The Family Professional Inside and Outside Academia

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Just about everybody has had someone ask, "What are you going to be when you grow up?" When we were little kids, some of us said we were going to be cowboys or firemen or policemen or nurses. When we became adults we had to get serious about this business of what we were going to do when we "grew up." This business is sometimes called career planning. During childhood and maybe adolescence it's okay not to know what we are going to be when we grow up. Then lots of us go on to college and career planning becomes serious business.

Some of us have made a career choice that includes the family at its core. Some of us want to work inside academia. Some of us want to work outside academia. But we want to focus on the family.

Is it possible to be a family professional and find fulfillment and satisfaction? Is it possible to make a decent living as a family professional? This article explores career possibilities for family professionals inside academia and outside academia.

FAMILY PROFESSIONALS IN ACADEMIA

Family professionals who pursue careers "within the halls of ivy" are faculty members, members of the professoriate. They are assistant professors, associate professors, or full professors. They generally are people who have earned the Ph. D. or the equivalent.

Family professionals within academia generally serve on faculties in departments of child development and family relationships, family studies, family and consumer studies, family science, family social science, and so forth. They teach such subjects as child/human development, family life education, marriage and family therapy, parenting, early childhood education, family and consumer economics, and on and on.

Being a faculty member involves at least three major strands: teaching, research, and professional service (including committee work, administration, preparing and conducting outreach workshops and seminars, writing newspaper columns, writing and conducting family-centered television programs).

Career preparation for academia requires a graduate degree. Currently, this means a Ph. D. or equivalent. In the mid-90s this requirement may change to a masters degree in many institutions where most faculty will be retiring and where there may not be enough individuals holding the doctorate available to replace them.

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Why do people select careers within academia? There probably are as many reasons as there are faculty members. Some of these reasons include the following: (1) working with young adults helps to keep a person young and challenged; (2) the work is task-oriented rather than time-oriented (that is, faculty members do not punch time clocks); generally, the faculty member is his or her own boss possibly more than in any other profession; (3) there generally is freedom to read and write and to channel gobs of time as well as energy into such activities; (4) there usually is frequent availability of cultural activities such as the theater, symphonies, art exhibits, well-known speakers from outside the community and the state; (5) a college campus generally has pleasant environmental surroundings (campuses are usually well-groomed and beautiful and spacious); (6) there are frequent opportunities to exchange ideas with colleagues; (7) there are opportunities to mentor colleagues and to be mentored by colleagues, often by those with outstanding scholarly and personal reputations and even by those who have national reputations in their fields; (8) there are opportunities for advancement up the professorial ranks (Kerr, 1987).

There are negatives about careers in academia as well. Some prefer not to have the "publish or perish" pressure that comes with the territory. Some dislike teaching immensely and the ubiquitous scramble for grades by students. Some dislike the salary. (Beginning salaries, with the doctorate, average about $21,000, while the average salary for a full professor is only $45,000 [Bowen & Schuster, 1986].) Some don't wish to go on for a graduate degree, a requirement in academia.

During the 1960s and the 1970s the bottom fell out of the job market for college professors. Anyone getting a Ph. D. in the 1980s often finds it very difficult to obtain a position as a family professional in the ranks of academia. Salaries have leveled off and tenured professors do not quit, they work until they retire. By the mid-1990s about 40% of tenured professors in the U. S. will retire. The "graying of academia" will bring about a monumental need for replacements in the ranks in the mid-1990s.

But few freshmen today plan to be college professors. Bowen and Schuster (1986), in their description of American professors, suggest that:

When enrollments begin to recover [in the mid-1990s] and retirements mount, colleges and universities, as always, will strive to hire the best available faculty. But unless the conditions of faculty employment improve and incentives for entering the profession become stronger, they may well be obliged to settle for the not very talented. The openings will be filled, one way or another; there has never been an insufficiency of persons--leaving aside the adequacy of their preparation--willing to enter upon academic careers. The question concerns the quality of the persons available at that time. (p. 7)

This includes those family professionals who are members of college and university faculties. Clark and Corcoran (1987) summarize the faculty career challenge to academia this way:

We should encourage the most talented young people, many of whom are enticed by professional and high technology careers, to pursue Ph. D. programs and fix their aspirations on joining the academic profession, for opportunities will become available in a predictable way for those who make plans now. (pp. 31-32)
Generally, the rewards of college faculty lie elsewhere than in teaching. Advancement in rank and pay usually are dependent upon amount of peer-reviewed publication, not on teaching. It is in the teaching arena where faculty rub shoulders with the concerns of their students, including career-choice concerns. It is unlikely that faculty receive career rewards in academia because of what they know of the "real world" outside academia and how many students they have been able to place in non-academic careers.

In spite of the drawbacks to careers in academia, 67 percent of a large sample of family professionals working in careers outside academia indicated they at one time (usually during their graduate studies) had the career goal of becoming faculty members, 19 percent of whom were still struggling with the decision (Vance, 1987). If you are an undergraduate, now is the time to plan your career as a family professional in academia.

FAMILY PROFESSIONALS OUTSIDE ACADEMIA

Probably the possibilities for family professionals outside academia are just becoming known. The possibilities are probably endless. What we know is likely just the tip of the iceberg.

This section is a description of the results of a study of 451 family professionals who were members of the National Council on Family Relations in 1985, the year the study was done. All of these individuals were family professionals, most with graduate degrees, who were working at the time in careers outside academia. This study provides some insights into the possibilities for family professionals who wish to pursue careers outside academia.

This research had its impetus in two areas. First, in 1984 the report of the Commission to Review the Structure of NCFR (National Council on Family Relations, the professional organization to which most family professionals belong) reported on membership in NCFR (NCFR, 1984). The Commission dealt with the central question of whether or not NCFR was a responsive organization to the needs of professionals working in family related fields. At the time NCFR membership was declining at an alarming rate. The Commission reported that NCFR membership appeared to have come primarily from "family practitioner professionals," not from "academic professionals" (NCFR, 1984). The second impetus came from the frequent questions from students in family-oriented majors about what careers they could pursue related to their degrees.

Traditionally, graduate students, especially at the doctorate level, have pursued academic careers in such family-related disciplines as child/human development, family relations, marriage and family therapy, early childhood education, family life education, family and consumer studies, and family science. The academic focus of most graduate education in family-related disciplines is academia. It is often assumed by teachers in colleges and universities that their students will join faculties in other institutions of higher learning.

Traditionally, the undergraduate degree has been viewed as a noncareer-oriented degree or a pre-professional degree. It has been viewed as an opportunity for students to "prepare for life," to engage in the study of a broadly-based general education. Modern students at the undergraduate level, however, cannot afford the luxury of spending four years "preparing for life." They are seeking careers that will bring satisfaction, economic independence, and personal and professional growth. Most undergraduates do not plan to attend graduate school. Indeed, graduate education is not
designed for ALL undergraduate students. However, what careers are available for undergraduate students in family-related majors?

Questions Related to Non-Academic Career Choices

Professors in the family sciences often wonder how their graduate students make their career choices and where they end up career-wise. They recognize that most of their undergraduate students take courses in the family sciences out of their own interest as husbands and wives, parents, or potential marriage partners or parents.

Do most undergraduates who major in the family sciences choose careers that are not related to the family? What about graduate students in the family sciences such as marriage and family relationships, home management, human development, family financial planning and counseling, family life education, and marriage and family therapy - do they expect careers in academia upon graduation? If they expect to move into academic careers in the 80s, a large percentage of them are going to be disappointed. "Ph.D." generally means a research degree that can best be utilized in academia.

Do those who have the Ph.D. in one of the family sciences and find positions in the non-academic arena do so only to mark time until they get into academia? Or have they found career opportunities that are satisfying and challenging and meeting their expectations? What kinds of positions do they hold and how did they find them? How did their education prepare them for their career choices? What did they do to create their career positions? Do they like the choices they made? What would they change about their career choices?

There are many professionals in the family sciences who do not have a doctorate. Undoubtedly many former graduate students are working in non-academic careers with masters degrees. What are the possibilities for career development with a masters degree? Do these careers provide opportunities for job satisfaction and fulfillment?

There is always the question of salary. Is it really true that high salaries can be made outside academia by family professionals? Are higher salaries the reason for seeking non-academic career positions? What ARE the rewards for family science professionals working outside academia?

Procedures

In June 1985 a total of 1058 16-page NCFR Career Options Survey questionnaires (which included 52 items) were sent to members of the National Council on Family Relations then employed in non-academic positions. Of those questionnaires, 483 were completed and returned.

The purpose of the questionnaire was to obtain data to answer the following questions:

1. What is the nature of the work of family professionals who are employed primarily in the non-academic arena?
2. How did family professionals in the non-academic arena obtain their current positions?
3. What were the expectations of family professionals in the non-academic arena regarding employment in academia?
Other major questions were part of the survey, but are not related to the purpose of this article.

**Subjects**

The subjects were selected from the membership records of NCFR, all who were employed outside academia. Of the 451 coded respondents to the survey questionnaire, 190 were male (42%) and 261 were female (58%). Thirty-nine percent of the respondents were in the 46-65 age-group (the age group well into and ending their careers) and 37% were in the 36-45 age group (the age group probably well established in a career). The 24-35 age group is generally considered the first stage of career development. As expected, a smaller percentage of the sample fell into this age category (20%), while only 4% were age 66 or older.

Respondents indicated their highest degree in four categories: bachelors, masters, doctorate, and other. Forty-seven percent of the respondents held the masters degree (40% of the males and 53% of the females), while 44% of the respondents held the doctorate (54% of the males and 37% of the females). Six percent of the respondents held the bachelors degree only, while 3% indicated some other degree.

As of March, 1985, 86% of the respondents were employed full time (92% of the males and 80% of the females), while 11% were employed part-time (5% of the males and 16% of the females). Three percent of the respondents were either working without pay such as in volunteer positions, or were otherwise employed.

The Nature of the Work Family Professionals Do Who Are Employed Primarily in the Non-Academic Arena

**Work categories.** Respondents were asked to mark the category that most adequately identified their employer. Categories were listed under four major headings: government, educational institution, profit business organization, and non-profit organization. Fifteen percent of the respondents indicated that they worked for the government, either at the federal or state level, or for an educational agency. Twenty-six percent of the respondents worked for profit business organizations, including private practice (probably counseling or some form of psychotherapy), self-employment, or employment in a corporation. Nineteen percent of the respondents indicated they were employed in an educational institution. [NOTE: Eleven percent of the respondents indicated they were employed by a university or college. These are primarily extension specialists who are employed by colleges or universities, but whose primary career tasks take them outside academia]. Thirty-nine percent of the respondents indicated they were employed in non-profit organizations, including social agencies, religious organizations, health service/research facilities, hospitals, or clinics.

**Job titles.** To more specifically identify what family professionals do in the non-academic arena, respondents were asked to mark the title of their present position. Twenty-five percent of the respondents indicated they were counselors, therapists, or psychotherapists (27% of the males and 24% of the females), while 19% indicated they were either directors or executive directors. Other job titles listed in the "top 10" were extension specialist (4%), administrator, social worker, researcher, and clergy (3% each).

**Length of work experience.** Respondents were asked to indicate how many years of work experience they had. Sixteen percent had worked 0-5 years, 24% 6-10 years, 19% 11-15 years, 15% 16-20 years, 10% 21-25 years, and 16% 26 or more years.
Length of employment in current position. Respondents were asked to indicate how long they had been employed in their current position. Fifty-six percent had been in their current position 5 years or less, while 23% had been in their current position 6-10 years, 11% had been in their current position 11-15 years, and 10% had been in their current position 16 or more years.

Hiring requirements. Respondents were asked to indicate the hiring requirements for their current positions. Fifty-four percent of the respondents indicated that their job positions required a masters degree, while 24% indicated that the doctorate was necessary. Twenty percent indicated that a counseling degree was necessary, 16% indicated that a degree in social work was necessary, while 11% indicated that a degree in psychology was required. Previous work experience was required in positions held by 39% of the respondents, while 25% indicated that previous work experience was required in a related field. Eleven percent indicated that previous publications were required, 18% indicated that previous teaching experience was required, 28% indicated that public speaking experience was required, and 23% indicated that a willingness to travel was required.

Salary. Respondents were asked to list their basic annual salary. This does not include income from sources other than professional employment. Fifty percent of the respondents were earning between $15,000 and $30,000 annually, while 8% were earning over $50,000. Salaries ranged from $10,000 per year to $150,000 per year. However, 50% of the respondents indicated they were making $25,000 or less per year. As expected, the higher the salary, the fewer were the respondents at that level.

How time is spent on the job. Respondents were asked to indicate how much time they devoted to 15 professional activities during a typical month. Approximately 80% of the respondents spent much of their time, or were frequently engaged, in various types of management or administration activities, while 35% spent substantial portions of their time in teaching, and 22% spent substantial portions of their time in basic or applied research. Thirty-eight percent were involved in consulting, and 41% were involved in writing/editing. Thirty-three percent were involved in development/design activities, and 63% gave a substantial portion of their time to professional service to individuals. Forty-three percent spent much or a frequent part of their time in public speaking.

On-the-job writing tasks. Respondents were asked what kinds of writing they do in their current position. Twelve percent indicated that they wrote books for the lay public, 13% indicated that they wrote books for other professionals, 43% indicated that they wrote articles for the lay public, 41% indicated that they wrote articles for other professionals, 45% indicated that they wrote within-organization research/analysis/evaluation reports, 38% wrote proposals, 45% wrote instructional programs, 73% wrote correspondence/memos, 17% wrote radio/TV scripts, 20% wrote slide/tape scripts, and 12% indicated that they did other kinds of writing.

Time spent on family-related tasks. Respondents were asked to rank order a list of 31 topics in terms of amount of time devoted to each topic during March 1985. Thirty-seven percent devoted professional time to parent/child relations, 33% to divorce/marital stability, 26% to child abuse/neglect, 15% to marital enrichment, 12% to single parenting, while education (non-teaching), women's issues, substance abuse, stepfamilies and teen pregnancy each required substantial professional time from 9% of the respondents.
How success evaluated by superiors. Respondents were asked to rank order a list of 14 items used to evaluate their success by their superiors. Five items were ranked 1, 2, or 3 as criteria used by superiors to evaluate success. Effectiveness with clients was listed as a high ranking by 48% of the respondents, leadership skills by 39%, communication skills by 32%, teaching skills by 20%, and ratings by a superior by 12% of the respondents.

How success evaluated by self. On the other hand, five criteria for determining their own success were ranked 1, 2, or 3 by the respondents. Challenge was ranked highly by 56%, autonomy by 47%, opportunity to lead/direct others by 34%, money by 27%, and enthusiasm was ranked high by 25%.

Job satisfaction. Respondents were asked to rate the degree of their satisfaction relative to 10 aspects of their work. The following percentages of the respondents indicated they were either very or somewhat satisfied with aspects of their position: freedom to think/write--77%, personal autonomy--77%, salary--71%, receptivity of senior staff to ideas of junior staff--59%, interpersonal relationships on the job--over 50%, communication between senior/junior members--55%, advancement possibilities--45%, and job assistance/support for junior members--42%.

Opportunities for professional development. Respondents were asked to indicate their opportunities for professional development. Seventy-six percent indicated formal/informal meetings with colleagues, 63% had paid attendance at professional meetings, 63% had paid attendance at workshops/seminars, 57% experienced in-service training with colleagues, 51% indicated time to read job-related literature, 44% had access to library facilities, 39% indicated that they had professional development leaves, 37% indicated opportunities for access to high technology, and 32% indicated opportunities to present papers/proposals to superiors.

How Family Professionals in Non-Academic Positions Obtained Their Current Positions

Respondents were asked to rank order 10 items they felt were most influential in helping them obtain their current positions. Previous employment history, professional contacts, and the creation of one's own position were the major influential factors in helping the respondents obtain their current positions. It is interesting to note that college/university placement services and college professors were indicated as influential factors by only 6% of the respondents.

Expectations of Family Professionals in Non-Academic Positions Regarding Employment in a College or University

Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not at any time they had wished to become professors in a college or university. Sixty-eight percent of the males and 66 percent of the females (or 67 percent of the total) indicated they did (19% had not yet decided whether or not to pursue an academic career, 13% decided as graduate students not to pursue an academic career, 9% decided as undergraduates, 6% decided while job hunting, 4% decided after marriage/family, 3% decided after working in a non-academic position, and 12% listed miscellaneous reasons for not pursuing a non-academic career).

Finally, respondents were asked to rank order 10 items that influenced them most to pursue their current position outside academia. The three top influences for pursuing a non-academic career were personal goals, career opportunities outside academia, and career plans always outside academia.
Undoubtedly, many graduates in the family sciences who wish to pursue careers related to their major will select careers outside academia, if for no other reason than that academic careers for many years to come will be few and far between (Henn & Maxfield, 1983). Fortunately, there are many types of career choices outside academia for family professionals.

The research project was designed to answer at least three questions related to careers for family professionals outside academia: What is the nature of the work family professionals employed outside academia do? How did such family professionals obtain their positions? What were the expectations about family professionals employed outside academia regarding employment in academia? The results previously reported provide at least partial answers to all three questions.

What family professionals outside academia do. Respondents in the study were employed in all 50 of the job categories listed in the survey for the four general job categories, government (including federal, state, county, city, and local government and government health agencies, welfare agencies, non-HEW agencies, Department of Defense, the military, social services, research institutes, scientific organizations, correctional agencies, and legal agencies), educational institutions (including universities or colleges, medical school, junior colleges, high schools, junior high schools, elementary schools, vocational schools, public school systems, private school systems, and day care centers/preschools), profit business organizations (including self-employment, industry, business, corporations, contract research, communications, advertising, hospitals/clinics, day care agencies, professional organizations, scientific organizations, legal agencies, service agencies, and private practice), and non-profit organizations (including research institutes, health services and/or research services, religious organizations, foundations, education agencies, advocacy agencies, hospitals/clinics, professional associations, community welfare agencies, and social agencies). More than 55 occupational specialties were marked by the respondents to the survey. These specialties include anthropology, counseling (including general, marriage, family, child, adolescent, pastoral, student, vocational, alcoholism and drug abuse, mental health, and individual counseling), clergy (including Roman Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, and other), education (including curriculum specialist, family relations, health/physical education, sex education, parent education/family life education, religious education, teacher training, human development, child development, family, home economics, journalism, and law), the health professions (including general family practice of medicine, ob-gyn specialty, pediatrics, psychiatry, public health, internal medicine, mental health, nursing, family planning, physical therapy, and gerontology), and other specialties (including psychology, social psychology, family social science, social work, sociology, business, marriage and family enrichment, women's studies, thanatology, demography, criminal justice, human development and gerontology). One out of four of the respondents to the survey indicated some form of counseling as their occupational specialty. Survey responses indicated that counselors were scattered all across the four general job categories listed in the survey.

Length of employment in their current positions had a wide range among the respondents. The range extended from under one year to over 66 years.

Sixty-eight percent of the respondents indicated one of the job requirements in their current positions was at least a masters degree. Because only six percent of the respondents held the bachelors degree, and 91 percent held a graduate degree (either
a masters or a doctorate), the study did not address the issue of careers for those who hold the bachelors degree as a terminal degree.

Fifty percent of the respondents indicated that their basic annual salary was $25,000 or less. The range of salaries was wide. However, high salaries were not the earmark of the respondents to the study. Nevertheless, most respondents indicated they were satisfied with their salaries. They indicated their satisfaction and fulfillment came from other job characteristics unrelated to salary, such as opportunity to be creative and opportunity to improve knowledge and job skills. However, when a person's salary is perceived to be extremely low, it usually rises to the surface as a source of dissatisfaction with one's career.

Respondents, when asked how they spent their time on the job, indicated management (or administration), teaching, basic or applied research, writing/editing, development/design, and professional service to individuals. These tasks are primarily service tasks, the fastest growing segment of our economy (U. S. Department of Labor, 1986). As a matter of fact, the overwhelming majority of career specialties indicated in the survey fall into the service category.

Writing, ranging from inter-office memos to books, was indicated as a major career task by virtually all respondents. Several respondents, when making comments on their surveys, indicated they felt more emphasis should have been focused during their college training on writing, especially writing for the lay public.

The majority of respondents indicated they were satisfied with their current careers. Job satisfaction generally is a good indicator whether a person will seek another career or not.

How family professionals obtained their career positions outside academia. People who achieve graduate degrees generally have in mind from the beginning of their graduate work what careers they wish to pursue. However, during their graduate studies, they probably do a considerable amount of exploration of career possibilities within the limits they wish to set. Apparently university professors and college or university placement services were not very helpful to family professionals with graduate degrees in the study when they sought employment. This may be a result of the individual's career focus from the beginning of graduate study. It may be a result of the lack of experience and training in the non-academic sector by college and university professors. This may be a result of the student's own experience in the economy before and during graduate experience. It may have nothing to do with any of these factors or it may be a combination of all of them.

Sateng St. Marie (1987), formerly vice president of the J. C. Penney organization and a family professional outside academia, suggested that students be counseled to create their own positions or careers. Approximately one-fourth of the respondents to the NCFR Career Options Survey had, in fact, created their own positions.

Written comments by respondents encouraged those still in college to volunteer for family-related work with a variety of community organizations. They also frequently mentioned the value of internships and practica during their undergraduate and graduate studies. Such experiences gave them a "feel" for what was available outside academia and gave them courage and confidence to pursue careers in the non-academic arena.

Expectations regarding employment in a college or university. Sixty-seven percent of the respondents to the survey indicated they, at one time, had wished to become college
or university professors. Nineteen percent (almost one in five) indicated they were still struggling with that decision. Perhaps those still struggling with the decision are those who may be experiencing the "defector syndrome" suggested by Bowen in this issue. Graduate study is primarily a mentoring process. Mentors of graduate students are college and university professors who, because of the nature of their own career tasks, perhaps convey the message more often than they think they do that their students are expected to "become like their mentors." That is, the message is picked up that the only acceptable career is that of a college or university professor. Written comments by some respondents and conversations with others indicate that some of them were struggling with the "defector syndrome" even though they were considered "successful" in their non-academic careers.

The future for family professionals in nonacademic careers. Absenteeism and health problems are major economic challenges of business and industry in the industrialized world today. Workers live in families. It seems possible that programs designed to strengthen families will reduce the stress associated with absenteeism and health problems. Students in the family sciences, through volunteer service and internships and practica, can help business and industry reduce lowered output by workers by means of effective programs they produce and conduct for workers and their families. This is an arena of career choice for family professionals that has barely been touched. Students who focus their studies on marriage and family relationships, home management, human development, family financial planning and counseling, family life education, and marriage and family therapy (traditional subject areas within the family sciences) probably have a ready market for their services once they learn to speak the language of the marketplace and have some experience in the workplace.

Can family professionals make a good living outside academia? Many already do. As family professionals further explore possibilities in the non-academic arena, they will discover that satisfying and financially-rewarding careers are to be found. No longer is academia the only career choice for family professionals.

THE FUTURE FOR FAMILY PROFESSIONALS

Careers for family professionals are many. However, with the possible exception of academia, a career for a family professional may not be listed in "jobs available" or any book on occupations. The family professional, especially with a bachelors degree as a terminal degree, will find a career if the person designs that career out of experience, initiative, and creativity. This probably means volunteer work in community organizations dealing with family-related matters is an essential part of career preparation as a family professional. Internships and practica are very important during the undergraduate and graduate experience, especially when seeking careers outside academia.

Family professionals must be aware of the following trends when preparing themselves for careers inside or outside academia (U.S. Dept. of Labor, 1986):

1. More women are entering the job market. Over 50 percent of women with school-age children are now employed outside the home, and the number of mothers employed outside the home is expected to continue to rise. Employed women and employed mothers, especially single mothers, will provide special challenges to families and to family professionals.
2. Smaller families is now the trend. Where once the trend was three or more children per family on the average, that number is now dropping to about two children per family. Parents are now putting their energies into meeting the needs of fewer children, including the challenges of increased costs of educating their children as well as increased costs of raising them (clothing and feeding them) and the increased costs of housing, and the challenge of maintaining open lines of communication with their children. Use of leisure time is a major challenge for families, and will become increasingly so with the trend toward smaller families.

3. There is the trend toward an aging population. The population over 65 is increasing. People are living longer. As the "baby boomers" raise their children to maturity, they become gray and older. Four-generation families will not be unusual, with parents of parents of parents living in the home. All the challenges related to an aging population must be dealt with, including the increasing incidence of catastrophic illness and how to cope with it within the family, how to meet the economic and physical needs of people who wish to maintain their self-reliance, how to meet the social and emotional needs of an increasingly "graying" population.

4. There will be increased enrollment in colleges and universities as the children of the "baby boomers" enter college in the mid-90s.

5. Population in the U.S. will increase in the West and the South.

6. Society is moving from a "manufacturing" society to an "information" and service society. This trend puts more stress on individuals in families because their emotional needs may not get met at work.

How do family professionals prepare for their careers? Most of them will spend a good part of their career time doing management/administrative tasks. They should prepare themselves for such responsibilities with coursework and with actual experience during volunteer work and internships.

Family professionals should learn how to write. Virtually all family professionals spend a good deal of their career time on writing tasks. More and more, family professionals find themselves writing proposals. Virtually all write correspondence, even if just inter-office memos. Family professionals will find increased possibilities for writing instructional programs in family-related content areas as well as scripts for filmstrips, videos, and films.

The salary range is large for family professionals, depending upon the employer, the type of tasks performed by the professional, and the state of the economy, just to name a few factors. The family professional likely won't get rich in his or her career. However, job satisfaction seems to be typical of family professionals, regardless of their salaries.

Being a family professional is like any other career. It has its positive aspects and its negative aspects. But if you are a person who wishes to be a family professional, the sky's the limit. You are limited only by your own vision, initiative, creativity, and stamina.
REFERENCES


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Family Science Review February, 1989