the academy more broadly). Please contact me at bletiecq@gmu.edu for more information. ■

Ethnic Minorities Section Update

Ani Yazedjian, ayazedj@ilstu.edu

It was great to see so many familiar faces at the annual conference in Vancouver. We had several engaging sessions and stimulating conversation throughout the conference. Thank you to all members who volunteered their time reviewing conference proposals and serving as facilitators and discussants for our various sessions. The success of our sessions depends in large part on your hard work prior to and during the conference.

In Vancouver, we had the unique opportunity to hear from Janice Abbott, the CEO of an award-winning local organization, the Atira Women's Resource Society. If you missed the presentation, an audio recording of the session will be posted on the NCFR website. We also kicked off our coffee mug fundraiser to provide conference travel support to one student and one new professional for next year's conference.

This year, the Section also recognized Dr. Adriana Umaña-Taylor, from Arizona State University, as the winner of the Marie F. Peters Award. The award recognizes an NCFR member who has made significant contributions to the area of ethnic minority families. Dr. Umaña-Taylor's research focuses on ethnic-racial identity formation, familial socialization processes, and culturally informed risk and protective factors among ethnic minority youth and their families. At the conference, she delivered a thought-provoking address entitled “Cultural Risks, Cultural Assets, and Developmental Considerations: An Examination of Latino Youth in the U.S.”

In closing, I want to thank this year's officers Shuntay McCoy (Students and



EM Section Officers: Roudi Roy, Ani Yazedjian (chair), Yolanda Mitchell, Shuntay McCoy, Jose Miguel Rodas

New Professionals), Yolanda Mitchell (Secretary/Treasurer), Jose Miguel Rodas (Students and New Professionals), and Roudi Nazarinia Roy (Chair-Elect) for all their hard work in ensuring such a successful conference. ■

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