

Failure Is Impossible!



Feminism and Family Studies Section Newsletter
National Council on Family Relations
Number 3 April 1995

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings from Blacksburg! I have recently sent out for anonymous review the 41 abstracts that were submitted to the Feminism and Family Studies Section for the 1995 NCFR Annual Conference to be held November in Portland, Oregon. Our space in the program is proportional to the number of submissions sent to our Section, so it is great news that we received 41 submissions. From my initial review, I'm anticipating an exciting array of presentations for the 1995 conference. Thanks to everyone who has volunteered to work on the program this year.

After reading the abstracts myself, I sent each one to three volunteer reviewers. A blind review process is now underway, with abstracts evaluated on the basis of NCFR's general criteria as well as additional section criteria. Our Section considers the degree to which abstracts reflect feminist scholarship, methods, and practice. The abstracts are reviewed by an excellent mix of graduate students, new professionals, and experienced Section members.

After the three external evaluations for each abstract are returned to me, I will rank order the entire set of abstracts and prepare a preliminary plan for our Section's contribution to the annual conference. The final determination for the program will be made at the Spring Board of Directors meeting which is scheduled for April 29-30 in Portland. In May, the NCFR office will send letters to all who submitted proposals. Many thanks to all of you who submitted your work to the Section and to the volunteers who are generously giving of your time to review proposals for the 1995 Annual Conference.

If you have any questions or suggestions for the 1995 Annual Conference program, please get in touch with me. Once the review process is complete, I will be calling on Section members who volunteered to serve as presidents, discussants, and recorders for Feminism and Family Studies Section paper sessions. Students and new professionals are especially welcomed to help.

Our Student/New Professional Representatives, Sharon Dwyer and Pam Lerner, are organizing a reception that will follow the Section business meeting at the annual conference. Please let them know if you would like to help, or if you have suggestions for networking at the conference.

In May, the Feminism and Family Studies Section will elect new officers in the 1995 NCFR Spring election. Candidates' biographical sketches will appear in the March issue of the NCFR REPORT. Please support section members who are running for national office, too.

Our Newsletter Editor, Vicki Loyer-Carlson, has prepared another excellent newsletter for us. There are many announcements for upcoming events, such as instructions for submitting proposals for our two Sections awards. The minutes from the 1994 Feminism and Family Studies Section Annual Business Meeting held in November in Minneapolis are also included. In addition, look for recorder summaries of our FFSS paper sessions from the 1994 Annual Conference. Many thanks to the section members who prepared the summaries this year and to the presenters and discussants for their contributions to feminist scholarship.

I hope everyone is having a productive and healthy year. I welcome your comments, questions, and any support you may wish to offer the Section:

Katherine Allen, Chair, Feminism and Family Studies Section

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FFS BUSINESS MEETING

November 11, 1994; Minneapolis, MN; Attendance: n=120

1. Katherine Allen, section chair, called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. She introduced the officers of the Section.
2. **Secretary's report.** The minutes of the 1993 meeting were unanimously approved as distributed.
3. **Treasurer's report.** Margaret Crosbie-Burnett reported that there is \$3509 as of August 31, 1994 in the general account and \$11,331 in the Jessie Bernard Endowment Fund.
4. **Newsletter committee report.** Vicki Loyer-Carlson requested that everyone be proactive about submitting

articles for the newsletter. In particular she asked for suggestions for summer reading.

5. Student/New Professional committee report.

Sharon Dwyer discussed the opportunities to be involved in the section. Pam Lerner reported that her professional advancement had been enriched since having that role. She also reported that she had liaised with other organizations. She suggested we create a good quality button that identifies the wearer as the student/new professional and that the button can be passed on to each new generation.

6. Chair's Report. Katherine Allen reported that there were 59 proposals submitted for 1994 conference and that 35 members reviewed the proposals. We co-sponsored sessions with 6 other sections (Education & Enrichment, Ethnic Minorities, Research & Theory, Religion & Family Life, Family Policy, Family Science) as well as with the Student/New Professional Organization, and the Public Policy Committee. She thanked everyone for their efforts and reminded us that we are awarded time slots on the annual conference program based on the number of proposals/abstracts submitted for review.

She asked the group for feedback regarding the success of the reception that we co-sponsored just prior to the business meeting, and the group's suggestion was to have a reception for section members following the business meeting next year. The Hospitality Committee Chairs (Pam and Sharon) will organize the reception.

Reporting of news from the NCFR Board, Katherine Allen announced that the two new journal editors and the new president were all members of our section: Alexis Walker, President of NCFR; Robert Milardo, incoming editor of the Journal of Marriage and the Family; Connie Shehan, incoming editor of the Journal of Family Issues.

7. Nominating committee report. The 1994 FFSS Nominating Committee members were: Connie Shehan, Chair, Margie Geasler, Allison Lee, Edith Lewis, and Anisa Zvonkovic. The 1995 slate of candidates for FFSS offices was approved by the Section membership. It is:

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|--------------------------|---|
| Section Chair: | Margaret Crosbie-Burnett
Leigh Leslie |
| Vice-Chair: | Irene Levin
Elizabeth Norrell |
| Secretary-Treasurer: | Pamela Lerner
Shelly MacDermid |
| Newsletter Editor: | Elizabeth Farnsworth
Carmen Knudson-Martin |
| Student/New Prof. Reps.: | |
| vote for 2 | Leslie Hall
Renate Houts
Julie Netzer
Kate Conway Turner |

8. Awards committee report. Leigh Leslie, committee chair, announced the winners: Diane Roberts for the 1994 Outstanding Feminist Research Proposal award; Karla Brock for the 1994 Outstanding Feminist Paper Award. Award committee members were: Sally Gallagher, Joan Jurich, Pam Lerner, Connie Shehan and Mary-Eve Zangari.

The deadline for nominations for next year is April 24, 1995.

9. Endowment committee report. Margaret Crosbie-Burnett, committee chair, gave a brief history of the endowment fund for the benefit of newcomers. She announced that the FFS would accept donations anytime.

She reported on the progress of the new fund-raising campaign, the sale of feminist greeting cards that would be appropriate for any occasion. Rosemary Bleiszner, Maureen Perry-Jenkins, Donna Barre, Karen Wilcox, and Maria Martino are serving on this committee. Original art work has been donated by undergraduate art students at Mills College. Members of the section have sent suggestions for text for the inside of the cards. The cards will state that a donation has been made to the FFS section of NCFR in honor of the person receiving the card. She suggested that packs of 5 different cards should be sold for \$10, and that we make up only 250 packs. A survey of the membership in attendance at the meeting revealed that the section membership intends to buy 110 packs. The membership gave unanimous approval for the project. Katherine Allen will bring the request for selling the cards to the NCFR Board at the spring meeting.

Robert Milardo suggested that we should try to get some of the money that the organization will receive from the sale of the Journal of Family History into our endowment fund. Margaret Crosbie-Burnett agreed to contact Lynda Walters about that; Dr. Walters is on the long-range planning committee.

10. Hospitality committee report. The students/new professionals are in charge of this committee. They placed sign-up sheets on the wall for suggestions for the 1995 conference. The students will be responsible for the reception at the 1995 conference.

11. Feminist teaching committee report. Donna Sollie, committee chair, announced that the feminist teaching round tables were a great success. The membership approved a plan to propose to the NCFR publication committee that we create and sell new Feminist Teaching Packets.

12. Mentoring committee report. Sandra Stith, committee chair, announced that 8 mentor-mentee matches were made this year and that 20 have been made

The Stepfamily - Variation and Manifold by Irene Levine (1994, Aventura Publ., Oslo)

In the spring of 1994 Irene Levin, Dept. of Social Work University of Trondheim, Norway, published a book in Norwegian at Aventura Publ. Oslo: STEFAMILIEN - VARIASJON OG MANGFOLD (The Stepfamily - variation and manifold) The work will be translated into English. In this book Levine analyzes the stepfamily not as a variant *of* the nuclear family, but as a variant *like* the nuclear family. Therefore the special conditions related to stepfamilies are highlighted.

The stepfamily can be looked upon as a project where it is important "not to fail." When one marries or starts a cohabitation the first time it is important to succeed. The second time it is not only important to succeed but also "not to fail." Therefore there is a special motivation in establishing the stepfamily, but at the same time there is no model for the roles on the societal level. How do the members of the stepfamily household behave to make sure they will not fail? Data shows three patterns of behavior. Some try to *reconstruct* the nuclear family and the stepparent becomes a *father or mother substitute*. While *wait and see'ers* are more pragmatic and use the nuclear family as model when they want. The stepparent becomes an extra person more like a *friend or an adult person*. The *innovators* use the nuclear family as an anti-model. The stepparent is more like an *uncle or an aunt* who takes care of the children once in a while.

This variety in the role of the stepparent is only partially true when data are analyzed from a gender perspective. If the females are mothers or stepmothers, they all do household chores anyway. Even if she is a stepmother like a friend or more distant like an aunt, she is the one who does the cooking and the laundry for his children. It seems like the female is a potential mother even if she does have children of her own or not. For the stepfathers there is a possibility to be both close and distant as stepfathers; they can be fathers or stepfathers like father substitute, friends or uncles - the male role allows more of a variety.

In connection with UN's International Year of the Family, Irene Levin was also invited to be a guest editor for a special issue of Fokus pa familien (Focus on the Family) on Varying Family Forms, 1994, 22, issue 1. The special issue includes articles on: Homosexual families, single parent families, families without children, three generational families, cohabiting families and LAT (living apart together) and stepfamilies.

(Continued on page 6)

in all. She asked for a committee to help her evaluate the program. New mentors and mentees were solicited.

13. **New business.** Katherine Allen asked the membership to examine the bylaws that were in the newsletter and reported that they have never changed since the inception of the section. The major change is that beginning in 1996, sections must now submit a budget before spending any money. (BYLAWS attached) The new wording on the budget will read "Maximum of \$..." in each category of expenses. This will build flexibility into the budget. We will also add a "Miscellaneous" category. Katherine Allen thanked Alexis Walker for her help on the budget. Catherine Surra moved and Rosemary Blieszner seconded the motion that the changes be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

Katherine Allen proposed next year's budget (below). She requested preliminary approval for the 1995 Annual Conference expenditures for approximately \$600. This will appear in the 1995-1996 budget. This and the entire budget was approved by the membership.

FFSS BUDGET

FY June 1, 1994 to May 31, 1995

FFS Travel	\$ 600
FFS Supplies	130
FFS Annual Conference	600
FFS Newsletter	670
FFS Printing	100
FFS Postage	300
Miscellaneous	
	<hr/>
	\$2400

Katherine encouraged members to submit proposals for next year's meeting. The following suggestions were made: research round tables, organized by topic, methods; feminist theology; a presentation that integrates something feminist about the city where the annual meeting is held. Sign-up sheets for reviewers of 1995 Conference abstracts discussants, presiders, and recorders were distributed. Ninety-two people volunteered.

Katherine asked people who had published books recently to stand and describe it briefly. Ten new books or special journal issues were announced. Members also announce job openings.

At Leigh Leslie's suggestion, Katherine asked all persons who were new to the group to introduce themselves, since the group was too large to have everyone introduce themselves.

14. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Families and Work: Negotiating Gender, Time, and Conflict

Let's hear it for Feminist research at noon on Sunday! The 24 NCFR conference participants who attended paper session no. 417, "Families and Work: Negotiating Gender, Time, and Conflict," in Minneapolis on Nov. 13 at noon were treated to a wonderfully diverse collection of research that explored women and men's experiences in coping with personal and professional commitments throughout the life course and in a variety of institutional contexts.

We began with the presentation of work by Maureen Perry-Jenkins, Sally Gillman-Hanz, Dorothy Puch, and Rebecca Wertz ("Linkages Between Parents' Daily Experiences at the Job and Involvement in Family Activities") that explored the effects of job stress upon daily family life among working class couples and single mothers. The authors used in-home interviews and post-workday diaries and questionnaires to assemble a unique data set that included self-report measures of stress and time spent in daily activities such as household tasks and active and passive leisure. Their analyses suggested that working women's infamous "second shift" patterns are affected by job stress in ways that are different for men. For married women, traditional gender role expectations may influence their decisions to engage in household tasks after high stress days while their husbands appear to be able to negotiate compensatory leisure on such days. Single mothers appear to be able to withdraw from household tasks after high stress days, perhaps due to an absence of spousal expectations, although they may face greater pressures to be more involved in leisure activities with children on low-stress days.

Next, Renata De Verthelyi presented an exploratory study of international student couple's struggles to balance individual professional opportunities with joint family life goals titled "International Dual Student Couples: Balancing Study and Family Life in a Cross-Cultural Context". With this study the author addresses a gap in the literature which has traditionally examined the experiences of student's spouses rather than "student-spouses", in this case women who are pursuing educational goals at the same time as their husbands. Through semi-structured, qualitative interviews with 15 couples the author explored their family lives, marital experiences, and professional careers before arrival in this country and during their program of study, as well as their individual expectations about the future. In most cases, male spouse's educational timetables and

professional opportunities shaped their wives' personal and professional decisions. This research reveals the strength of peer/spouse support in international student marital relationships which are negotiated in a cultural context likely to offer few alternative sources of social support. The author notes further research on gender inequalities in such relationships is needed. Based on this preliminary research, she distributed a list of suggested interventions for supporting such couples in the university environment.

In recognition of this year's NCFR Conference theme "Families and Justice", Joanne Hoven Stohs studied work-family negotiation processes by examining the role of equity issues in married couples' conflicts. In "Similarities and Differences in Couples' Experiences of Conflict over Household Labor" she discussed results from a mail survey of couples expected to have less traditional gender role values in order to determine whether equity (measured as satisfaction with division of labor), practical (number of people in household), and status difference factors predicted conflicts about household division of labor. The author reported results from separate analyses for men and women that revealed that dissatisfaction was the strongest predictor of conflict whereas for men a variety of factors were significant. She concluded that perceived equity is a relatively more important issue for women in the negotiation of family work than for their male partners.

The final paper, titled "Working Men and Women: A Gender Analysis of Family and Work Needs," Laurie A. Stenberg-Nichols, Nancy Wanamaker, and Nancy Deringer reported data from a large needs assessment study conducted at the University of Idaho. The authors presented visual summaries of selected statistics concerning work-family needs, preferences, stress, and coping for which gender and organizational position differences were apparent. Among other findings, women reported that services such as medical information and supportive work environments were needed more than men did, and gender was associated with the identification of different types of current and anticipated needs. Staff members tended to report a greater need for certain types of services such as financial management and counseling as compared to faculty. Both women and staff members were more likely to report that dependent care needs were not being met. Male respondents and those with faculty status reported lower stress levels on average.

Our discussant, Polly Fassinger, enthusiastically integrated those presentations by noting that each study identified the work-family negotiation process as central

to understanding issues of gender stratification. After offering some specific issues for each author to explore, she challenged all of us to fulfill two principles of feminist methodology in future work (1) the explicit inclusion of women's voices in our research data and reports and (2) the design of studies and application of knowledge that will empower women to understand and address social inequalities. Finally, she encouraged us to incorporate the conference theme of social justice by suggesting that feminist scholarship should attempt to broaden traditional, "individualistic" public discourse in an effort to focus policy discussions to recognize community level effects and obligations related to work-family negotiation patterns in contemporary society.

Susan Levy, Recorder

Gender and Power in Family Contexts: Changing Ideologies and Practices

Nearly 45 people attended a stimulating session on gender and power. Leigh Bramon, a doctoral student at the University of Missouri integrated and analyzed research published since 1980, which focused on similarities and differences in gay male, lesbian, and heterosexual intimate relationships. Bramon found that power issues are similar across the three groups, and the amount of quality/satisfaction does not differ according to the type of relationship.

Karen Pike challenged participants to examine the structures of inequality and the ways in which they are "expressed in ideological hegemonies, which enhance, legitimate, and mystify, the interpersonal power of privileged men relative to lower-status men, and women in general." Ideological hegemony is the process of attaining consensus between dominant and subordinate groups. Pike interviewed 70 individuals (34 men, 36 women) half of whom were in working class marriage half of whom were in middle to upper class marriages and found support that both women and men internalize ideologies that reinforce gender and social class hierarchy in invisible ways and in ways which considered the prevailing ideology to be essential.

Marti Kennedy investigated the importance and differential meaning given to women's family roles in terms of beliefs about economic and sex equality. Of the 181 males and 277 females (ages 18-77), men were more inclined to report higher levels of sex-inequitable beliefs when asked about the five most important things for a woman to be. Particularly problematic, according to Kennedy is that when considering motherhood, women separated motherhood duty and devotion, while men combined duty and devotion. Kennedy warns that "an

ideology that mandates women to motherhood and further to self sacrificing devotion toward the family organizes motherhood as an institution that is symbolic of subordination."

Finally, Kersti Yllo and her colleague Penelope Grace (deceased in 1993) examined family therapist's recognition of the widespread problem of domestic violence, their assessment of marital abuse of power, and therapeutic intervention. Rejecting systemic notions of focusing on what the situation is rather than why it exists, Yllo asserts that an understanding of why men are violent is critical to feminist intervention. Yllo and Grace sent surveys to AAMFT members and asked therapists to indicate whether marital violence was a significant problem in their practices: over half of the respondents said it was not a significant problem. This, the authors point out, is a concern because it is contradictory to data which indicate that violence occurs in up to one third of all marriages. Therapists use of conjoint therapy as the treatment of choice for marital violence decreased between 1989 (72.5%) and 1992 (57.3%) and actually became seen as a contra-indicated form of treatment. The use of alternative approaches such as battered women's support groups and programs (most favored by feminists) increased. This, the authors assert, may mean that therapists are changing their practice styles in light of the feminist culture.

Yllo and Grace conclude that while some therapists are able to contextualize violence, some are continuing to use paradigms which minimize violence and blame the victim. Therapists are challenged to develop an effective conceptualization of family violence and to standardize screening for violence and treatment of violent relationships.

In summary, these four papers have each highlighted the dilemma imposed by not questioning the prevailing ideology. It is precisely things "that have always been that way" that show the greatest threat to the equality, and safety, of women in society.

Vicki L. Loyer-Carlson, Recorder

Louis Balancio 1973 - 1994

Poster presentations give authors comfortable forums from which they can discuss their projects in detail with those who are willing to listen. Frequently the researchers investigate that which they hold most dear: marital relationships, gay and lesbian family relationships, motherhood, etc. I was not surprised to find Dorothy M. Cali-Balancio, an Italian-American mother-sociologist-journal editor displaying a journal and newspaper articles - until I began reading about her mission: to find and prosecute her 21-year-old son's murderers. In what reads like a stereotyped "mob-hit"

and keep everyone quiet-or-else, Louis Balancio was murdered in front of 30 witnesses, the arriving police told everyone to "scatter and shut up" and "young men regularly called the house this spring and warned the family to leave the case alone" (New York Daily News, Sept. 23, 1994). The mother, using all of her resources is participating in conferences whenever she can in the hope that someone will read her tragic story who can help. To this date, according to family members, there is still no progress in locating the murderers, or even the witnesses. You can contact Dr. Cali-Balancio at 11-68 Jackson Avenue, Scarsdale, NY 19583; (914)-961-2426 (H), (914) 961-2537 Messages, (914) 779-4502 Fax.

• BOOKS • BOOKS • BOOKS • (Con't) •

Women Growing Older: Psychological Perspectives, by Barbara F. Turner and Lillian E. Troll (Eds). (1994; Sage).

Beginning their book with a general review of feminist philosophies, editors Turner and Troll focus on expanding theory and research in the field of aging women. This is an exciting collection of seven papers which focus on women's reality. All of the chapters focus on older women, though several studies use male comparison groups. The populations studied are largely middle-class White women. Two of the chapters feature samples that are diverse in race, ethnicity, and social class. Turner and Turner explicitly address White people's social stereotypes of African American as well as White women of different ages. Several samples in the book are diverse in age. The intent of the book is to stimulate the development of theory on gender and aging.

DID YOU KNOW?

Many of our section members have written or edited books. If you have read any of such books, please write a review and send it to book review editor Karen Headlee, 1337 Fairfield St., Morgantown, WV 26505-2103. (As many of you may already know, if you call publishers and tell them you would like to write a book review on a particular book they will send you the book for free!). If you have written or edited a book and would like to have

it reviewed, send Karen a complete reference for your book and a short description of your intended audience.

CONFERENCES

The Vermont Conference on the Primary Prevention of Psychopathology and the University of Vermont Department of Psychology are pleased to present a conference in June on the **Prevention of Heterosexism and Homophobia**. Experts will discuss the prevention of heterosexism through empirical findings, theoretical models, and applied programs in both formal and informal settings. The conference is designed to be a working meeting therefore allowing for interaction between those in attendance and speakers. International experts will be presenting papers and workshops. In addition, a three-credit course on the prevention of heterosexism and homophobia will be offered for either graduate or undergraduate credit.

The conference is June 14-17 in Burlington, Vermont at the Radisson Hotel on Lake Champlain. For more information, contact: UVM Conferences, Att: VCPPP 30 South Park Drive, Colchester, VT 05466, USA Phone: 800-639-3188, Fax: 082-656-3891. E-mail: HBallou@moose.uvm.edu.

The Pennsylvania State University College of Health and Human Development will be hosting a three day conference **Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identities and the family: Psychological Perspectives**, June 2 - 4, 1995 at The Penn State Scanticon Conference Center Hotel. The goal of this conference is to bring together nationally renowned researchers and scholars to address contemporary conceptual and empirical analyses that relate sexual orientation to different aspects of family life. Families will be discussed both as sites in which sexual orientation develops as well as social contexts that influence the expression of sexual identities. For more information contact Dr. Anthony R. D'Augelli at (814) 865-1447.

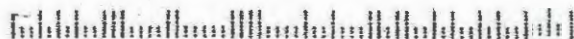
FUTURE MEMBERS

Congratulations! to Leigh Leslie who's daughter Lydia was born on January 4, 1995.

Family Wellness Center, Inc.
2424 E. Broadway Blvd.
Suite 202
Tucson, AZ 85719



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OOPS! MORE NEWS

Attention: Students & New Professionals

The Feminism and Family Studies Section of the National Council on Family Relations is seeking applications for two awards to be given at the November 1995 NCFR Annual Conference in Portland. Applicants do not need to be members of NCFR, but we welcome new members to our section and organization.

The Outstanding Research Proposal from a Feminist Perspective is given in honor of Jesse Bernard. Graduate students and new professionals (with up to five years post-doctoral work) are encouraged to apply for this award of \$500 to fund feminist research. Proposals will be evaluated for their potential contribution to feminist scholarship and the use of feminist frameworks and methods. Applications should include: a) an abstract of 100 words or less, b) a five page (maximum) proposal outlining the projects purpose, theoretical foundation, research methods, and potential contribution to feminist scholarship, and c) a half-page budget. A summary of the recipient's research results will be published in the Feminism and Family Studies Section Newsletter, and the recipient will be asked to present a report of the project and findings at the 1996 NCFR Annual Conference.

The Outstanding Contribution to Feminist Scholarship Paper Award is accompanied by a gift of complimentary books from Westview Press. Applications for this award are open to all graduate students and new professionals (with up to five years post-doctoral work). Papers should demonstrate contribution to feminist scholarship and the use of feminist frameworks and methods. Applicants should be the sole author or first author of the paper; both published and unpublished papers will be considered. A summary of the paper will be published in the Feminism and Family Studies Newsletter.

Six copies of the application should be sent by April 24, 1995 to: Leigh Leslie, FFSS Awards Committee Chair, Department of Family Studies, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742 (E-Mail: Leigh-A-Leslie@umail.umd.edu; phone 301-405-4011; FAX 301-314-9161). Authors should identify themselves only in a cover letter so all entries can be reviewed anonymously.

Remember: Copy deadline for the October issue of this fine newsletter is **September 15, 1995!!!!** Don't forget to Clip & Send your Oh Wise One answer to Vicki Loyer-Carlson, Family Wellness Center, Inc., 2424 E. Broadway Blvd., Suite 202, Tucson, AZ 85719.

FFSS Officers & Committee Chairs

Section Chair:	Katherine Allen
Vice-Chair:	Leigh Leslie
Past-Chair:	Connie Shehan
Sec/Treas:	Margaret Crosbie-Burnett
Newsletter Editor:	Vicki Loyer-Carlson
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Mentoring:	Sandi Stith

Inclusion of an article in this newsletter does not imply endorsement by the National Council on Family Relations

Oh Wise One:

Two questions that have been frequently posed to me by students and new professionals are:

1. Is there life after graduate school *other than* University/College employment?
2. How do people balance the demands of paid work and family work, and have time for leisure activities?

Dear Colleagues,

Here's what I think about your questions:

Sincerely,