

In this issue:

Cultural Sea Change and Families

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Article topics include...

- Changing nature of marriage
- Suicide and LGBTQ youth
- Muslim families facing discrimination and hate
- Parental leave in the U.S.
- Sibling relationships
- Black Parent–Child Relationships

...and more

Next issue:

Families and Obesity



NCFR 2016
78th Annual Conference
Minneapolis, Minnesota
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NCFR Fellows 2015



FRANCESCA
ADLER-BAEDER



STEPHEN GAVAZZI



RAMONA F. OSWALD



DONNA SOLLIE

The National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) has conferred its organization's prestigious Fellow status to four members.

Fellow status in NCFR is an honor awarded to members who have made outstanding and enduring contributions to the field of the family in the areas of scholarship, teaching, outreach or professional service, including service to NCFR.

Fellows are nominated by their peers and selected by the Fellows Committee. Members of the 2015 selection committee were: Marilyn Coleman and Adriana Umaña Taylor, co-chairs; Katherine Allen; Stephen Jorgensen; Francisco A. Villarruel; Karen Seccombe, board liaison; Jeanne Strand, staff liaison.

The 2015 Fellows are highlighted on pages 2 and 3. They will be recognized at the 2016 NCFR Annual Conference. ■

Kristi Williams named JMF editor

The NCFR Board of Directors has appointed Kristi Williams, Ph.D., of The Ohio State University as the new editor of the *Journal of Marriage and Family* (JMF), NCFR's flagship research journal. She will begin her four-year term as editor of the peer-reviewed journal, the leading research journal in the family field for more than 70 years, with the publication of its February 2017 issue.

"[Dr. Williams] is highly regarded in the sociological discipline and is clearly seen to be one of the stars of research on the family and health," wrote William R. Avison, Ph.D., in his nomination letter. "[She] also has a very keen sense of what the new currents of thought and investigation are within the field. Her own work is cutting edge, and I think she is extremely talented in identifying new directions in research that contribute to a journal's reputation."

Dr. Williams will succeed current JMF Editor R. Kelly Raley, Ph.D., of the University of Texas at Austin.

Dr. Williams has been an associate professor in Ohio State's Department of Sociology since 2008 and from 2002 to 2008 was an assistant professor in the department. She also is the department's director of undergraduate studies and is a senior scholar with the Council on Contemporary Families. Dr. Williams completed her undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degrees at the University of Texas at Austin.

In addition to publishing and presenting her scholarly work widely, Dr. Williams



KRISTI WILLIAMS

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Report

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.

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

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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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Fellows 2015

Francesca Adler- Baeder



Francesca Adler-Baeder, Ph.D., CFLE, is a professor and extension specialist in the Department of Human Development & Family Studies at Auburn University. She also is the director of the university's Center for Children, Youth, and Families, and she oversees the activities of the National Stepfamily Resource Center.

Dr. Adler-Baeder, a Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE), earned her bachelor's degree in communications from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke, and her master's and Ph.D. in human development/family studies from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She began her career as a research associate at Cornell University in 1999, where she was also an extension agent and family life education director.

Dr. Adler-Baeder is recognized as an NCFR Fellow for her exceptional record of grant procurement (well over \$20 million); her development, delivery, and evaluation of programs to enhance family relationships—especially her efforts targeting young parents, people of color, and low risk families—and her mentoring of future leaders in the field of family science.

She has coauthored more than 50 refereed publications and more than 100 professional paper and poster presentations. She also has received many awards from Auburn University, including the Excellence in Faculty Outreach Award and the Distinguished Diversity Researcher Award, as well as the state of Alabama's Strengthening Alabama Families Award.

Stephen Gavazzi



Stephen Gavazzi, Ph.D., is dean and director at Ohio State University at Mansfield.

Dr. Gavazzi earned his Ph.D. from the University of Connecticut's School of Family Studies; a master's degree in marriage and family therapy, also from the University of Connecticut; and his bachelor's degree in psychology from Pennsylvania State University. Since 1991, he has served Ohio State as a professor of family science in the Department of Human Development and Family Science, director of the Center for Family Research in the College of Education and Human Ecology, and in his current capacity.

An expert in the area of child and adolescent well-being in families, Dr. Gavazzi has combined his research and clinical practice to design positive interventions for children and families that are at risk for problem behaviors and psychopathology. He has developed several widely used programs for children and families, such as the Growing Up FAST Program as well as the Global Risk Assessment Device (GRAD).

Dr. Gavazzi also is highly regarded as a leader and advocate for the education of family science professionals and for initiating NCFR's Academic Administration and Leadership Focus Group.

In addition to his many family science and administration publications, Dr. Gavazzi has published influential books on families with adolescents. He is on the advisory board of the *Journal of Adolescentology* and has been an associate editor of NCFR's *Family Relations: Interdisciplinary Journal of Applied Family Studies*.

Fellows 2015

Ramona F. Oswald



Ramona Oswald, Ph.D., is professor and director of graduate studies, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

Dr. Oswald earned her bachelor's degree in studio arts from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, and her master's and Ph.D. in family social science from the University of Minnesota. She began her career in academia as an assistant professor in her current department at the University of Illinois in 1998.

Dr. Oswald's name is synonymous with innovative scholarship on LGBT families, and she is one of the most productive and recognized scholars in that area. Her transformative scholarship, excellence in teaching and mentoring, policy relevance, and contributions to NCFR, as one of her nominators wrote, make her truly deserving of Fellow status.

Dr. Oswald has made numerous contributions to NCFR through committee and member-group leadership roles and service on NCFR journal editorial boards and through guest editorships; she has received several NCFR awards and many others at her university and beyond. Her contributions extend to many organizations, groups, and publications outside NCFR. Dr. Oswald earns top ratings from students year after year and has earned a reputation as an outstanding mentor.

Donna Sollie



Donna Sollie, Ph.D., is Assistant Provost for Women's Initiatives, Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, Auburn University.

Dr. Sollie earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in sociology from Mississippi State University and the University of Kentucky, respectively, and her Ph.D. in family studies from the University of Tennessee. She began her career in academia as an assistant professor at Texas Tech University in 1979.

Dr. Sollie has a sustained record of research contributions in women and gender issues, social networks, and marital intimacy. Her coauthored book, *Gender, Families, and Close Relationships: Feminist Research Journeys*, provides a solid research-based text for college courses on gender issues and families. Her research has been published in many top-tier family and developmental research journals.

Dr. Sollie has received teaching awards at Texas Tech University and Auburn University. Her innovative approach to teaching includes an experiential model in which college students mentor middle school adolescent females so they can learn the dynamics of human development. She also assumed leadership in developing the doctoral program in Human Development & Family Studies at Auburn University.

Dr. Sollie's service to the family science community includes sustained involvement with NCFR, where she has held several committee and member-group leadership positions and introduced many new members to the organization. Her service to the profession extends to many other organizations.

On the Bookshelf

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



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

- David Knox and Caroline Schacht (2015). *Choices in Relationships: An Introduction to Marriage and the Family*. Wadsworth Publishing.
- David Knox (2015). *M&F3*. Wadsworth Publishing.
- Giovanna Ganesini (2015). *Resilience as a Relational Construct*. Edizioni Accademiche Italiane.
- Sara E. Langworthy (2015). *Bridging the Relationship Gap: Connecting with Children Facing Adversity*. Redleaf Press.
- Jen Goncalves (2015). *What Good is a Fly? God's Creation, Self-Esteem, Purpose, Rhyme, Animals* (children's book). CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.
- Carol J. Bruess (ed.) (2015). *Family Communication in the Age of Digital and Social Media*. Peter Lang Publishing Inc.
- Eli R. Green and Luca Maurer (2015). *The Teaching Transgender Toolkit: A Facilitator's Guide to Increasing Knowledge, Reducing Prejudice & Building Skills*.
- James J. Ponzetti, Jr. (ed.) (2015). *Evidence-based Approaches to Relationship and Marriage Education*. Routledge.
- James J. Ponzetti, Jr. (ed.) (2015). *Evidence-based Approaches to Sexuality Education: A Global Perspective*. Routledge.
- James J. Ponzetti, Jr. (ed.) (2015). *Evidence-based Approaches to Parenting Education: A Global Perspective*. Routledge.
- Stephen M. Gavazzi (2015). *The Optimal Town-Gown Marriage: Taking Campus-Community Outreach and Engagement to the Next Level*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.
- Fumie Kumagai and Masako Ishii-Kuntz. (2016). *Family Violence in Japan: A Life Course Perspective*. Springer.



President's letter

William D. Allen, Ph.D., LMFT, NCFR President, ballen@umn.edu

I'm writing this article on the day we celebrate the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday, and have been thinking about what Dr. King used to refer to as the "beloved community." In using that phrase he was not limiting himself to the civil rights struggles of the day. He envisioned a hypothetical community of diverse interests guided by a unifying set of goals and values. He made a point of basing this community on so-called "agape" love; love that supported and honored all people—not just the oppressed, but also the oppressors; not just our friends, but those we perceive to be our enemies. In his view, the community could not be built by "discriminating between worthy and unworthy people." It could only spring from the mutual embrace of our shared humanity. It was, and continues to be a bold but elusive concept.

Like many of you, I consider NCFR to be my professional home. It is the organization that best represents my interests in families of all kinds, and I feel the members share my passion for supporting family relationships. I often think that my ideal for NCFR

...we still have so much more to learn as families continue to evolve.

is that it be a "beloved community," where our diverse professional and personal backgrounds come together in a multidisciplinary forum committed to the mission of family research, education, and practice.

Of course, we don't always live up to our ideals. Part of the problem we face in doing

so is that we swim in a sea of discontent. All around us are pressures to disagree with each other, use our differences as the basis for demonizing each other and, at worst, dehumanizing each other. And the problem is not confined to any one nation, generation, gender, socioeconomic class, or any other conceivable demographic that I can think of. The temptation to factionalize affects families, communities and, yes, even organizations like NCFR.

Those of us who care deeply about families know a lot about what makes them work and how to support them, but we still have so much more to learn as families continue to evolve. No single family scientist or group of scientists has the corner on what is right for all families. No single method or approach to understanding families is universally effective in clarifying the lives or the needs of all families. No single family experience has greater or lesser intrinsic value than any other. All of this should be self-evident given the astonishing variety of family experiences.

At the community of faith that I happen to belong to, we often close together with the saying "Take a look at the people around you; you are going to need these people on your journey." It always reminds me that whatever differences I may think I have with the other members, *we share much more that binds us together*. That is the beloved community that Dr. King was encouraging us to build and maintain, and the kind of organization I hope NCFR can become for all its members—a place where we can disagree about means, methods, or even priorities but stay united in mutual support of our goals. That may not be easy to do at times, and given the current sociopolitical climate it may feel hopelessly naïve if not impossible. But that, my friends, is what I believe we must do. Family science and the families we are committed to serving are depending on it.

Stay well,
Bill Allen

editor continued from page 1

has been a deputy editor of *Society and Mental Health* and an associate editor of *Demography* since 2013. She served two terms as an associate editor of the *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* and was on the editorial board of the *Encyclopedia of Quality of Life Research*.

"Dr. Williams will bring tremendous energy to the work of JMF editor," wrote NCFR's

journal editor search committee. "In addition, we sensed that the energy would be directed toward some potentially valuable innovation for the journal. . . . She discussed with us some concrete plans to increase the public visibility of the journal and translate the research of the journal for a wider audience" while also "maintaining the journal's scientific merit and objectivity." ■

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



Updates and insights: NCFR journals, Fellows

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

Congratulations to Dr. Kristi Williams, the newly named incoming editor of the *Journal of Marriage and Family* (JMF). Dr. Williams was recommended by the NCFR board-appointed search committee (Alan J. Hawkins, Marilyn Coleman, Daphne Hernandez, David R. Johnson, and Kei Nomaguchi) and approved by the Board of Directors in December 2015. Dr. Williams is an associate professor in the Department of Sociology at The Ohio State University. She will succeed Dr. R. Kelly Raley, who will remain editor of record through December 2016.

How NCFR journal editors are selected

You might wonder how NCFR journal editors are selected. The process begins two years in advance of the current editor's last journal issue. The NCFR board identifies members to serve on the editor search committee. This ad hoc committee meets by conference call over a period of months to identify and recruit candidates. Qualified candidates who have completed the application process, including letters of support from their academic institution, are interviewed at the NCFR annual conference. Upon completing the interviews, the search committee meets a final time to review the applicants and make their selection. Shortly after the conference concludes, the board convenes a special meeting for the purpose of receiving the recommendation from the search committee.

To ensure ongoing communication between the board and the editor search committee, the board assigns a liaison to the committee. Communication flows between the board members and the search committee through this liaison and through Jeanne Strand to the staff with regard to operational questions.

Editorial office transitions

Once the board has selected an editor, the NCFR staff organization begins the work of drafting a contract and setting up and equipping the new editorial office. One year before the official change of editors, the new

editorial office begins to accept new submissions while the current editorial office continues to work on existing manuscripts through revisions and resubmissions. When all goes well the process is seamless, and while operating two editorial offices in the same calendar year we accomplish a smooth transition. Dr. Williams and her editorial assistant have already visited the University of Texas JMF office in Austin and received training from Dr. Raley and her editorial assistants. The Ohio State University office of JMF began accepting new submissions on February 1, 2016.

Journal editor terms are typically five years in length, including the first year, which is referred to as the *transition year*. During this first year the new editorial office is collecting manuscripts for their first volume, which commences at the beginning of the next calendar year, and the existing editorial office is publishing their final volume.

Journals and "Early View"

A relatively new feature for NCFR journals, Early View, has created an interesting situation in which the new editorial office may publish articles online before the current editorial office publishes their final issue. Early View allows for completed manuscripts to be published online (only) as soon

as they are copyedited and typeset for publication by Wiley-Blackwell, our publisher. These articles are not part of an issue or volume yet but can be seen online and cited by researchers before the hard copy issue has been printed. In some cases, this allows for several months of additional exposure before the print issue is published. Notice of these Early View articles is sent via email to all NCFR members who purchase journals as part of their membership.

You might wonder how these Early View articles can be cited if they are not yet part of a printed issue and have no issue or volume number and no page numbers. Every article slated for publication is assigned a unique code called a *Digital Object Identifier* (DOI). When the article is first posted online, the DOI is used in place of the volume, issue, and page numbers for identification and citation purposes. The unique DOI remains with that article in perpetuity.

Congratulations to the 2015 class of NCFR Fellows

The NCFR board has named four Fellows to the Class of 2015: Francesca Adler-Baeder, Stephen Gavazzi, Ramona F. Oswald, and Donna Sollie. Additional information about these accomplished family scholars is

executive review continued on page 10

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>.

Tawni Basden
Patricia Bell-Scott
Robyn L. Cenizal, CFLE
William Cohen
Krsnanandini Devi Dasi, CFLE
Albert J. Davis, Ph.D., Retired
David H. Demo

Cynthia Marston Figueiredo, CFLE, CFCS
Lawrence H. Ganong
Michael C. Gottlieb
Jennifer (Jenn) Greiving
Ralph LaRossa
Janel Leone
Tahera Mamdani
Jay A. Mancini

Colleen I. Murray
Emily Schulz
Michael Sporakowski, CFLE
Julie A. Zaloudek
The Meeting Connection, Inc.; Dwight Loken, President
Anonymous

Inclusion and Diversity Committee Report

Anthony James, Kate Kuvalanka, Christi McGeorge, and Sandra Bailey.¹

The Inclusion and Diversity Committee (IDC) is a board committee consisting of nationally elected NCFR members. As we discuss our goals for the upcoming year, we will be reflecting on our 2015 activities, including our sessions at the annual conference in Vancouver. We will also be working with the NCFR Board of Directors to reassess our mission and role within the organization to ensure that the IDC is best utilized within the organization. In the following paragraphs we discuss these items in further detail.

Black Lives Matter, Black Families Matter

In a time in which a non-indictment for two police officers who have killed an unarmed black child is business as usual, we mourn for Tamir, and for all of the black people who have been killed by the police without justice. In our view, this process demonstrates that race is still an extremely troubling and serious problem in our country and the criminal-justice system.

—The family of Tamir Rice (<http://www.cnn.com/2015/12/28/us/tamir-rice-shooting/>)

In late 2014, following several high profile incidents, the IDC decided to write about the contentious relationship between law enforcement professionals and Black American communities; more specifically, we also called for dialogue within NCFR about how such incidents influence members' work as family educators, researchers, and practitioners. An article on this topic was published in the spring 2015 issue of *NCFR Report* (https://www.ncfr.org/sites/default/files/downloads/news/ncfr_report_spring_2015_final.pdf).

After publication of this article, several more fatal incidents involving police officers and Black Americans occurred. Thus, the IDC, in conjunction with the Students and New Professionals, and sponsored by eight other sections, organized a social justice panel at the 2015 NCFR annual conference, titled: "Social Justice Strategies of Family Researchers and Professionals in the Age of Ferguson" (an audio recording of this panel can be found at [https://www.ncfr.org/ncfr-2015/wednesday/snpidc-panel-social-](https://www.ncfr.org/ncfr-2015/wednesday/snpidc-panel-social-justice-strategies-family-researchers-and-professionals-age-)

[justice-strategies-family-researchers-and-professionals-age-](https://www.ncfr.org/ncfr-2015/wednesday/snpidc-panel-social-justice-strategies-family-researchers-and-professionals-age-)).

Anthony James served as panel moderator. The panelists—Bill Allen, Curtis Fox, Antoinette Lander, and Bethany Letiecq—spoke to the packed room of almost 100 attendees about how their work—as family educators, researchers, practitioners, and advocates—has been affected by such incidents of institutionalized racism and how they continue to work for social justice in their communities. A goal of the panel was to provide an opportunity for NCFR members to collectively contemplate these critical issues as municipalities across the nation try to develop policies to address issues of systemic racism and social injustice. The very positive feedback from panel attendees included the following quote: "This was a great session that touched on the complexities of being a researcher and/or social justice advocate in the age of Ferguson. The panel did a great job of addressing the issue involving this and what next steps academia can make moving forward."

As the IDC outlines its next steps for the coming year and considers how to continue such conversations, we will be considering NCFR member feedback to our 2015 conference sessions as well as ongoing member feedback. Please share your ideas, concerns, and suggestions via the IDC webform at <https://www.ncfr.org/idc-webform>.

At the time this piece is going to press, the IDC is intending to organize another social-justice-oriented session focused on issues raised by the Black Lives Matter movement, delving more deeply into how families and our work as family scholars and professionals are influenced by race and racism. For example, of great interest is how parents

talk to their children about issues of race and racism. Our hope is that session attendees will walk away with tangible strategies and resources to implement in their work.

Moving forward: contemplating the role and mission of the IDC

In the midst of this conversation about race and racism, we at NCFR are thinking through our own issues regarding diversity, inclusion, and social justice, and how the IDC can help facilitate this process. In the coming year, the IDC will consider the points raised in the "Call for Action" letter (https://www.ncfr.org/sites/default/files/downloads/news/ncfr_-_a_call_for_action_10_11_2015.pdf) signed by several NCFR members. This letter raised concerns about how NCFR and the IDC are defining and acting on the term *inclusion* and thus about the mission and utilization of the IDC.

The IDC members applaud the NCFR Board of Directors for their initial step of a timely response to letter signers and for their memo to the entire NCFR membership on December 14, 2015. We in the IDC look forward to working with the NCFR board to ensure that the IDC is better—and best—utilized to help move NCFR forward as the premier family organization committed to the strengthening of all families. We hope to move into a more consultative role within the organization. As always, we welcome your input (<https://www.ncfr.org/idc-webform>) as we discuss the changing nature of our work. Also, be on the lookout for future communications from us as we keep you informed of our activities.

¹Additional committee members are Soyoung Lee (chair), Ruben Viramontez Anguiano, Shann Hwa (Abraham) Hwang, Vanja Lazarevic, and Jennifer Kerpelman (board liaison).



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



Spreading the word about family life education

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

One of the best approaches would be to use those of us already working with Head Start to share information about family life education and CFLE with our local programs. ... I would imagine (and hope) the organization I work for would respond better if it were coming from someone they know. They might consider looking more at CFLEs when hiring as well as obtaining certifications for existing staff and using more of an overall FLE approach.

—A Provisional CFLE

This quote comes from a recent conversation with CFLEs involved in Head Start. I had just attended the Head Start Parent Engagement Conference and was seeking input as to how NCFR could expand the role that CFLEs could play in Head Start and Early Head Start settings, especially as it relates to home visiting.

Over the past few years I have shared information in this column about efforts on the part of CFLEs such as John Machir (<http://bit.ly/InSBsJZ>) and Justin Petkus (<http://bit.ly/IPFsUAm>), both of whom saw the wisdom of incorporating family life education and Certified Family Life Educators into the practice of home visiting. Efforts like theirs are critically important to helping increase awareness and value of the CFLE credential.

We know, based on the CFLE Employer Assessment and Verification forms used to document CFLE work experience, that employers typically rate CFLEs very high in knowledge of the content areas and in the traits, skills, and abilities identified as needed for family life education. However, it can be a struggle for CFLEs to initially get their foot in the door for an interview or to identify employment positions that use the skills of a family life educator.

We need to make it easier for family professionals to spread the word about family science and family life education. Toward this end, NCFR has been working to increase

awareness and understanding of family science as a discipline, which in turn has implications for family life education, (sometimes referred to as the *practice* of family science). Please check out the “We Are Family Science” website (<http://family.science/>). It was designed to help employers, potential and current family science students, parents of these students, and legislators see the value of the discipline and practice of family science. This site is a work in progress, and we welcome your thoughts and suggestions on how it can be best used and improved.

NCFR is also currently working on the creation of printed and online materials that can be used to promote family life education and the CFLE credential. We are updating the “Village on the River” PowerPoint presentation, creating talking points, and producing a new CFLE brochure, and we are hoping to create an infographic about family life education. We

directions continued on page 8



Certified Family Life Educators

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

UNITED STATES

Alabama

Anna Victoria Montgomery

Arizona

Daniel H. Erickson FULL

California

Yesenia Guerra
Jaime A. Heras
Jewel M. Mitchell FULL
Ashley B. Shober

Connecticut

Kaitlin M. Hill
Kathryn Cynthia Philpott

Florida

Caitlin Jenna Hunter

Georgia

Tanisha Corporal FULL
Patrician Herrin FULL
Allison Joy Morris

Idaho

Sara E. Ramos

Illinois

Susan Marie Mitchell
Cristina Prestin-Latham FULL

Indiana

Jonathon J. Beckmeyer
Laura E. Miller FULL

Kansas

Clarissa A. Sents

Louisiana

Lauren Ashley Clayborn
Kelli Nichols

Maryland

Mackenzie Barnes
Elise Fronden
Amanda Michelle Gangi

Michigan

Madison Mackenzie Arendt
Timothy Aaron Grimm
Gary W. Hawkins
Andrea Lynch
Alexandra MacDiarmid
Justin W. Peer FULL
Senita Monique Reynolds
Clare Elise Robertson
Alexander M. Smith
Latieca Williams

Mississippi

Jaime D. Baas

Missouri

Kayla J. Hower
Taylor Anne Lauer

Nebraska

Heather Kennedy FULL

New Hampshire

Breanna Brann

North Carolina

Morgan Fergus

Ohio

Laura Butsch
Amberlyn Rhodes
Gregory Vincent Southard

Oklahoma

Miranda Earnest

Pennsylvania

Melissa Calderon

Tennessee

Ciana D. Calhoun

Texas

Haley Dansby
Totundra Grays FULL
Leslie Frankel FULL
Erica Florence Jordan FULL
Tameka Simone Riley FULL
Yurmea Park

Utah

Cailie Alexa Cissna

Virginia

Melissa G. Sparks

Wyoming

Karilynn Crowell

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British Columbia

Todd F. Martin FULL

Manitoba

Stephanie Yamniuk

Nova Scotia

Kelly-Lynn M. Russell-Iseonor



Scholarly content for use in your classroom

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

I love education—educating students at the university level, families in the community, and NCFR members—especially as the education relates to family science topics. I view the work I do at NCFR through an educational lens: *How is what I'm doing educating someone?* My *Report* articles are one example of providing education (e.g., providing tips on how to work with legislators [ncfr.org/ncfr-report/current-issue/family-science-report-tips-working-legislators]).

Another example of providing education is through the expanding library of content available for individual and classroom use (e.g., webinars, video lectures, video-recorded conference sessions). Whether the intended audience is students, new professionals, professors, or practitioners, the goal of the content is to educate NCFR members.

The intended audience doesn't stop at NCFR members, though. Webinars, video lectures, and conference recordings are now used in the university setting to educate undergraduate and graduate students. The purpose of this article is to share with you NCFR's emerging resources available to use in traditional and online undergraduate and graduate courses.

Webinars

Currently, there are four categories of webinar topics: (1) Family Life Education Practice webinars, geared toward enhancing

the skills of family life educators; (2) Family Science Research Updates, aimed at providing research updates; (3) Research Methodology and Statistics webinars, developed to enhance research methodology and statistical expertise for individuals engaged in research; and (4) Family Policy webinars, meant to educate those interested in family policy how to engage in the policy process. NCFR originally began offering webinars to educate individual NCFR members. As NCFR's webinar library grows, however, so too do the intent and use of the materials.

More and more professors are using webinars in undergraduate and graduate courses. The Research Methodology and Statistics webinars (ncfr.org/professional-resources/archived-webinars) are the most popular webinars purchased for classroom use. In the following paragraph, Cassandra Dorius, Ph.D., provides a creative example of how she used the "Missing Values, SEM, & Growth Curves Using STATA: A Four-Part Statistics Webinar Series," by Alan Acock, Ph.D., in the classroom to enhance graduate student learning:

The Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) department at Iowa State created a one-credit *Stata Short Course* corresponding with Dr. Acock's four-part webinar. The course was co-organized and taught by myself and Brenda Lohman over six weeks. The first week was an introduction to Stata, including an overview of frequently used commands. The next four weeks covered the webinar content as presented by Dr. Acock including working with missing values when running regression models (week 2); working with missing values when running path models focusing on mediation models (week 3); estimating full structural equation models (week 4); and estimating and interpreting latent growth curve models (week 5). The final session, week 6, was an open lab time where students and faculty brought their own data and questions for assistance from HDFS faculty members who use Sta-

ta. The class was graded as Pass/Fail with no homework assignments. Students had to attend five sessions to receive a passing grade. To improve learning throughout the course, the webinars were watched as asynchronous stopping the presentation whenever students had questions, or to allow people to catch up when content was more complex. The course was well attended by faculty and graduate students alike (24 students, 5 faculty). It was the first time our department built a class around a national curriculum or webinar series, and the response was overwhelmingly positive.

In addition to the research methodology and statistics webinars, several Family Life Education Practice webinars are used in the classroom, including the following:

- "The Domains of Family Practice Model: Differentiating the Roles of Family Professionals," with Karen Myers-Bowman, Ph.D.; Sharon Ballard, Ph.D.; Judith Myers-Walls, Ph.D.; and Carol Darling, Ph.D.
- "Improving Family Programs Using Evidence-Based Principles," with Stephen Small, Ph.D.
- "Helping Families Learn to Live with Ambiguous Loss," with Pauline Boss, Ph.D.
- "Cross-Cultural Competence in Family Science," with William Allen, Ph.D.

We've also seen an increase in policy-related webinars being used in the classroom.

Please visit the NCFR website for more information on all upcoming (ncfr.org/events/upcoming-ncfr-webinars) and archived (ncfr.org/professional-resources/archived-webinars) webinar topics and purchase prices. You may also contact Dawn Cassidy (dawncassidy@ncfr.org) or me (jennifercrosswhite@ncfr.org) if you are interested in a specific webinar topic or in presenting a webinar. Presenting a webinar is a great way to get your name and research out to others and to expand the impact of your research.

scholarly content continued on page 9

directions continued from page 7

will also be looking for CFLEs who are willing to make a short video about the work that they do and to share stories of the impact they have made.

As the opening quote to this article implies, the individuals working in the field are best suited to champion the cause. NCFR can provide resources to support these efforts. If you have ideas about how NCFR can help you spread the word and/or you want to be involved in the creation of some of the materials described above, please contact me at dawncassidy@ncfr.org. ■

Video lecture series

New to the expanding library of content available for individual and classroom use is the Helen LeBaron Hilton Endowed Chair Video Lecture Series, “Envisioning the Future of Healthy Families by Crossing Disciplinary Boundaries,” sponsored by Iowa State University College of Human Sciences, Department of Human Development and Family Studies.

This multidisciplinary video lecture series includes nine presentations by exemplary scholars who bring together insights on the future of healthy families. Themes covered across the presentations include: What elements define a healthy family? What do we know currently about healthy families? What do we need to know in the future? How do you approach this conversation, not only from your own discipline and primary research program but also from a cross-disciplinary perspective? What are the most pressing policy issues for the future of healthy families?

Dr. Dorius provides her insights on the lecture series in the following two paragraphs:

Our department was awarded funding from the Helen LeBaron Hilton Endowment to showcase speakers in 2015–16 to reflect on “The Future of Healthy Families” from a multidisciplinary perspective. The endowment was named after Dr. Helen LeBaron Hilton, who was an innovator, a forerunner, and a broad thinker. The speakers of this series carry on that vision in their own discussion of where family scholarship has been and where it is going over the next several decades. Visiting luminaries include Ross Parke, Ph.D., (chair); Velma McBride Murry, Ph.D.; Stephen Russell, Ph.D.; Frank Furstenberg, Ph.D.; Greg Duncan, Ph.D.; Kathryn Edin, Ph.D.; Ronald Dahl, M.D.; Carolyn Cowan, Ph.D.; Philip Cowan, Ph.D.; and Deb Cassidy, Ph.D. By the time you read this, most speakers will have already lectured in our department and will be preparing for the final live culminating event on April 20, 2016. All lectures and the culminating event will be available online from NCFR (ncfr.org/events/upcoming-ncfr-webinars/envisioning-future-healthy-families-crossing-disciplinary-boundaries). The content also will be published in a special issue of *Family Relations*.

As part of this project, a one-credit course corresponding with the lectures was cre-

ated (Dorius and Schofield instructors; 26 graduate students). Students explored the materials and developed questions for the visitors. This was such an exciting opportunity for our students and faculty that we want to share these resources with the rest of our NCFR community. In addition to making the lectures available as video presentations, I’m working with a graduate student, Brianna Routh, to provide instructor resources, suggested readings, and discussion questions that correspond with the lecture series for use by other instructors in their own courses on this topic. To my knowledge, the sharing of a course is another new avenue for NCFR’s expanding library of classroom content. The content of this lecture series is foundational to what we think about as family scholars, and I can think of no better place for these resources to be housed than at the premier family organization in America.



Most of the videos are available now (ncfr.org/events/upcoming-ncfr-webinars/envisioning-future-healthy-families-crossing-disciplinary-boundaries) for purchase as a single presentation or as a package for use in the classroom. The culminating live event is scheduled for April 20, 2016. More information on the video lecture presentation course materials will be provided when available.

Video-recorded conference sessions

A final classroom resource now available is the video recordings of selected NCFR conference sessions. Since 2008, NCFR has recorded and curated sessions from each conference (learning.ncfr.org/). These recorded conference sessions are great for professional development and are free for individual member use online one year after the original conference date. The 2015 video sessions are available free to those who attended the conference in Vancouver or purchased the NCFR conference online. The recorded sessions remain available for purchase (ncfr.org/ncfr-2015/registration-details/attend-ncfr-conference-online) for those who were unable to attend.

The recorded conference sessions also are a great source of classroom content. Highly rated sessions from the 2015 conference include the following:

- “Daring to Make a Difference for DR Congo: Research, Theory, and Critical Scholar Activists,” presented by Lee Ann De Reus, Ph.D.
- “Cultural Risks, Cultural Assets, and Developmental Considerations: An Examination of Latino Youth in the U.S.,” the Marie Peters Award Address, presented by Adriana Umaña-Taylor.
- “Intercepting Historical Trauma: Intergenerational Transmission of Risk and Resilience in Families Affected by Political Violence,” presented by Kaethe Weingarten.

For a full list of the video-recorded sessions from the last eight years, visit learning.ncfr.org/.

Using NCFR resources in your classroom

If you are interested in showing one of the past conference sessions, the video lecture series, or a webinar in your traditional or online course, you can purchase a Classroom Use License. Simply complete the Classroom Use Request Form at ncfr.org/professional-resources/archived-webinars/classroom-use-request-form. NCFR staff will contact you to fulfill your order.

When you purchase a Classroom Use License for either a webinar, the video lecture series, or a video-recorded conference session, you will receive an mp4 file. Then you can show the video during class, upload the video into an online learning management system (LMS, e.g., Blackboard) so that students can watch the video before coming to class, or upload the video into your LMS for online learning. The Classroom Use License is designed for one professor and allows you to show the video in multiple courses indefinitely. If more than one professor is interested in showing the same video, please purchase the Departmental Use License.

I hope you find these resources valuable as you look for timely and professional research-based classroom content. Please contact me (jennifercrosswhite@ncfr.org) if you have any questions regarding the Classroom Use License or if you have ideas for developing additional classroom content. Please also let me know if you are interested in curating current content into topic specific collections; this too has the potential for use in the classroom. ■



Quality of writing and adhering to style in manuscript preparation



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

Some of the most significant writing we do as academics consists of crafting journal articles. Tenure and promotion decisions depend on success in publishing, especially publishing in journals with the greatest influence sponsored by leading professional organizations. And, just to keep things in perspective, gaining tenure and promotions is important, but crafting great work — articles that are likely to be influential and contribute to the growth of our respective fields—is equally important.

The style in which empirical articles are written is straightforward, with an introduction and literature review, a method section, results and discussion sections, and a conclusion. The formula differs modestly for theory, research syntheses, case studies, and applied work but is standard for empirical work. In this article I attend to two related issues as they influence the evaluation of submissions to peer-review journals by editors and reviewers. The issues of concern are (1) the overall quality of writing and (2) the adherence of a manuscript to “house style,” which for many journals, including those published by NCFR, means APA formatting, or a close variant thereof. In focusing on empirical reports, including quantitative and qualitative work in all their variations, I don’t wish to exclude case studies, analysis of social policies, or other forms of journal articles. Most of the issues I discuss here are generic and apply to nearly all article forms, including grant proposals.

Quality of writing

The overall quality of writing, including issues of style, grammar, and appropriate use of the English language, are important in some regards, but they aren’t necessarily deal breakers. Reviewers and editors are not expecting Woolf or Hemingway; they are expecting a reasonable level of competence. Otherwise, reviewers and editors vary in the importance they attach to the quality

of writing. Personally I enjoy writing and vastly favor a well-written article. I admire authors who write well. I suspect they are more successful in publishing, their work is more accessible and influential and, from the perspective of an editor, they are much easier to work with. Well-written articles can be read efficiently, requiring less time and effort on the part of readers to fully appreciate and evaluate complex arguments, research designs, and findings.

Some view the issue of writing well as relatively unimportant, assuming an author has achieved a minimal level of competence; the quality of the science or contribution to the discipline is privileged. When I asked sociologist Mike Johnson about the importance of matters of style or grammar in the

evaluation of manuscripts under review he responded thus:

Not at all. In terms of my decision whether to recommend accepting or rejecting a paper, not at all. It would come up in a recommendation for revision and I would include a note to the editor [about the writing] if needed. To me the overall quality of writing is not that important. Although I should say, it very rarely comes up. Most of the things that I review are well written. It is possible that editors are screening out things that are horribly written.

Social psychologist and former editor Harry Reis shared a similar view: “I consider it important in that I think we ought to write

quality of writing continued on page 11

executive review continued from page 5

presented elsewhere in this issue of *Report*. Congratulations! These Fellows will be inducted in a ceremony to take place at the 2016 NCFR conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Thank you to the Fellows Committee for their work in soliciting, reviewing, and recommending this class of Fellows. The members of the 2015 Fellows Committee were Marilyn Coleman, Adriana Umaña-Taylor, Francisco Villarruel, Katherine Allen, Stephen Jorgensen, and Board Liaison Karen Seccombe.

The Fellows award process

If you’ve ever wondered how Fellows are selected, it begins with the election of the selection committee and falls under board responsibilities. The NCFR board has determined to create the selection committee through a membership-wide election. Once elected and formed, this committee solicits Fellows nominations from the membership. The criteria, nomination procedures, and

policies are posted on the NCFR website at <https://www.ncfr.org/awards/ncfr-fellow-status/how-become-ncfr-fellow>. Changes to Fellows policies, procedures, and selection criteria are reviewed by the Fellows Committee and passed on to the Board of Directors for approval.

The Fellows Committee convenes at the annual conference to review the nominations and make its selections. At the completion of their process, the Fellows Committee recommends its selections to the NCFR Board of Directors. Board approval is followed by letters to all nominated members. The new Fellows are announced via Zippy News and media releases in January, covered in more depth in this spring issue of *NCFR Report*, and inducted at a ceremony at the next annual conference in November.

If you have someone in mind to nominate for the 2016 Class of Fellows you have until September 15, 2016, to submit your nomination. ■

well. I would *never* use that to accept or reject a paper.”

The disposition of a manuscript is largely dependent on the quality of the science or application and the importance of the contribution. Great writing is not a prerequisite for either, but then neither is it entirely inconsequential. Harry shared a position that appeared often in my interviews with editors and reviewers. “Writing well helps to get your ideas across . . . and it’s kind of a delight to read. I think that certainly promotes [an author’s] work.” Family scholar Heather Helms amplified the issue and added some additional thoughts:

Good writing is pretty important to me. . . . If I review an article and think this is really well written, then I have almost an emotional reaction. It’s a positive feeling. You enjoy reading it. It’s not a struggle to get from paragraph to paragraph. You do not have to constantly reread a sentence over and over again to understand the author’s intention. It makes the process more enjoyable. I like reading good writing. So if a paper is written well, then you can concentrate on [substantive issues]. If it’s not well written you spend all your time struggling through the paper asking what did this sentence or paragraph mean. I can actually get a little bit grouchy if the writing is so poor I can’t understand the writer’s intention.

Paul Amato is a professor of sociology and has won the prestigious Reuben Hill Award more often than any other author. Like Michael, Harry, and Heather, he is very productive and among the most skilled authors I know in crafting journal articles. Paul takes a slightly different perspective regarding the importance of the quality of writing in evaluating a manuscript:

There are a lot of social scientists who are not very good writers. . . . it is something I weigh heavily because I do believe clear writing reflects clear thinking. If a manuscript is very poorly written, it makes me wonder if the whole theory and analysis are questionable. Good writing in our field needs to be as clear as possible. Here is my theory, this is what I did, here are my results, and here is what I think it means.

RM: Are matters of house style or grammar important?

It’s not a deal breaker but poor grammar does irritate me. Mixing up verb

tenses, run-on sentences and so on are bothersome, but not necessarily a deal breaker. I think there are situations where a manuscript is not particularly well written but the research still seems useful or valuable.

Later in the interview, Paul commented further on the importance of learning to write well in his career:

I realized in graduate school that I needed to learn how to write. So I spent an entire summer immersing myself in learning grammar and reading books on style and I learned an awful lot. So I tell my students you’ve got to learn how to write. I don’t think we stress that enough in our curriculum.

And, not to belabor the point, I asked Kelly Raley, Editor of the *Journal of Marriage and Family*, her thoughts on the issue of writing and its importance in evaluating a manuscript:

I think there is a strong relationship between the quality of writing and the quality of thinking. It’s not a correlation of 1; they are not the same thing, but oftentimes people who struggle with writing also don’t have the tools to organize their thoughts as strongly as people who have strong writing skills.

In summarizing the commentary of our judges—Michael, Heather, Harry, Paul, and Kelly—good science and intelligent and knowledgeable practices are necessary, and good writing services all.

When the quality of writing detracts from a reader’s understanding, or ease of understanding, it becomes an important issue. We write technical work that requires considerable background knowledge on the part of readers and concentration in trying to understand complex arguments. A well-organized work, clearly written with few distracting errors in style or grammar, can only help in generating a more positive evaluation. Typographical errors or lapses in house style (e.g., APA style) are things I can control as a writer and in the end I want to give evaluators as few reasons to be critical as possible.

Other elements of good writing are more difficult to achieve but nonetheless are important to consider. For instance, the precise and consistent use of concepts throughout a manuscript is a simple prescription, but it is sometimes difficult to obtain. The clarity and logic of an argument are also important

but decidedly difficult to judge. Heather shared her thoughts on these issues:

To be honest, journal writing is kind of boring. Creative writing, like fiction, is much more expressive. I actually think some of us like creative writing; I have to battle through that side of myself when I’m writing an empirical article. I remember being edited by Susan McHale [a mentor]. “Synonyms are not good,” she would say. In creative writing you don’t necessarily want to use the same word all the time for describing something, and in empirical writing you do. There is the need for this conceptual clarity that is kind of boring but it is actually really important.

I am writing this paper now that comes from the economic hardship literature, and people throw terms around like economic pressure, economic hardship,

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Accolades for Crafting Scholarship and author Robert Milardo, Ph.D.

Choice magazine, published by the American Library Association, has named Dr. Robert Milardo’s book *Crafting Scholarship in the Behavioral and Social Sciences* an **Outstanding Academic Title** for 2015, an honor given to fewer than 3% of books published each year. The following is a quote from the review:

Milardo has written a refreshing, inspiring, and readable take on what has typically been a dry, mechanical, and private process.

NCFR is indebted to Dr. Milardo for sharing his ideas and insights on writing through this continuing article series, “Crafting Scholarship,” based on his book. As an NCFR Fellow and the founding editor of the *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, he has more than 35 years of experience in teaching, research, and academic writing.

Dr. Milardo’s book provides a comprehensive look at writing, editing, and reviewing processes in academic publishing (Fall 2014, Routledge). It is available at www.routledge.com/books/details/9781138787841/



National Council on Family Relations (NCFR), sponsored by Iowa State University College of Human Sciences and the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, presents the Helen LeBaron Hilton Endowed Chair Video Lecture Series:

Envisioning the Future of Healthy Families by Crossing Disciplinary Boundaries

This multidisciplinary video lecture series will include presentations by ten exemplary scholars bringing together insights on the future of healthy families, culminating in a live panel discussion on April 20, 2016.

Themes that will be covered include:

- What elements define a healthy family?
- What do we know currently about healthy families? What do we need to know in the future?
- How do you approach this conversation not only from your own discipline and primary research program but also from a cross-disciplinary perspective?
- What are the most pressing policy issues for the future of healthy families?



Ross Parke, Ph.D., Hilton Endowed Chair, Professor Emeritus, Department of Psychology, University of California, Riverside.
Available January



Velma McBride Murry, Ph.D.

Velma McBride Murry, Ph.D., Lois Autrey Betts Chair in Education and Human Development and professor of Human and Organizational Development in Peabody College, Vanderbilt University. *Available now*



Stephen Russell, Ph.D.

Stephen Russell, Ph.D., Priscilla Pond Flawn Regents Professor of Child Development, Department of Human Development and Family Sciences, University of Texas at Austin. *Available now*

Frank F. Furstenberg Jr., Ph.D., Zellerbach Family Professor of Sociology, Emeritus, and Research Associate in the Population Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania. *Available now*

Ronald E. Dahl, M.D., Director of the Institute of Human Development, University of California, Berkeley, professor in the School of Public Health and the Joint Medical Program. *Available April*



Frank Furstenberg Jr., Ph.D.

Greg J. Duncan, Ph.D., Distinguished Professor in the School of Education, University of California, Irvine. *Available March*

Kathryn Edin, Ph.D., Bloomberg Distinguished Professor, Department of Sociology, Zanyvl Krieger School of Arts and Sciences and Department of Population, Family, and Reproductive Health, Bloomberg School of Public Health. *Available March*

Carolyn Cowan, Ph.D. & Philip Cowan, Ph.D., Dr. C. Cowan, Adjunct Professor Emerita, Department of Psychology, University of California, Berkeley. Dr. P. Cowan, Professor of the Graduate School, Department of Psychology, University of California, Berkeley. *Available April*



Ronald E. Dahl, M.D.

Deb Cassidy, Ph.D., Barbara E. (Mound) Hansen Lecturer in Early Childhood Education, professor of Human Development and Family Studies, School of Health and Human Sciences, University of North Carolina Greensboro. *Available April*



Greg J. Duncan, Ph.D.



Kathryn Edin, Ph.D.



Carolyn Cowan, Ph.D. & Philip Cowan, Ph.D.



Deb Cassidy, Ph.D.

Culminating live event, panel discussion with Dr. Ross Parke and all presenters, April 20, 2016.

For more information including pricing visit: <https://www.ncfr.org/events/upcoming-ncfr-webinars>

economic strain, stress; *there is zero conceptual clarity. The problem is that these concepts all mean different things, and are operationalized differently. I've become attuned to the importance of conceptual clarity throughout a paper; being clear how concepts fit with the literature, and operationalizing constructs in ways that make sense and fit with the theoretical base. So I think that empirical writing is different. I think there is a method to doing it well that new writers need to understand.*

Heather identifies a common problem I see in editing submissions: an inconsistent use of language and incomplete definition of core concepts. In her example, she draws on the economic hardship literature and the array of concepts directed at similar themes. Often, authors can make important contributions by carefully distinguishing between related but distinct concepts, a contribution built on exacting definitions.

The importance of style and formatting

I am often asked about the importance of adhering to house style in the preparation of a manuscript and its subsequent evaluation. Quite apart from the quality of writing, how important is the formatting and selection of headings, organization and presentation of material in each section of a paper, completeness of references, and similar issues of style?

Ron Sabatelli, former editor of *Family Relations*, considers the issue of style important but prefers to rely on professional copyeditors to correct such issues and reserve his editorial commentary to more substantive issues. Kelly Raley takes a similar perspective on the issue of adherence to the rules of style, although she notes that attending to the rules governing the presentation of an article can influence the overall judgment of an article's worth:

Matters of style are probably less important to me than to other editors, but as I'm in this position longer I understand why it is important to people. . . . when [authors] don't adopt the expected style of presenting things, it just takes readers a lot more effort to understand what the authors are trying to do. But having said that, it is really not the thing I'm paying attention to when reading an article. I'm really paying much more attention to the nature of the contribution and whether the method is appropriate for making that contribution.

In the end, I don't expect perfection in the adherence to the particulars of style, but I do expect a reasonable performance. This means selecting meaningful headings that function well to guide a reader through the course of a manuscript, executing the various sections of an article that are consistent with style guidelines, constructing tables in ways that are consistent with a journal's stated preferences, submitting work that is within the guidelines for length, or stating in a cover letter why an article is longer than typical. If a journal's guidelines require 1-inch margins and 12-point type, there is no reason to do otherwise. Check and recheck references to be certain there are no substantial errors and references are correct and complete. Editors and reviewers don't expect perfection in the presentation of reference lists, but we do expect a reasonable level of competence. Simple errors of formatting or presentation detract from the inherent contribution of your work. When manuscripts are much longer than suggested, are poorly formatted, have confusing tables, more tables than recommended, or have incomplete references, we question the overall competence of the work. Take the wind out of the sails of critics and avoid simple errors.

Conclusion

Crafting great articles and getting them published in highly selective journals is contingent on well-conceived and well-executed science, all of which is serviced by writing effectively as well as attending to the conventions of style. A wide variety of books aim to teach the principal elements of writing well and I encourage you to consult some of that work. For example, *Crafting Scholarship* (2015) is replete with annotated bibliographies. For North American writers, *The Elements of Style* by W. Strunk and E. B. White is a classic statement on great writing in 105 pages. It should be part of a writer's library. There are many other useful resources, including several writing apps such as *The Writer's Diet*, and *Edit Minion*; both can help improve your written work and are highly recommended. In the mix of doing influential science and getting it published, write well and mind your *ps* and *qs*.

Writer's resource: useful writing applications

The Writer's Diet

<http://writersdiet.com/WT.php>

This app was developed by Helen Sword and provides a supplement to her books



Stylish Academic Writing (2012) and *The Writer's Diet* (2007). The app is a diagnostic tool that evaluates writing samples (maximum 1,000 words per run) over five grammatical categories, such as the use of verbs and adverbs. The app is well designed, simple to use, and informative. I enjoy using it and find it helpful in evaluating writing samples and pinpointing areas that need shoring up.

Edit Minion

<http://editminion.com>

This is another great app that evaluates writing samples for common grammatical hot points. The app highlights passive verb constructions, sentences ending in a preposition, weak words, clichés, tricky homonyms (e.g., *your* and *you're*), frequently used words, adverb usage, and common misspellings. Once you've used this app a bit you'll begin to recognize weaknesses in your writing and correct them. Running an evaluation of an entire manuscript is modestly time consuming and worth the effort.

Word Web

<http://wordweb.info>

Word Web is an English thesaurus and dictionary. The application duplicates existing features of Windows but adds some additional functionality. I've been using the Pro version for years and find it very useful.

There are a variety of additional writing applications, but these are the three I find most useful. You may wish to explore the possibilities a bit more. For instance, *Write or Die 2* is an application that makes procrastination consequential. A writer sets a goal—for instance, 250 words in 60 minutes—and things happen if the goal is unmet. It's like video gaming meets scientist. (No worries, it's nonviolent and nonshocking.) The whole business is kind of fun, but that's what I mean by distracting. ■

Advancing Family Science Section Update



Robin Yaure, Section Chair, r2y@psu.edu

It is an exciting time of year for me as a Section Chair, and I am already sort of sad that the term of this position is only for two years because, now that I am getting used to my duties as chair, they will soon be over. The call for proposals and request for reviewers have gone out, and it is exciting to see the ideas that have already been put forth for symposia and other papers for the Section. I am constantly amazed by the creativity and dedication of our Section members when it comes to the presentations they have in mind for the upcoming conference. I am also delighted to hear that there are already a lot of people in our Section who have come forward to volunteer to read the proposals that are coming in. Once again I am reminded of the group effort that is required to create such a dynamic conference.

By the time this newsletter comes out the proposals will be submitted and the reviews should be done. We have some exciting ideas for the Section meeting in November.

Silvia Bartolic of the University of British Columbia, who organized the resource exchange at last year's Section meeting, suggested that we include the resource exchange as a more formal part of the conference, which would require people to submit proposals for their contribution. The benefit of this to members is that these would then be considered peer reviewed and thus eligible for inclusion in *vitae*, which is crucial to many of our section members. Silvia and I were impressed with the quality of the work that was shared at last year's conference, and we want to enhance the status of this work.

At the 2016 conference we will again have a separate business meeting for our Section and then a shared meeting with the Education and Enrichment Section during which we will host the resource exchange and the roundtable presentations. These were so successful last year, with such great attendance, that we wish to continue this event. We are hoping to avoid conflicting with

some of the focus group meetings, which ended up drawing some of our Section members away from our meeting.

I really look forward to seeing how the conference schedule comes together. In April I will attend a face-to-face meeting in Minneapolis with the other Section chairs where we will discuss the outstanding work that has been accepted for the conference, and then we and the amazing NCFR staff will put together a cohesive program.

I am pleased that there were quite a few new people who have stepped forward to run for officer positions for the AFS section. I think that the year or so that I have been involved as Section Chair has been so good for me professionally, and I recommend it for everyone. With help from the NCFR staff, I have been able to stay on track task wise and have learned to appreciate all of the work that goes on behind the scenes to create the conference. I really look forward to being in Minneapolis in November to see the fruits of our collective labor. ■

Ethnic Minorities Section Update



Ani Yazedjian, Section Chair, ayazedj@ilstu.edu

Note from the chair:

The panel discussion on social justice strategies for family professionals was one of the best-attended events at the 2015 annual conference. NCFR President Bill Allen provided this summary of the session, which was co-sponsored by the Ethnic Minorities Section and offered through Student and New Professionals.

"*Social Justice Strategies of Family Researchers and Professionals in the Age of Ferguson*" was one of the most thought-provoking sessions at the recent 2015 NCFR annual conference, which was held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. A standing-room-only audience heard a panel of NCFR members discuss, from diverse perspectives, their reactions to the string of events in Ferguson, Missouri; Staten Island, New York; and Cleveland, Ohio, in which unarmed Black men and boys were killed by police officers. A major objective of the session was to facilitate dialogue about how family scientists might contribute to the national debate about

ways to reduce tensions between law enforcement and communities of color.

The panel moderator was Anthony James. The panelists included Dr. Antoinette Landor, University of Missouri (researcher); Dr. Bethany Letiecq, George Mason University (policy and educator); Dr. Bill Allen, Healing Bonds (couple and family therapist), and Dr. Curtis Fox, Loma Linda University (CFLE, practitioner). The session enjoyed broad co-sponsorship from several sections: Research & Theory, Feminism & Family Studies, Family Therapy, Ethnic Minorities, Family Policy, Religion, Spirituality & Family, and Advancing Family Science.

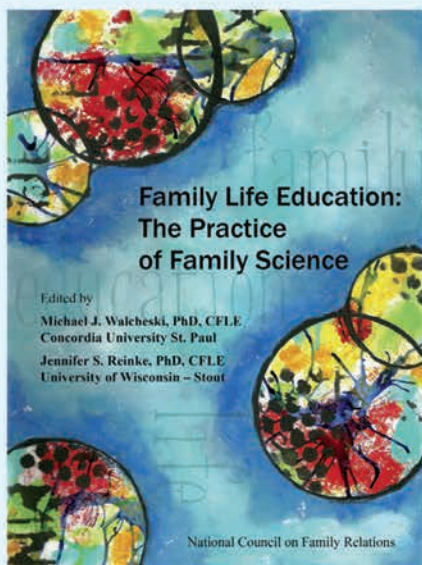
The panelists discussed how their work had been influenced by recent events and encouraged colleagues to consider how they might use current events as teachable moments to advance social justice in their work. These might include research and scholarship on families, classroom activities centered on family process, and professional practice with families. Although there was time for

several questions from the audience after the panel discussion, most participants agreed that there was a need to follow up this session with similar dialogues at future conferences.

Editor's note: Listen to the audio recording of this session, open to all members and the general public, at <https://www.ncfr.org/ncfr-2015/wednesday/snpidc-panel-social-justice-strategies-family-researchers-and-professionals-age->. ■

Correction

In the Winter 2015 issue of *NCFR Report*, in the article "Family policy in the academy" by outgoing chair Bethany Letiecq, a change by the editors resulted in a misleading statement. In the text, the editors changed the word "we" to "my husband and I" which misrepresented Dr. Letiecq's relationship and her intent--she was referring to her colleagues. We apologize for this error.



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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
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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



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