

In this issue:

Effective Communication pages F1 – F24

The articles in Family Focus this issue concentrate on communication in families and relationships. A sampling of topics: couple communications and conflict styles; conflict resolution methods; teaching about sex and communication skills; family communications and building resilience; communicating with individuals with disabilities.

Upcoming issues...

Fall: **Conflict, Violence, and Family Risks** (2015 conference theme)

Winter: **The Best of Report**



Annual Conference 2015

Special Preconference Workshops – November 10

Plan your schedule and arrive early to participate in these Tuesday workshops. Advance registration required; fees apply.

MAXQDA – Hands-on training in this major qualitative research software application; led by Áine Humble; limited enrollment (full day).

Eradicating Sexual Violence on College Campuses: Putting Patriarchy in its Place. Offered by Feminism and Family Science Section (full day).

TCRM—Research works in progress are discussed and strengthened in this unique interactive format; sessions start Tuesday morning this year.

Media Training: Translating Family Science for the Public. Writing and interviewing skills, led by Stephanie Coontz; limited enrollment (special evening scheduling, 5-8:30 p.m.)

Congratulations to the 2015 NCFR elected officers

The following NCFR members were elected to serve in the following offices of the National Council on Family Relations beginning in November 2015.

Board President-Elect 2015–2017

Anisa M. Zvonkovic, Ph.D., Professor, Head, Department of Human Development, Virginia Tech University

Dr. Zvonkovic is an NCFR Fellow and has been an NCFR member for nearly 35 years. She has served on the editorial boards of all three NCFR journals and was chair of the most recent *Journal of Family Theory & Review* editor search committee. She was program chair for the 2008 NCFR Annual Conference and chair of the Theory Construction and Research Methodology workshop in 2005. She is a past chair of NCFR's Feminism and Family Studies Section, and she currently serves on NCFR's Future of Family Science Task Force.

“For nearly 35 years . . . NCFR has nurtured my own, my peers’, and my students’ professional careers and networks,” Dr. Zvonkovic wrote in her candidate statement. “I am eager to ensure that members, particularly students and new professionals, reap the same benefits.”

Board Member-at-Large 2015–2017

Jennifer L. Kerpelman, Ph.D., Associate Dean, College of Human Sciences, Auburn University

Dr. Kerpelman is an NCFR Fellow and has been a member of NCFR for more than 20 years. She has served on the editorial board and as associate editor of NCFR's *Family Relations* journal and on the nominating

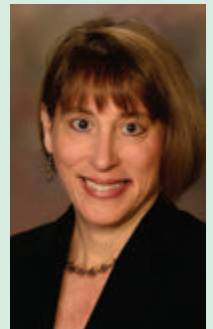
committees for two NCFR sections: (a) Research and Theory and (b) Feminism and Family Studies. She was an Alabama family policy volunteer for NCFR's Certified Family Life Educator program from 2006 to 2009 and was membership chair of the Family Council of North Carolina from 1995 to 1998.

“This organization makes a real difference in how well all of us study and serve families,” Dr. Kerpelman wrote in her candidate statement. “I will facilitate NCFR setting and reaching timely goals, support innovative activities . . . and help ensure we have effective leadership across all levels of the organization.”

Affiliate Councils President-Elect 2015–2017

Nathan R. Cottle, Ph.D. CFLE, Associate Professor of Family Studies, Utah Valley University

Dr. Cottle has been a member of NCFR for 15 years and a Certified Family Life Educator for 7 years. He is the current student affiliate adviser representative on NCFR's Affiliate Councils Board and the adviser of the Utah Valley University Council on Family Relations. He is a current board member of the Utah Council on Family Relations and a past board member of the Oklahoma and Texas councils. He was president of the Oklahoma Council on Family Relations in 2011–2012.



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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.

President: Paul Amato

Board Members: William D. Allen, Frank D. Fincham, Hilary Rose, Sandra Stith, Karen Seccombe, Rebecca Ward, Rachel Engler Jordan

Executive Director: Diane Cushman

Family Focus Managing Editor: Jennifer Crosswhite, Ph.D.

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, Jennifer Crosswhite, at jennifercrosswhite@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—March 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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officers continued from page 1

“The regional, state, and student affiliates of NCFR play a crucial role in extending the reach of NCFR, and promote real change in their local areas,” Dr. Cottle wrote in his candidate statement. “My goal is to support these affiliates in promoting their missions and the mission of NCFR as a whole.”

Students and New Professionals (SNP) Board Representative-Elect 2015–2016

Kimberly A. Crossman, doctoral student, University of Illinois

Ms. Crossman has been a member of NCFR since 2009. She has served as the SNP representative for NCFR’s Feminism and Family Studies Section and as a member of the SNP Leadership Council. She has received NCFR’s Cindy Winter Award and the Jessie Bernard Outstanding Proposal Award. For the Illinois Council on Family Relations, Ms. Crossman is Secretary and has served as Co-President, Conference Co-Chair, and on awards and recruitment committees. She has also held leadership positions in the University of Illinois Council on Family Relations.



“It will be my goal as SNP Board Representative to make all SNPs feel at home at NCFR,” Ms. Crossman wrote in her candidate statement. “Whether you are an engaged member or new to the organization, your voice will be heard.”

National Elections Council Members 2015–2018

Ramona Faith Oswald, Ph.D., Professor of Family Studies, University of Illinois
Curtis A. Fox, Ph.D., CFLE, Professor and Chair, Department of Counseling & Family Sciences, Loma Linda University

Fellows Committee Members 2015–2018

David H. Demo Ph.D., Associate Dean, School of Health & Human Sciences, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
B. Jan McCulloch Ph.D., Professor of Family Social Science, University of Minnesota
Laura Sanchez Ph.D., Professor of Sociology, Bowling Green State University

Inclusion and Diversity Committee

Sandra J. Bailey, Ph.D., Chair-Elect 2015–2016

Vanja Lazarevic Ph.D., Students and New Professionals Representative 2015–2017

Section Officers 2015–2017

Family Policy Section

Anne F. Farrell, Ph.D., Chair-Elect
Morgan Cooley Ph.D., Secretary/Treasurer
Kelly M. Roberts Ph.D., Students and New Professionals Representative

Feminism and Family Studies Section

Abbie E. Goldberg, Ph.D., Chair-Elect
Kevin Zimmerman Ph.D., Secretary/Treasurer
Erin Lavender-Stott, Students and New Professionals Representative
Andrea L. Roach, Students and New Professionals Representative

International Section

Mihaela Robila, Ph.D., Chair-Elect
Toni Hill, Ph.D., Secretary/Treasurer
Gizem Erdem, Students and New Professionals Representative

Religion and Family Life Section

Michael Goodman, Ph.D., Chair-Elect
Pamela B. Payne, Ph.D., Secretary/Treasurer
Ashlie Lester, Students and New Professionals Representative

Research and Theory Section

Christine Proulx, Ph.D., Chair-Elect
Beth S. Russell, Ph.D., Secretary/Treasurer
Kayla Anderson, Students and New Professionals Representative ■



Fellows nominations sought

Please consider putting forward names for NCFR Fellow status. Nominees must be NCFR members who have made outstanding contributions to the field.
See page 4.



Is marriage becoming passé?

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

Most people realize that marriage rates have declined in the United States during the last several decades. In fact, the share of adults who have never married is at a historic high. Part of this trend is due to a rise in the age at first marriage. But nonmarital cohabitation is common these days, and the percentage of children born outside of marriage has surged. These trends have led some observers to claim that marriage is becoming passé—an old-fashioned institution that is increasingly irrelevant to the lives of most people. The actual situation, however, is more complicated.

Consider the fact that the majority of Americans today, as in the past, see marriage as valuable and worthwhile. Attitude surveys reveal that most single people want to marry, and most would prefer to raise their children in a married-couple family. But if people generally hold positive views about marriage, then why are so many people avoiding it?

Part of the answer to this question involves the economy. Wages have eroded substantially in recent decades for individuals without a college education (especially men), and most of the decline in marriage has occurred among people without college degrees. Ethnographic studies reveal that many unwed parents would like to be married, but their precarious financial circumstances make matrimony seem out of reach. In contrast, among those with college degrees, salaries have remained high, marriage continues to be popular, and the great majority of children are born within marriage. Moreover, among college-educated couples, divorce rates are comparatively low, and most marriages last a lifetime. Clearly, the deterioration of economic opportunities for those without college degrees has played a major role in the decline of marriage.

But if this is true, then what about the Great Depression of the 1930s? Despite high levels of unemployment and widespread economic hardship at that time, cohabitation

was rare, most people married, and the great majority of children were born within marriage. If the economy is so important, then why did the Great Depression have such a modest effect on marriage?

The answer to this question lies in culture. Marriage remained strong during the Great Depression because, at the time, American culture simply did not allow for other options. Living together was shameful, as was having children outside of marriage. People were strongly motivated to avoid these stigmatized behaviors, and marriage was the only game in town, even for poor people. In contrast to the 1930s, alternatives



to marriage are more socially acceptable in the 2000s. Most people these days view living together as perfectly normal, and having children outside of marriage has lost most of its stigma. Although people continue to hold positive views of marriage, alternatives to marriage have become respectable.

The decline in marriage in recent decades, therefore, has been due to the loss of well-paying jobs among people without college degrees, combined with a culture that is more relaxed about alternatives to marriage. It is only when both conditions exist that marriage declines. Despite the fact that alternatives to marriage are readily available to

college graduates these days, most continue to marry, partly because it is their preferred option and partly because they have the economic resources and financial security to support a married lifestyle.

These considerations suggest that marriage is not passé or irrelevant to most Americans. Marriage is not for everyone, of course, and the fact that individuals who choose not to marry are no longer viewed as unfortunate or deviant has been a positive development. But although economic hardship has put marriage out of reach for many Americans, it remains the arrangement of choice for intimacy and childbearing for the majority of people who can afford it. Moreover, recent trends in the legalization of same-sex marriage have made it available to an even broader range of people.

Helping young people achieve the economic security that will allow them to marry, should they desire it, is a current policy challenge. Given the pervasive, deleterious effects of globalization and technological change on the labor market, this will not be easy. Ultimately, however, helping men and women without college degrees to find well-paying jobs is the strongest pro-family—and pro-marriage—policy that we can imagine for our times.

Although my short analysis is necessarily lacking in nuance, interested readers might like to look at two recent, informative, and thought-provoking books for more details. Both demonstrate how growing economic inequality in the United States (and other countries) is shaping people's options for intimacy, marriage, and child bearing.

Carbonne, J.J., & Cahn, N. (2014). *Marriage Markets: How Inequality Is Remaking the American Family*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Cherlin, A. J. (2014). *Labor's Love Lost: The Rise and Fall of the Working Class Family in America*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. ■

NCFR Fellows nominations

by Marilyn Coleman and Adriana Umaña-Taylor, Co-Chairs, NCFR Fellows Committee;
colemanma@missouri.edu; adriana.umana-taylor@asu.edu



Greetings, NCFR Members! The Fellows Committee is seeking nominations for the 2015 Fellows Awards. Would you please help us by nominating members who have made significant contributions to the organization and the field? A description of Fellow status in NCFR, the Fellows Award criteria for selection to Fellow status, and the procedure for submitting nominations follow. The Fellows Committee would greatly appreciate your assistance.

What Is Fellow status in NCFR?

Fellow status in NCFR is an honor awarded to relatively few living members of NCFR on the basis of their outstanding contributions to the field of family science. Nominations of all family professionals who have made contributions to the field are encouraged.

Among the recognized areas of contributions are scholarship; teaching; outreach; practice; and professional service, including service to NCFR. By definition, *outstanding contributions* are those that have had a broad impact on the field and are enduring over time.

What are the criteria for Fellow status?

A. Nominees for Fellow Status must have made outstanding contributions to the field. A combination of these criteria is required. Examples of outstanding contributions include the following:

1. Published, refereed scholarship that has shaped or reshaped the field of family relations.
2. A history of innovation in practice or outreach that has transformed the field, such as the development and

implementation of novel or significant interventions or programs designed to promote healthy family relations.

3. Recognition of teaching excellence through awards and mentoring.
4. The development and implementation of innovative curricula for training professionals in the area of family science.
5. The development and implementation of innovative social policy relevant to families.
6. A history of innovation and publication about the methods and measurement strategies used in related family science arenas.
7. Superior contributions to NCFR as an organization.

B. Nominees must have at least 10 years of professional experience after the receipt of the appropriate graduate or professional degree.

C. Nominees must have held NCFR membership continuously for the past 5 years at the time of nomination.

What is the procedure for nominations?

- A. Nominees must be nominated by another NCFR member.
- B. Nominees must have the endorsement of two additional individuals, one of whom must be an NCFR member, describing the outstanding nature of the nominee's contributions.
- C. In general, nominees should not be aware that they are being considered for Fellow Status. For this reason, the NCFR office will not contact candidates for Fellow Status at the time of their nominations.

For complete information, NCFR Fellow Status Policies and Procedures, a nomination form, and a sample letter of endorsement, visit <http://www.ncfr.org/awards/ncfr-fellow-status/how-become-ncfr-fellow>

Please send your nomination materials to jeannestrand@ncfr.org. The **deadline for nominations is September 15, 2015**. We are building this special recognition to further the legacy of outstanding members of NCFR. Let us hear from you, and thank you very much for your consideration. ■

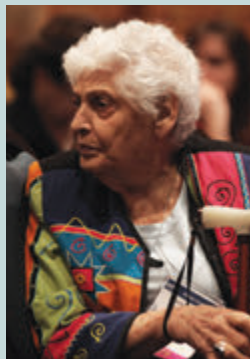
In memoriam

Marilyn Bensman, 89

Longtime NCFR member Marilyn Bensman, Ph.D., passed away on April 30, 2015, at age 89, in New York City.

Dr. Bensman began her service as NCFR's representative to the United Nations in 1992, and over the next 20-plus years took on the important work of keeping NCFR abreast of and involved in family-related issues on the international stage.

For additional detail, visit www.ncfr.org/news/memorial.



Richard Noble Hey, 96

Richard "Dick" Noble Hey, Ph.D., of Roseville, Minnesota, passed away on April 22, 2015, at age 96.

Dr. Hey was a past president of NCFR (1969-70) and the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy and professor emeritus at the University of Minnesota (Department of Family Social Science).

Among his many activities and accomplishments with NCFR, Dr. Hey also served as 1969 NCFR Annual Conference program chair; was awarded the Ernest G. Osborne award for excellence in teaching; and served as a Finance Committee co-chair in 1975-76.





Update from the executive director

Diane Cushman, Executive Director, dianecushman@ncfr.org

Raising your profile

Academic societies, like NCFR, can be quite effective at raising the professional profile of members. Winning a prestigious award, editing a top-tier journal, serving in a national office, speaking on an international stage, and becoming an NCFR Fellow are newsworthy events that provide opportunities for NCFR to promote you and your work.

In our continuing efforts to recognize members, NCFR has begun to issue media releases for NCFR members who author articles published in NCFR journals. Our first pilot was for “Sampling Richness and Qualitative Integrity: Challenges for Research with Families,” published in the *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Volume 77, Issue 1, February 2015. The authors were Kevin Roy, Anisa Zvonkovic, Abbie Goldberg, Elizabeth Sharp and Ralph LaRossa. The full-color media release was sent to university administrators and others and has the added benefit of being a concise one-page document that can be easily saved and inserted into the next update of your vita. These NCFR-produced media releases are in addition to those distributed by our journal publisher, Wiley Blackwell.

JMF in the news

Speaking of newsworthy, within the past couple of months, two *Journal of Marriage and Family* articles have garnered scores of mentions in the traditional news outlets and social media. “Does the Amount of Time Mothers Spend With Children or Adolescents Matter?” by Melissa Milkie, Kei No-

maguchi and Kathleen Denny (April 2015 issue), started its run with an article in *The Washington Post* and made its way through *The Telegraph*, NBC’s *The Today Show*, *Slate*, the *Evaluations* blog of *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, Pew Research Center’s *Fact Tank* blog, the *Los Angeles Times* (op-ed), *The Wall Street Journal*, the *Chicago Tribune*; Boston Public Radio; and many more smaller market outlets.

Then in June, the article “The Production of Inequality: The Gender Division of Labor Across the Transition to Parenthood,” by Jill Yavorsky, Claire Kamp Dush and Sarah Schoppe-Sullivan, was picked up by *The Washington Post*, *Time*, the *Taking Note* blog of *The New York Times*, *Science World Report*, *Education News*, *Tech Times*, *The Times of India*, and other sources.

High-quality research published in top-tier journals, effective titling of articles, well-crafted abstracts, strategic media relations, and perhaps our new online early article release have all contributed to getting your research into the mainstream of society. These results contribute to the fulfillment of one of NCFR’s main objectives – to support the dissemination and application of research- and theory-based information about the well-being of families by raising the visibility of family research, theory, and practice to policy makers and the general public.

Altmetrics

A relatively new feature on the journal websites attaches a score to articles based

on their “reach.” Inclusive of Twitter, blogs, mainstream media, cites, Facebook, and Mendeley readers, Altmetrics is an alternative to “citations only” as a method of evaluating the breadth and depth of an article’s impact. The Altmetrics Badge is a circular multi-colored graphic that contains the current score of the article and can be seen on the online article page just above the abstract. By clicking on each element of the score, one can access the details of each media placement. Check it out by logging in to ncfr.org as a member and selecting one of the three journals from the drop-down publications menu.

An added feature of Altmetrics is notification of media exposures. You can sign up to receive notification each time an article is mentioned in any of the media tracked by Altmetrics.

Election results and leadership in NCFR

Congratulations to all members who were candidates in the NCFR elections. (Election results are shared in this issue of *Report*.) If you were not elected this time, please know that there are many opportunities to lead in NCFR, both in elected and appointed positions and in other ways. There are numerous initiatives underway as well as opportunities to lead within Sections and Focus Groups. Initiatives include: increasing awareness of family science in high schools; developing a leadership program for NCFR members; including family life educators as qualified candidates for Head Start positions in Michigan; and setting standards for family science degree programs. Please contact us at info@ncfr.org if you have an interest in getting involved in NCFR initiatives and projects.

Vancouver in November

Planning continues for the 2015 NCFR conference. Make your plans to attend now and secure travel and hotel arrangements <https://www.ncfr.org/ncfr-2015>. The conference experience can transform you personally and professionally. I hope to see you in Vancouver!

Thank you, donors

Janet C. Benavente
Neil F. Buono
Marsha T. Carolan, CFLE
William Cohen
Teresa M. Cooney
Stephanie A. Falk
Frank D. Fincham
Tammy L. Henderson, CFLE

E. Jeffrey Hill, CFLE
Linda D. Ladd
Thomas H. McGloshen, CFLE
Susan M. McHale
Peggy S. Meszaros
Maresa J. Murray
Curt Newell
Willie Oliver, CFLE

B. Kay Pasley
Colleen M. Peterson
Kathleen W. Piercy
Ronald M. Sabatelli, CFLE
Jason Schuster
Ahlshia Shipley, CFLE
Rebecca J. Ward
Diana White



Family Life Education: The Practice of Family Science A new resource for family professionals

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

NCFR has been fortunate over the years to benefit from the generosity of members who willingly share their knowledge and expertise for the betterment of the field of family science. I've had the privilege of working with many NCFR members in the creation of multiple professional resources:

- *University and College Curriculum Guidelines*
- Three volumes of the *Family Life Education Teacher's Kit* (which I hope to resurrect someday soon via the Professional Resource Library)
- *Family Life Education Framework*
- *Tools for Ethical Thinking and Practice for Family Life Educators*

- *Pathways to Practice, a Family Life Education Internship and Practicum Handbook*
- *Careers in Family Science*
- *Family Life Education: Integrating Theory and Practice*
- Plus countless *CFLE Network* articles

These resources provide valuable information to support family professionals. None of these resources would exist without the dedication of the NCFR members who volunteered their time and knowledge toward their creation.

NCFR's newest publication, *Family Life Education: The Practice of Family Science*, is yet another collection of invaluable informa-

tion provided by multiple experts in the field. Editors

Michael Walcheski, Ph.D., CFLE, Concordia University, and **Jennifer Reinke, Ph.D., CFLE**, University of Wisconsin-Stout, have recruited experts from all areas of family science to provide an amazing resource. I have thoroughly enjoyed reading each and every chapter and am confident it will become a well-used and referenced publication for family life education professionals and students alike! **Following is a helpful description of this important publication, provided by the editors, Drs. Walcheski and Reinke. ■**



Certified Family Life Educators

The following is a list of Certified Family Life Educators designated between January 1, 2015 and March 31, 2015. Provisional unless otherwise noted.

Alabama

Kelsey E. Givner

California

Leslie Arreola-Hillenbrand
Jondelle Denise McGhee
Kaye McCormick Schneider

Florida

Jeffrey Hays
Wendy Shawn Loth

Georgia

Caroline Rebecca Tunkle

Illinois

Kelly Ann Lowy
Angela R. Wiley, FULL

Iowa

Kayla M. Redfearn

Kansas

Jessie Lee Gardiner
Kristina Michelle Garza
Mikayla Henderson
Kiley L. Herring
Jane Margaret Opsahl

Kentucky

Casey E. Simon

Louisiana

Joel Daugherty

Maryland

Amanda Jennings
Samantha Lynn Saraceno

Michigan

Lisa Ann Addy
Rebecca Lynn Anderson
Tamekka Bennett
Diane Castle
Jessica Marie Goddard
Marissa Kulig
Leann Elizabeth Littlejohn
Vera Middleton
Brenda L. Smith

Mississippi

Laqunda Moneika Stamps
Samarian H. Thomas

Missouri

Marissa Davine Burns
Dustin Dick
Kaitlyn Michele Rodee

North Carolina

Tiffany Sharees Jones
Erica Whitesock

Oklahoma

Carrie Egert

Pennsylvania

Rebecca Ann Loefflad

Rhode Island

Mitzie A. Johnson, FULL

Tennessee

Natalie Anne Cravens
Mollie Prindiville
Kelsey Cree Yarbrough

Texas

Samuel Bonus
Pamela J. Dunn
Daniel Korie
Anahi C. Martinez

Utah

Brianna Warnick Roberts
Wendee N. Wilkinson

Wisconsin

Jordyn Denzer

An Overview

Family Life Education: The Practice of Family Science

Over the past 30 years, many scholars, researchers, and practitioners have worked to define and refine the discipline of family science and the application of such to the profession of Family Life Education (FLE). Most recently, the journal *Family Relations* (Vol. 63, No. 3) included articles (Gavazzi, Wilson, Ganong, & Zvonkovic, 2014; Hamon & Smith, 2014; Hans, 2014) calling for a continuation of the work suggested at the 1985 National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) conference (Cushman, 2014). The practice of Family Science rests on a rich history of program development.

Clarifying the definition of Family Life Education has not been an easy endeavor. Consistently identified as a source of operationalizing Family Life Education (Darling & Cassidy, 2014; Duncan & Goddard, 2011; Hennon et al., 2013), Arcus et al. (1993) examined the practical and programmatic features of Family Life Education in the context of what is and what should

directions continued on page 8



Copyright: A brief introduction

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

According to the U.S. Constitution, Article 1, Section 8, clause 8,

The Congress shall have power . . . to promote the progress of science and useful arts, by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries.

The U.S. Constitution paved the path for the development of Title 17 of the U.S. Code as well as the U.S. Copyright Act of 1976 and each subsequent amendment that outlined what it means to be copyright protected, types of materials that are copyright protected, fair use, how copyright pertains to colleges and universities, and much more (U.S. Copyright Office, 2011). Copyright laws are very complex and can be difficult to understand. The following introductory information is meant to help us begin to understand copyright laws better so that we don't infringe upon the rights of copyright holders. The content covered in this article includes definitions, NCFR copyright assignment forms, and implications of sharing your research online. (Please note: The information provided in this article does not pertain to articles in the public domain or that have been published as open access.)

Definitions

According to Section 106 of the U.S. Copyright Act, *copyright* is a protection automatically extended by the government to the copyright holder that provides the exclusive right to reproduce, or copy, the materials; create derivatives of the materials; distribute copies of the materials; and publically display or perform the materials, including the public display of audio recordings through digital audio transmission (Copyright Clearance Center, 2011; U.S. Copyright Office, 2011, 2012). Copyrighted materials include materials in a written or recorded format.

The *copyright holder* is the owner of the copyright protected materials (U.S. Copyright Office, 2012). In some cases, but not all, the copyright holder is the author of the

materials. If the author signs a copyright release form, for example, that explicitly transfers the copyright to a third party, the author no longer holds the copyright to that material; the third party now has it. For example, many NCFR members write articles for publication in peer-reviewed journals such as the *Journal of Marriage and Family* (JMF), *Family Relations* (FR), or the *Journal of Family Theory & Review* (JFTR). In this instance, authors are asked to sign a Copyright Assignment Form relinquishing copyright ownership to NCFR.

The author of copyrighted materials also is not the copyright holder of materials if the materials were "works made for hire," in which case the employer is the copyright holder (Copyright Clearance Center, 2012). For example, although I am the author of this current article, NCFR is the copyright holder because the article is written as part of my employment. Another example of works made for hire includes commissioned work, such as an author being invited to write an article or brief for NCFR.

NCFR Copyright Assignment Form

As stated above, when an article is accepted for publication in one of NCFR's three journals, the author (or first author on behalf of all authors) is asked to sign the Copyright Assignment Form with the journal and Wiley-Blackwell, NCFR's publisher. This form explicitly outlines author rights prior to and after acceptance. For the purposes of educating readers about copyright as it pertains to NCFR, the following material outlines the author rights as they appear in the Copyright Assignment Forms for *JMF*, *FR*, and *JFTR*.

Prior to acceptance: We ask that as part of the publishing process you [the author(s)] acknowledge that the Article has been submitted to the Journal. You will not prejudice acceptance if you use the unpublished Article, in form and content as submitted for publication in

the Journal, in the following ways:

- sharing print or electronic copies of the Article with colleagues;
- posting an electronic version of the Article on your own personal website, on your employer's website/repository and on free public servers in your subject area.

After acceptance: Provided that you give appropriate acknowledgement to the Journal, National Council on Family Relations and Blackwell Publishing [Wiley-Blackwell], and full bibliographic reference for the Article when it is published, you may use the accepted version of the Article as originally submitted for publication in the Journal, and updated to include any amendments made after peer review, in the following ways:

- you may share print or electronic copies of the Article with colleagues;
- you may use all or part of the Article and abstract, without revision or modification, in personal compilations or other publications of your own work;
- you may use the Article within your employer's institution or company for educational or research purposes, including use in course packs;
- 12 months after publication you may post an electronic version of the Article on your own personal website, on your employer's website/repository and on free public servers in your subject area. Electronic versions of the accepted Article must include a link to the published version of the Article together with the following text: "The definitive version is available at www.blackwell-synergy.com."

Please note that you are not permitted to post the Blackwell Publish-

copyright continued on page 9

be Family Life Education. They arrived at these principles:

- Family Life Education is relevant to individuals and families throughout the lifespan.
- Family Life Education should be based on the needs of individuals and families.
- Family Life Education is a multidisciplinary area of study and multi-professional in its practice.
- Family Life Education programs are offered in many different settings.
- Family Life Education takes an educational rather than a therapeutic approach.
- Family Life Education should present and respect differing family values.
- Qualified educators are crucial to the successful realization of the goals of Family Life Education (pp. 15–20).

The sections and chapters of the present volume have been shaped by the description and principles of Family Life Education as we now have them.

Purpose

The primary purpose of *Family Life Education: The Practice of Family Science* is to meet readers at the intersection of family research and practice. The practice of Family Life Education is grounded in and sustained by Family Science. This foundation, Family Science, has a rich history extending back to the beginning of the previous century (Smart, 2009). NCFR has named *Family Science* as the identifying term for the discipline twice in the past 30 years (Cushman, 2014). During this time, NCFR has been diligent in advocating the sound dissemination of high-quality family research and its application to the practice of Family Life Education (Hennon et al., 2013). The NCFR Task Force on the Development of a Family Discipline identified Family Science as a field of study where “the primary goals are the discovery, verification and application of knowledge about the family” (1987, p. 49). The application of such knowledge is the framework (Bredehoft & Walcheski, 2011) by which Family Life Educators practice Family Science. Furthermore, the purpose of this book is to provide a reliable resource for the preparation of Family Life Educators and for the certifying CFLE exam. We are confident that the chapters herein will be a benefit for new and experienced family professionals.

Outline of the text

Three overarching themes informed the development of this book: (a) recogniz-

ing Family Science as the foundation for Family Life Education, (b) identifying the audience as the Family Science student and Family Life Education professional, and (c) and reflecting the prescriptive work of Family Life Education across the life span. As editors, we have organized this volume into three sections.

The chapters in Section I are organized around current themes in Family Life Education, such as the science and art of Family Life Education, opportunities and challenges in coparenting education, family life and technology, and strategies for designing online Family Life Education programs. This section chronicles the emerging trends in family life education, and includes updates and reprints of landmark articles that further the discussion of what comprises Family Life Education, such as the *Levels of Family Involvement Model: 20 Years Later* (Doherty & Lamson, 2015), *Reconceptualizing the Domains and Boundaries of Family Life Education* (Myers-Walls, Ballard, Darling, & Myers-Bowman, 2011), and *Family Coaching: An Emerging Family Science Field* (Allen & Huff, 2014).

Section II begins with an outline of the Family Life Education Content Areas: Content and Practice Guidelines. These guidelines should be referenced in the study of the following chapters as a guide in preparation for the CFLE Exam. Each chapter in this section focuses on one of the 10 Family Life Content Areas. Each presents the learning outcomes of the content area from the Framework for Family Life Education (Bredehoft & Walcheski, 2011) and the Practice component from the Family Life Education Content Areas: Content and Practice Guidelines (National Council on Family Relations, 2014). Chapter authors were asked to follow the same template; however, the uniqueness each author brought to the task produced distinctive results. As editors, we attempted to provide a sense of continuity without disturbing the distinct contribution of each author. Many of the content areas overlap and interact with each other. The chapters in this section encompass the following topics:

- The Practice components from the Family Life Education Content Areas: Content and Practice Guidelines.
- The specific Framework’s concepts and area outcomes.
- An introduction to the Content Area.



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- A discussion, intended for students and practitioners in the field of Family Life Education, integrating the Practice components from the Family Life Education Content Area guidelines and the Content Area outcomes from the Family Life Education Framework life span framework for the practice of Family Life Education. Authors were asked to provide visual tools and case studies to encourage the application of current themes and best practices in Family Life Education.
- References of works cited in the chapter.

Section III includes chapters for the development of Family Life Education teaching and practice for the profession and the professional. One of the strengths of this section is the brevity and applicability of the chapters, as authors offered specific and practical ideas of how to effectively practice Family Life Education. Chapter foci include topics such as marketing Family Life Education programs, preparing for the profession, developing a portfolio, using social media as a Family Life Educator, and principles for improving family programs. This section concludes with a postscript to the field of Family Science and the professional development of the Family Life Educator.

All authors were asked to provide discussion questions, annotated references, and key resources to accompany their chapter. Discussion questions use language that promote Bloom’s higher learning outcomes, while annotated references provide readers with the descriptions of a few important sources of information on the topic. Key resources include books, research articles, websites, films and media sources, and curriculum materials that support the work of the Family Life Educator. Annotated references and key resources will be accessible via the NCFR website.

Family Life Education: The Practice of Family Science continues the rich history of writing about work with families. For

directions continued on page 10

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Conclusion

In reading through this article, many questions are likely to arise: What about posting article PDFs in classroom management systems for online learning?, What about fair use?, What—I'm breaking copyright laws?,

How can I share my research to expand its impact?, What about open access?, and many more. These are excellent questions, and they will be answered in future articles that will expand on copyright and permission laws.

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Please note: I am not a lawyer; the information contained in this article is not meant to provide legal advice.

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Family Life Educators, it is necessary to question and discuss changing definitions, to review old and offer new approaches to program and delivery, to evaluate work and effectiveness with individuals and families across the life span, and to assess the relevancy of training programs. As members of a profession, Family Life Educators are consistently faced with pioneers who leave, the arrival of new explorers, and the ever-changing territory of work with families. It is imperative that we remain vigilant to the evolving nature of Family Life Education as described and explained in this volume.

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A successful writing life

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



In their first few years, more than two thirds of new assistant professors produce nothing in the way of journal articles, the kind of work that is most prominent in tenure and promotion reviews (Boice, 2000). This is a startling finding and one that commands attention. In my conversations with successful authors, both newly minted assistant professors and more established scholars, I have noted recurring themes that define productive writing practices across disciplines as well as practices that interfere with productivity. Success in writing derives from some very different approaches grounded in a few key principles.

Contrary to the common wisdom of popular writing textbooks, productive authors are diverse in their writing habits. They are consistent in regard to their persistence and interest in scholarship, but they organize

their writing in ways that are responsive to their personal preferences and social conditions. Regardless of personal preferences, writing occurs in a social context--an overly stimulating academe requiring an array of competing commitments that are often unsupportive of writing time, as well as a gendered relational context composed of family relations with partners, children, and elderly parents in which caregiving responsibilities largely fall on women. I may plan a writing session on Friday, but if my dean calls a meeting, my partner's car breaks down, one of my children is ill, or my mother falls and injures her hip, all bets are off. The array of unanticipated interruptions is a constant challenge, especially for those who write as part of a complex of professional obligations like teaching and service. Having a quiver of effective responses that help normalize writing time improves our chances of success. So, let's focus on what it means to *normalize writing time*.

every weekday from 8-10 a.m., seems like a feverish delusion. As parents of young children know, 8 a.m. is almost lunchtime. Now I write from 5-6:30 a.m. each weekday.

Paul's commitment to writing regularly continues unabated and is a consistent message throughout his book (Silvia, 2007). In interviews with productive faculty in the field of educational psychology, faculty consistently emphasized the need to *schedule writing time* as a regular entry in a weekly calendar, and many wrote daily (Mayrath, 2008).

Robert Boice, in his book *Advice for New Faculty Members* (2000), demonstrated how new faculty fail to learn to write with regularity and efficiently in graduate school, often writing in binge sessions to meet a particular deadline. The average time to write dissertations is a stunning 4 years after data collection. This doesn't suggest that routine weekly writing sessions were part of the mix, and it doesn't bode well for success in the academe. It also suggests some inefficient mentoring and a lack of institutional support.

Blocking writing time

New faculty shared the belief that writing is best done in large blocks of time, which may never come or come irregularly. This is an issue with which I, and many others, struggle most. Boice, Goodson, and Silvia all emphasized writing daily in whatever times are available, even 30-minute sessions. I've never done this and always thought it near impossible. I write regularly, but not daily. Mostly I write in scheduled writing sessions consisting of a single 4- to 6-hour session and a few shorter 2-hour slots per week, and I grab a stolen moment here and there. As I write this article, I am averaging a whopping 10 to 12 hours per week. Incidentally, I teach three classes most semesters, often chair a major committee for my college, and have spent the better part of my career as a journal editor. And just so you know: I rarely work weekends; I do work late a few evenings each week; and I have no children or

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Scheduling writing time

Write often and regularly

Productive writers share one common attribute: They write regularly. Scheduling writing sessions is among the most consistent recommendations for writers, and for good reason. Productive faculty report that scheduling regular writing sessions is among the most important strategies. The question is, just how often is *regular*? In her book *Becoming an Academic Writer* (2013), Patricia Goodson recommended scheduling daily writing sessions, if only for brief periods of time, for instance, 30 minutes per day. Paul Silvia, in *How to Write a Lot* (2007), recommended allotting time for writing each week, starting with about 4 hours at a minimum allocated over one or more days. Before he recently became a parent, Paul wrote for 2 hours each morning, Monday through Friday. Now, with two toddlers, some change in Paul's writing schedule has occurred, but the commitment to daily writing has not. He says:

I have two children now, so the writing schedule I described in the book, write

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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/



caregiving responsibilities for elderly family members. In all of this assemblage of work and personal life, I do privilege writing like I do teaching. I think you should, too.

Privilege writing time

I like writing, and I'm determined to write regularly, if not quickly, so I schedule time for writing each week. The only exceptions to this schedule are conferences when I am away from campus and advising week once each semester, which I enjoy thoroughly. I imagine there are some other exceptions, but none all that common or predictable. And to be honest, I occasionally take some time off when I'm fatigued or just needing some free time to wander. I think my colleagues do as well, but we don't talk about it. Persistence and commitment need not be rigid.

Boice (2000) described a group of new faculty who were productive early on in their careers. They learned to work in brief sessions daily. These quick starters worked efficiently and were mindful of their writing habits. They were rare birds: Thriving new faculty comprised about 3 to 5 percent of the total Boice interviewed. Their work habits were unique among their peers, but not especially unusual or unfamiliar.

In my own interviews, productive writers are rarely as consistent in their writing habits. They fall into several camps. Some write regularly when time permits during the week. They may not keep to a precise schedule because of unpredictable events (e.g., child care), but they still manage to complete some writing each week. Others prefer to write in intensive bursts or multiday sessions. A minority write in prescheduled sessions of a few hours duration each week, which is my typical schedule. Although most find brief sessions imperfect, they do so out of necessity because their schedules don't permit longer sessions. Preferences aside, they write when they can and do so with regularity.

Writing in the midst of family obligations

In order to better understand how my colleagues organize their writing and research time, I asked Heather Helms, a colleague at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and a very accomplished scholar, about her writing and whether she schedules time each week:

I know that is such good advice. Well, I try, and then children get ear infections. People get sick, and the dean calls you for a meeting, and you get put on a

committee. I do try to have a set number of hours in a week, 4 hours that I can dedicate to writing. I need chunks of time. An hour just doesn't work for me. It is just the way I write. It also means I don't publish at the same rate as people [who write more regularly and during prescheduled times]. The people who gave me that advice are just machines. They are also men and they also tend not to have children. [Laughs.] They also tend to have power that I don't have.

Heather prefers to schedule blocks of time for writing but, like many of her colleagues (and mine), she finds that children sometimes get unexpected illnesses, deans sometimes call meetings, and elderly parents sometimes have mishaps. These relational commitments and the unexpected attentions they require are paired with an overly stimulating academic environment. I can't remember a time in which I had nothing to do, for instance.

There is competition for our time and attention, and then there are family obligations that largely fall on women. As in all matters of work and home, gender rules, although there are exceptions. When I asked Bill Marsiglio from the University of Florida if he scheduled time for writing, he replied: "I have a 5-year old." Bill specializes in qualitative research on fathering, has published a variety of books on the topic, and fathering his young son is clearly important:

I write in spurts and it's not always predictable when they happen. If my son is here, I typically don't work while he is at home. I choose to spend time with him rather than writing. Sometime I'll have a block of time [for writing] but it is a day-to-day thing. Early in my career I could do whatever I wanted. In the last 5 years having a young son has really altered the way I organize my life and particularly my writing life.

Bill may not write as often or for such long sessions as he once did, but he does manage to continue writing with some regularity, in spurts, as he says, and if not daily then for several sessions each week. This may not be Bill's preference, but he finds stolen moments and writes when he can. His recent book on fathering with Kevin Roy (2012) attests to his continuing productivity.

The comments of Paul, Heather, and Bill also demonstrate how one's writing life varies over time. Although before these three

individuals became parents they were able to regularly schedule time for writing, parenting a young child altered the available time and the predictability of executing neatly organized schedules. In a similar fashion, as faculty move into senior positions over time, they become involved in faculty governance (chairing committees, departments, graduate programs), supervising graduate students, and an array of leadership positions in professional organizations all of which compete with writing time.

Managed writing time

Nonetheless, we still manage to meet with our classes. We don't *find* the time to teach; we meet our classes regularly, and all other activities, other than a family emergency, become secondary. In over three decades of teaching, I don't recall missing more than a class or two. I can't say that about writing sessions. I suppose if I were a parent my teaching record would not be as unblemished, but I'm sure you get the point. So, why is writing a secondary activity and one that occurs only when time permits? Regularity seems fleeting for most academic writers. Typical responses to my queries about scheduling writing time were consistent. It is viewed as impossible, or simply unworkable:

- "It doesn't work for me."—Harry Reis
- "No, I have tried to work that way. It has not worked thus far for me."—Sarah Schoppe-Sullivan
- "No, I don't. I write anytime. I often write throughout the day with lots of breaks."—Michael Johnson
- "These days I write whenever I find the time. A lot of scholars reach a point in their careers where they suddenly discover that all of their time is eaten up; it's a gradual thing: committees, students, [leadership positions in the American Sociological Association] and NCFR. If I get a free Saturday, I'll just go for it."—Paul Amato

Scheduling routine writing time is challenging for many, including those with very productive careers. There were exceptions. Rachelle Brunn-Bevel remarked:

Yes, well, I didn't always work this way. I would fall into scheduling everything else first, like teaching and meetings and then fit writing in between those things which was a problem because everything else had more pressing deadlines [and] writing would get pushed off. I definitely

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Advancing Family Science Section update



Robin Yaure, Section Chair, r2y@psu.edu

One of the most interesting things that I have learned in the short time that I have been the Advancing Family Science (AFS) Section Chair is how much work goes on behind the scenes to prepare the NCFR Annual Conference.

As you know, the conference proposal deadline was at the beginning of March. What you may not know is how much has been happening since then. Proposals were examined by Section Chairs and NCFR staff to make sure they had been submitted to the most appropriate section, were assigned reviewers, and were reviewed by up to three volunteer reviewers. Now the monumental

tasks of figuring out which proposals will fit best in different formats (posters, papers, symposia, workshops, paper symposia, special sessions), and then how they can be pieced together with presentations from the different sections, are being completed. It seems to me that the whole process is similar to putting together a gigantic jigsaw puzzle, with the goal being a cohesive and meaningful vision of the state-of-the-art research, practice, and pedagogy on family science.

I feel very fortunate to have a lot of help from the NCFR staff and the AFS board and other NCFR members to figure out what I am supposed to be doing as AFS Section

Chair to help put this great puzzle together. I feel lucky to have a preview of the great work that will be presented at the conference, and I am excited to see how all of this comes together.

In addition to the work being done on putting together the conference program, some of the initiatives that the AFS Section had identified to help reach the Section's goals, which were laid out at the November 2014 meeting in Baltimore, are also proceeding smoothly. I am constantly impressed by how willing people are to step up to help out when a call for volunteers is put out. The AFS Section is lucky to have these great volunteers:

Ethnic Minorities Section Report

Ani Yazedjian, EM Section Chair, ayazedj@ilstu.edu

As spring approaches, the Ethnic Minorities Section officers are excited about planning this year's Annual Conference in Vancouver and are exploring new ways to heighten a sense of engagement among Section members. Our Resource Exchange at the Baltimore conference was well received, and we are considering ways to further expand that opportunity and potentially collaborate with other sections. The examples we received at the conference are now posted on the Ethnic Minorities Section webpage.

We continue to brainstorm opportunities for expanding networking opportunities for our Students and New Professionals and invite suggestions from our members. We hope to develop a Section newsletter that will highlight the cutting-edge work in which our members are engaged. However, something is missing from these plans. That something is YOU!

A vibrant and effective Section is based largely on the contributions of its members. Therefore, as we move ahead in implementing these new initiatives, we invite you to take this journey with us. We need to hear about what you like and what's not that

helpful. And we need more people to serve in various capacities. There are so many opportunities to help make our Section even more successful. I know all of our inboxes are probably all too full; however, I ask you to take time to respond when you receive emails related to the Section. Our success depends on you!

One continuing opportunity involves the Marie F. Peters award that will be given out at this year's conference. The application deadline (May 1) has passed for this year, but keep this opportunity in mind for the future. The award was established for the purpose of recognizing distinguished scholars, researchers, and practitioners who have made significant contributions to the areas of ethnic minority families. We have so many accomplished scholars in our Section deserving of recognition: See <https://www.ncfr.org/sections/em/section-awards>

The continuing vibrancy of the Ethnic Minorities Section depends on the engagement of our members. We look forward to working on your behalf to ensure the ongoing success of our conference and the vibrancy of our Section. ■



Eboni Baugh, Assistant Professor from East Carolina University has started the AFS blog to help highlight topics and individuals important to the field of family science. You can see the blog at <https://www.ncfr.org/sections/fs/blog>. If you are interested in contributing a blog, feel free to contact Eboni.

Tonya Ricklefs, a doctoral student at Kansas State University, has stepped up to run the AFS Twitter account (@NCFRFamSci) and the Facebook group (NCFR Advancing Family Science Section). These are both active ways for the Section to reach out to its members. Be sure to sign up for one or both of these social media outlets.

Silvia Bartolic, an instructor from the University of British Columbia, and Lauri Etheridge, a doctoral candidate from the University of North Texas, have both offered to help with a resource exchange at the November conference. More information on the resource exchange will be forthcoming as plans for the conference come together.

What does all of this wonderful progress mean to the AFS Section and to me, in particular? It means that great things are on the horizon for the Conference and for the Section. The best type of project, in my mind, is one that is collaborative and feeds on the activity and excitement of many people. Both the Conference planning and Section activities are a result of the collaborative efforts of individuals who feel these are worthwhile endeavors and who want to share in the creativity and excitement that such work elicits. I am very glad to be a part of it, and I look forward to continuing to build opportunities for many to become involved. ■

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Children's Exposure to Family, Community and Political Conflict and Violence: Emotional Security Theory and Child Adjustment

E. Mark Cummings, Ph.D.,
University of Notre Dame



Daring to Make a Difference for DR Congo: Research, Theory, and the Critical Scholar-Activist

Lee Ann De Reus, Ph.D.,
Penn State University-Altoona



Resilience, adaptation, recovery (title pending)

Ann Masten, Ph.D., *University of Minnesota*



...plus

Treating Complex Trauma

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Bradley S. Craig. (2014). *Between Two Homes: A Coparenting Handbook*. BTH Publishing.

Carol A. Darling and Dawn Cassidy with Lane Powell. (2014). *Family Life Education: Working with Families Across The Lifespan*, Third Edition. Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc.

Charles Figley, Peter Huggard, and Charlotte Rees. (2013). *First Do No Self-Harm: Understanding and Promoting Physician Stress Resilience*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press

Kathleen M. Galvin, Dawn O. Braithwaite, and Carma L. Bylund. (2014). *Family Communication: Cohesion and Change* (Ninth Edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Thomas P. Gullotta, Robert W. Plant, and Melanie Evans (Eds.). (2014). *Handbook of Adolescent Behavioral Problems: Evidence-Based Approaches to Prevention and Treatment* (Second Edition). Springer.

Yvonne Gustafson and Kendra Hovey. (2014). *Tools for The Toddler Years: Parenting Support for the Time-Crunched, Always Interrupted, Mobile, Multi-Tasking Parents of Toddlers*. Your Parenting Matters.

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William Marsiglio and Kendra Siler-Marsiglio. (2015). *The Male Clock: A Futuristic Novel About a Fertility Crisis, Gender Politics, and Identity*. Sense Publishers.

Susan M. McHale, Paul Amato, and Alan Booth (eds.). (2013). *Emerging Methods in Family Research* (National Symposium on Family Issues). New York, NY: Springer.

Rowland Miller. (2014). *Intimate Partnerships* (Seventh Edition). McGraw-Hill Humanities/Social Sciences/Languages.

Judith Treas, Jacqueline Scott, and Martin Richards. (2014). *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to the Sociology Of Families* (Wiley Blackwell Companions to Sociology). Wiley Blackwell. ■

writing life continued from page 12

realized I needed to schedule a time for writing way in advance and have it on my calendar like a regular appointment so that I don’t schedule other things at that time or writing continually gets pushed back for what I perceive as more pressing deadlines.

Me: How long is a session?

Rachelle: It depends on the semester, but this semester I have scheduled three 2-hour blocks for myself on nonteaching days. So 2 hours on Monday morning, 2 on Friday morning, and then 2 hours on Wednesday afternoon. I’ve tried to use 4-hour blocks, and it can work sometimes, but I feel for a weekly schedule 4 hours is a lot to block out without interruption.

Rachelle quickly developed some productive habits that often appear in the recommendations of writing mentors: She makes writing a priority, establishes bounded writing times, manages distractions like email, and sets clear goals. Like many of the writers with whom I spoke, Rachelle is reflective about her own process. She knows what works for

her and why and arranges her writing sessions accordingly. All of the writers I spoke with were clear about their own preferences for writing and the conditions that were conducive of productivity. Some, like Rachelle, preferred sessions of a few hours, and others, like Heather, Paul, and Michael, preferred longer sessions of 4 hours or more. They are clear about their preferences, although they cannot always arrange for them and often have to accept less than their ideal conditions.

Among the many faculty whose careers Boice (2000) followed, writing was considered what new faculty did when they had time, when everything else was done. It’s a simple matter to put off writing, although you are not very likely to put off teaching. At times, I too confuse what’s important with what is merely urgent. I do try and respond to email queries and the like promptly, but I privilege writing, teaching, and little else with such consistency.

I have no precise recipe for having a successful writing life, in part because preferences vary and change over time, as do the

relational and professional contexts in which we work. Nonetheless, one the basis of my own experience and, more important, by observing the work habits of productive writers (and not-so-productive writers), there are some key ingredients to a successful writing life. Here I have covered the basics, a bit briefly but, I hope, convincingly. A successful writing life includes these five essentials:

Best writing practices

- Make writing a priority with the same regularity as teaching.
- Establish bounded daily or weekly writing times.
- Manage distractions like email, phones, and social media.
- Be adaptable. You may not find a preferred and long writing slot, but you will find briefer moments.
- Don’t confuse important with merely urgent.

There is one more issue, if you don’t mind: The key to a successful writing life is to write regularly, and to do that you need to show up, butt in chair. ■



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