

Human Development and Family Science

Volume 1, Issue 1

August, 2010

We've Changed Our Name !

HDFS Colloquium Series:

"Researching the National Women's Conference of 1977" Dena Wyum and Dr. Christi McGeorge.

"Does Affirmative Training Matter?: Assessing CFT Students' Beliefs about Sexual Orientation and Their Level of Affirmative Training" Tom Carlson CFT Associate Professor

"The Body Image and Sexual Activity Study" Presenters: Dr. Kristen Benson and Dr. Beth Blodgett Salafia

Gertrude Weigum Hinsz Lecture Series

"Being Out and Gay in High School: Victimization and Young Adult Adjustment." Dr. Stephen Russell

HDFS Community Presentation

"How to Get the Most Out of Baby Toys" Dr. Rebecca Woods



The Department of Child Development and Family Science is now the Department of Human Development and

Family Science! Our name change was approved by the State Board of Higher Education this fall, and is an excellent fit with what we do as a department, emphasizing both our lifespan perspective and our programs in adult development and aging. The name of the degree will officially change fall of 2010, with our CDFS course

prefix replaced by HDFS.

We've had other changes as well, which you'll find on the following pages. As you'll see, HDFS is a thriving, vibrant place, with lots of exciting things happening. We look forward to sharing our news with you, and also to hearing from you about your experiences since leaving us!

Gertrude Weigum Hinsz Lecture

Thanks in large part to an anonymous donor, the HDFS department has been able to establish a lecture series, that allows us to bring one nationally known scholar to our campus each year to present his or her research to members of the NDSU and Fargo-Moorhead communities.

The lecture series is dedicated in honor and memory of



Gertrude Weigum Hinsz, who was born in Zap, ND and had a long-standing commitment to child development, healthy and happy living, and quality family life.

The **Second Annual Gertrude Weigum Hinsz Lecture Series** was held on Friday, March 26th. The speaker for this year's lecture was Dr. Stephen T. Russell, Professor and Fitch Nesbitt Endowed Chair, from the University of Arizona.

The title of Dr. Russell's lecture was "Being Out and Gay in High School: Victimization and Young Adult Adjustment." Dr. Russell discussed the fact that contemporary lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth are part of the first generation to "come out" during adolescence. Many adolescents "come out" at school, a crucial peer environment at this age. For adolescents, "coming out" is associated with a greater risk for peer victimization and harassment. At the same time, studies of LGBT adults indicate that "coming out" is associated with positive social and emotional adjustment.

Dr. Russell shared data from his recent study which showed youth who were out in school were more likely to be victimized (e.g., experiencing teasing, name calling, physical violence, etc.), but that even with this victimization, the long-term effects of being out in school were better adjustment in

young adulthood. Thus, while being victimized at school is harmful to LGBT adolescents, and for that matter all adolescents, the benefits of being out and open about their sexual orientation appear to be greater for adolescents and outweigh the negative effects of victimization.

This lecture was well attended by HDFS undergraduates and graduate students as well as by area teachers, law enforcement officers, and faculty and students from across the NDSU campus. The Gertrude Weigum Hinsz lecture series is one way that the HDFS department contributes to the land-grant mission of sharing scholarly knowledge generated at universities with people who can use that information.

2011 Heinz Lecture: Dr. Jan McCulloch, Department Head at the University of Minnesota. April 15, 2011.

New Faculty and Programs in HDFS



(Left to right) Front row: Rebecca Woods, Christi McGeorge, Heidi Bills, Kris Bjelde, Cynthia Torges, Nancy Kaler, Theresa Anderson, Jim Deal (Department Head)

2nd Row: Beth Blodgett Salafia, Kristen Benson, Margaret Fitzgerald, Tom Carlson, Renee Galster

3rd Row: Sean Brother-son, Debb Pankow, Brandy Randall, Joel Hektner, Debra Habedank

Faculty/Staff not pictured:

Nicole Bakkegard
Heather Fuller-Iglesias
Candace Philbrick
Ann Werlinger

Center for Child
Development Staff

Stacey Birrenkott
Mary Duggan
Mary Mastel
Monica Nicklay
Heather Oye
Michele Zwack

In the past few years, we've seen some major changes in departmental staffing.

In 2007, Professor Harriett Light retired after a long record of extensive service to the department. At the

same time Professor Greg Sanders moved into the Associate Dean's position full-time.

The void left by Dr. Light and Dr. Sanders was significant, but was filled by Dr. Elizabeth Blodgett Salafia, Dr. Cynthia Torges, and Dr. Rebecca

Woods.

Dr. Salafia and Dr. Woods increase our expertise in child and adolescent development, while Dr. Torges fills a gap in the adult development and aging area.

Dr. Kris Bjelde joined us in a half-time position, providing a breadth of expertise across both family science and adult development and aging areas.

At the end of 2008, Dr. Marlys Bratteli left NDSU. She was replaced by Dr. Heather Fuller Iglesias, furthering our adult development and aging faculty.

In addition, Dr. Kristen Benson became a tenure track assistant professor fall of 2009, giving us a full complement of faculty in the family science/couple and family therapy areas.

We also added two new online instructors, Professor Candace Philbrick and Professor Ann Werlinger. Together, they fill out our complement of online-DCE courses.

Finally, Ms. Heidi Bills joined us Fall, 2008 serving as academic advisor to our freshmen and sophomores.

Meet The Newest Faculty

Dr. Elizabeth Blodgett Salafia



Dr. Beth Blodgett Salafia earned her PhD in psychology from the University of Notre Dame and came to NDSU in 2008. She currently teaches undergraduate classes in adolescent development and parent-child relations. She also teaches graduate classes in adolescent through early adult development and quantitative methods in developmental science.

Dr. Salafia's research examines the factors associated with adolescents' and young adults' disordered eating patterns and body image. She is currently conducting three research studies.

The first, called *the Eating Attitudes Study*, is a 2-year study involving male and female adolescents in middle school and high school. The foci of the study include examining a variety of parent, sibling, peer, and individual factors on adolescents' eating attitudes, disordered eating behaviors, and body image.

Dr. Rebecca Woods



Dr. Rebecca Woods has been an assistant professor in the Department of Human Development & Family Science at NDSU since 2008. In 2006 she received her Ph.D. in Psychology from Texas A&M University and in 2007 she completed a postdoctoral assistantship focused on studying early gender differences in toy preferences.

She teaches courses in prenatal, infant, and toddler development and cognitive development. Her current research, conducted at the Infant Cognitive Development Lab, is focused on identifying developmental changes in infants' learning and memory for objects. In particular, she is interested in learning how experiences, such as those provided by parents and other caregivers, influence object-processing skills in infants aged 4 months to 2 years.

Infant Cognitive Lab

About our Research

Research in the Infant Cognitive Development Lab is centered on cognitive abilities in infants that are related to attention and memory.

Object Individuation

Most of our research investigates object individuation in infancy. Object individuation is the ability to determine whether an object is the same or a different object than one that was seen previously. To individuate an object, an infant must attend to various types of visual information and use this information to make a "same/different object" distinction. Our research is focused on learning how infants begin to identify new forms of information as important and how development in multiple areas contribute to the emergence of this basic cognitive ability.



features unreliable, will this disrupt their ability to individuate?

Multi sensory Experience and Object Processing in Infancy

Young infants can use features such as shape and size, but not color or pattern to individuate objects. Playing with objects before an individuation task helps babies use both color and pattern differences, but what if we add a distracter?

Assisting Infants in Object Exploration

Does helping babies explore objects help them attend to different features? We think it might, and that a parent's help compared to a stranger's will be more effective.

Audio-Visual Processing in Infancy

When babies are given the ability to use multiple senses (such as sight and touch) to explore an object, they are better able to process information about object features. Does pairing audio cues with visual information have the same effect?

Current Studies at the Lab

Infants' Use of Reliable Features for Object Individuation

Most object features in an infant's world are fairly consistent and reliable. If babies are given information which makes certain object

*Dr. Rebecca Woods,
Principle Investigator*

Dr. Stephen T. Russell



Dr. Stephen T. Russell was this year's speaker for the Second Annual Gertrude Weigum Hinsz Lecture Series (see story on p.1).

Dr. Stephen T. Russell is Professor and Fitch Nesbitt Endowed Chair in Family and Consumer Sciences in the John & Doris Norton School of Family and Consumer Sciences at the University of Arizona, and Director of the Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth, and Families.

Stephen conducts research on adolescent pregnancy and parenting, cultural

influences on parent-adolescent relationships, and the health and development of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth.

He received a Wayne F. Placek Award from the American Psychological Foundation (2000), was a William T. Grant Foundation Scholar (2001-2006), a board member of the National Council on Family Relations (2005-2008), and was elected as a member of the International Academy of Sex Research in 2004. He is Associate Editor for the Journal of Research on Adolescence, and President-Elect of the Society for Research on Adolescence.



The Infant Cognitive Development Lab is located at NDSU's Graduate Center on the corner of 12th St N and 12th Ave N.



**Graduate Student
Awards 2009**

Dena Wyum for Outstanding Master's Thesis or Paper

Jessica Lemer and Andrea Lang (tie) For Outstanding Assistance to Faculty.

Meet Our Newest Faculty (continued)

Dr. Heather Fuller Iglesias



Dr. Heather Fuller-Iglesias just completed her first year as assistant professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Science at NDSU. In 2009, she earned her Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from the University of Michigan. She teaches courses that focus on adult development and aging, family dynamics, and lifespan development.

Dr. Fuller-Iglesias' research focuses on social relationships and their effect on development and well-being across the life course. Her primary interests include aging and family dynamics, intergenerational relationships, and sociodemographic and cross-cultural differences in social support and family interactions. Most recently, she returned from a year-long Fulbright Fellowship in Mexico City where she completed a mixed methods study of social support and well-being among Mexican adults. With this data, she is currently working on projects that examine the role of older adults in the Mexican family unit and the effect of transnationalism on the social networks and well-being of Mexican families separated by migration to the U.S.

Dr. Kristen Benson



Kristen Benson joined the Department of HDFS in fall 2007. She earned her PhD in Human Development and a Women's Studies Graduate Certificate from Virginia Tech in spring 2009. Dr. Benson supervises couple and family therapy (CFT) students, teaches graduate courses in CFT ethics, couples therapy, parent-child relations, and teaches undergraduate courses in sexuality and parent-child relations. She is a licensed marriage and family therapist.

Dr. Benson's research explores gender identity and relationships, sexuality, underserved clinical populations, and qualitative research methodology. Dr. Benson's dissertation research utilizes qualitative methods to examine gender identity and adult partner relationships when one partner identifies as transgender. She is currently conducting a study to better understand the experiences of parents and primary caregivers whose children do not conform to social gender norms. Dr. Benson collaborates with Dr. Beth Blodgett Salafia on the Body Image and Sexual Activity Study.

Dr. Cynthia Torges



Dr. Cynthia Torges joined the Department of Human Development and Family Science in 2008. Prior to this, she completed a postdoctoral assistantship at the University of Michigan's School of Social Work funded by a grant from the National Institute on Aging. She received her Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of Michigan in 2006.

Dr. Torges teaches classes about adult development and aging. In broad terms, her research focuses on personality development and well-being in midlife and older age. One area of interest involves how people deal with difficult life challenges and how people's understanding of these difficulties affects their adjustment and well-being. She is currently conducting research focused on regret, forgiveness and spirituality in older age.