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# Family Science Review

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## RESEARCH

The Bumpy Road off TANF for Rural Mothers 1

Mary Jo Katras  
Elizabeth M. Dolan  
Sharon B. Seiling  
Bonnie Braun

*Rural welfare mothers receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) have a difficult time reaching economic security and lessening their reliance on benefits because of the impediments they face regarding employment opportunities, transportation, child care resources, and more. This article focuses on 62 rural mothers, each receiving TANF at some point during the three year Rural Families Speak study. By their third-year interview, only 11 of the 62 mothers had household incomes above 150% of poverty for their family size. These 11 achieved success through educational training in fields offering livable wages. The other 51 mothers were struggling to overcome barriers such as poor health and lack of transportation. The rural economy was a barrier faced by both the successful and non-successful mothers. Mothers representing those who got off TANF and those who did not were both profiled. Their words add to the quantitative findings. Rural residents face barriers measurably different from their urban counterparts, and policy makers have not considered rural-urban differences in creating TANF regulations. The barriers and pathways identified in this study should inform future public policy decisions.*

Computers in the Family Context:  
Perceived Impact on Family Time and Relationships 16

Jane D. Lanigan  
Mary Bold  
Lillian Chenoweth

*This article examines the perceived affect of computers on family time and relationships. A family systems theoretical framework guided the exploratory qualitative investigation. Results indicate that computer use generally replaced solitary or minimal interaction activities. However, the majority of participants (n = 79; 89%) perceived that the computer impacted their family relationships. Of those participants, 45% (n = 36) cited a mostly positive impact; 24% (n = 19) a mixed impact and 20% (n = 16) a mostly negative impact. Themes included connection and the computer as a source of family information. The potential benefit of considering family characteristics was demonstrated as differences emerged based on family type as well as reported family levels of cohesion and adaptability.*

Adolescent Sexual Competence: A Paradigm Shift 33

Kevin Gross

*Data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health were analyzed comparing the constructs of sexual intercourse and sexual competence using various background characteristics. Forty-two percent of the youth had experienced sexual intercourse during the previous year. Of these, the level of sexual competence was high (Mean = 5.36 on a scale that ranged from 0 to 7).*

*Significant independent effects were found for gender and race in relation to sexual competence and for age, race, family structure, and parental education in relation to sexual intercourse. Both being a male and being black were associated with lower levels of sexual competence; whereas, being older, black, from a single-parent household, and having parents with lower levels of education were all associated with having had sexual intercourse. Findings illustrate the importance of considering sexual competence when investigating adolescent sexuality.*

Relationship Dissolution and Romance and Mate Selection Myths 48

*Jacob Priest*

*Misty Burnett*

*Rachel Thompson*

*Anne Vogel*

*Paul L. Schvaneveldt*

*This research examines the impact that of relationship dissolutions on romance and mate selection beliefs. A questionnaire was randomly distributed to 261 young adults regarding past breakup history and attitudes toward unrealistic beliefs of romance and mate selection. Age, gender, relationship status, the number of breakups and recentness of a breakup were all shown to affect one or more of these unrealistic beliefs. The study suggests that the more relationship experience an individual has, the less likely one is to hold unrealistic beliefs when choosing a mate.*

## **SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Parents as Co-Educators:

Do Effective Sex Education Programs Include Parents? 58

*Jennie E. Long Dilworth*

*Schools and communities conduct sexuality education programs to supplement the information children receive from parents and caregivers. Critics argue that this institutional education supplants parental teaching and fails to include parents as partners in sex education. To assess to what extent current sex education curricula draw parents into this vital process, eight empirically validated sex/HIV education programs were selected for content analysis. Programmatic references to parents were organized into thematic categories representing varying levels of parent inclusion. Results of these analyses can assist schools in selecting parent-friendly sex education curricula. Recommendations for family life educators are presented.*

Preparing Graduate Students to be Outreach Family Life Educators 67

*Stephen F. Duncan*

*Upon graduation, many family science graduate students will have opportunities to work with lay audiences in educational settings outside the traditional university and high school classroom. To succeed in educating lay audiences requires a somewhat different skill set than that which students currently gain in many family science programs. Thus, for graduates in family life education to succeed well in educating the public requires different skills than teaching students in traditional classroom settings. This article reports the development, implementation, and evaluation of a course, called *The Outreach Class*, as an example of what family science graduate programs can do to assure that students gain the skills they need. Evaluation data show the course is experienced as a positive, hands-on learning experience. It is suggested that through a course like this, students gain practical educational experiences that arm them to become more effective ambassadors of family science scholarship to citizens of the world.*

“I Want to be a Better Parent” Examining an Applied Approach  
to an Undergraduate Parent-Child Course

81

Heidi E. Stolz

*This study explores the effects of an undergraduate parent-child relations curriculum designed to integrate instruction of developmental and parenting theory into an applied, skill-based parenting framework. It was hypothesized that students in the applied teaching group would demonstrate significantly more improvement in effective parenting behaviors from pre-test to post-test than control group students who were enrolled in a traditional text-based course. The results suggested the 10 week curricula positively impacted the parenting skills of treatment group participants (N = 54), but not control group participants (N = 25), as evidenced by blind, quantitative coding of responses to hypothetical parent-child scenarios.*

Teaching Relationship Concepts Using Media Clips

93

Rebecca A. Adams

Scott S. Hall

*The benefits of using film clips in Marriage and Family Relations classes are numerous. They can be used to teach new concepts, initiate discussion, and assist students in developing “perspective taking,” an important component in feminist pedagogy and in developing critical thinking skills. Suggestions for classroom utilization are included, as well as methods for gathering film clips and information about copyright issues. The appendix includes numerous examples of family related themes, movies in which the clips can be found, descriptions of the scenes and the approximate length of each clip.*

What do College Students Consider “Busy Work”?

105

Carmel White

*This study examined college students’ conceptualizations of “busy work” in an course that incorporated student-centered learning and collaborative learning groups. About 40% of the students felt that there was no “busy work.” Those that did most frequently reported that in-class group assignments and providing feedback to group presentations were “busy work.” Examinations were least likely seen as “busy work.” It is recommended that faculty explain the pedagogical rationale when student-centered learning techniques are used.*

**ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL ISSUES**

Family Science: The Emergence of a New Discipline, 1982-2007

118

Laura S. Smart

*Family science emerged as a separate social science discipline in the last quarter of the 20th century. In the mid 1980s, two organizations gave recognition to the new discipline. The Family Science section of National Council on Family Relations was formed, and a separate organization, the Family Science Association, also was formed. The purpose of this article is to describe the development of family science, with a focus on 1982-2007. Eight categories of family science scholarship from 1987-2007 are reviewed: academic programs, curriculum development, ethical guidelines for practice, philosophy of science, research methodologies, the interface between research and practice, and career development.*

## **BOOK REVIEWS**

The Craft of Teaching About Families: Strategies and Tools

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By *Debra L. Berke and Steven K. Wisensale, (Eds.)*

Wm. Michael Fleming, reviewer