



Janet Fritz

Human Development and Family Studies, 1969-2003

Personal Background

Date of Birth: 06/12/1942

Family

Single. 2 siblings, 5 nieces and nephews, 5 great nieces and nephews, and 1 great-great niece

I was born in Boulder, Colorado in 1942. I attended Mapleton Elementary, Casey Jr. High, and Boulder High. My father was a history professor at CU (deceased in 1956). My mother taught in a one room school in Gold Hill, CO and Brighton, but had to give up being a teacher when she married in 1927. (Deceased in 1968).

Education

I attended the University of Colorado from 1960-1964 earning a BA in Psychology with honors. Knowing I could not get a professional job in psychology with a Bachelors, I went on immediately to graduate school for my Masters (1964-66). I went to Cornell University and did my degree in Child Development. This was my first exposure, not only to the East, but to a Land Grant University. While I had applied only to Psychology Departments, I had indicated my interest was in Developmental Psychology. At Cornell all graduate applications go to the Graduate School and by your choice of area they place you in the appropriate department. I was encouraged to go to Cornell by my CU profs, but was very unsure of being in a College of Home Economics having had no exposure to Home Economics beyond Junior High...but soon changed my mind when I saw how appropriate the faculty and courses were for my academic interests. My Assistantship was in the Counseling Service of the College of Home Economics (now the college of Human Ecology). It was through this work at the Counseling Center that I learned about the Land Grant concept. This position also gave me two valuable areas of training for my later position at CSU. First was learning more about working with college students (their issues, concerns, and needs) and learning much more about each of the areas within a college of Home Economics. At Cornell you selected your courses and committee members from anywhere on campus....so I had committee members from both Psychology (Dr. Eleanor Gibson-Perception) and HD (Dr. George Suci -Cognitive Development). It turned out to be a wonderful, challenging program and one where I found that my chosen specialty of Cognitive Development was one that held my interest then and for the rest of my career.

I completed my Masters of Science degree in Child Development in 1966. The title of my thesis was “The effect of overtraining and method of stimulus presentation on reversal shifts”. My topic remained relevant to my work in my first professional position and served as a launch for inclusion in a larger grant proposal at Harvard Medical School and for the first study I published when I was hired at Colorado State University. It is interesting to me that at the end of my Masters I turned down several college teaching positions (college teaching positions were available at the MS level in the 60’s) because of a desire to get out of the university milieu and into the “real world”. So I held out and found a wonderful first position as a researcher and clinical assessment staff member on an ongoing NIH project at The Johns Hopkins Hospital/Pediatrics Unit. My first research position after my Master’s was in the area of cognitive development in children with Minimal Brain Dysfunction who were either taking medication or not. The head of the project was Chief of Child Psychiatry (Dr. Leon Eisenberg) and when he was hired as Chief of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School the entire project went to Boston with him. Several of us were free to move and were given academic appointments in the medical school and a clinic on the grounds of Massachusetts General Hospital. But after a couple of years I realized that there was no room for growth and additional responsibilities with the clinic project and so decided to return to Colorado for a soft-money position in a larger clinic in Denver. When that grant did not materialize I was out of work, but wanted to remain in Colorado. On a visit to Colorado State University to see a counselor I’d worked under at Cornell during my Master’s, who was serving as Associate Dean of the College of Home Economics, I was told about two open positions in the then unit of Child Development. I was hired by Dean Gifford and began to see the joys of being back in academia and the pleasures of working with college-aged students again.

After coming to Colorado State University to teach I realized that college teaching/research was the career I wanted; with that realization came the decision that I must return to school for my doctorate (the union card in the profession). I applied to several graduate programs and in visiting the ones where I was accepted, I recognized that the best fit for me was to return to Cornell. In 1974 I took a leave and a sabbatical and completed my doctoral course work in two years on campus and returned to CSU and completed my dissertation the following summer at Cornell. My academic area was still Cognitive Development, but now had a greater focus on psycholinguistics, still under the guidance of Dr. Gibson and Dr. Suci. My dissertation was entitled “Semantic comprehension of the action-role relationship in early –linguistic infants”. When I returned to CSU, my department head, Dr. Bruce Gardner, allowed me to develop two new graduate courses---one Cognitive Development and the other Early Language Acquisition. My doctorate from Cornell is a joint Human Development/Developmental Psychology degree. So my interests from undergraduate days were still vital for me a decade and a half later. And with my earlier work experience and final graduate study I found new collegial working relationships at CSU within the Speech and Language Department, the Psychology Department, and the Education department as well as my department which had been renamed Human Development and Family Studies.

Employment

As mentioned above...I came to Colorado State University to visit Dr. Hoddick with whom I had worked under at Cornell. My good luck was that two openings had just occurred in the Child Development and Family Relations unit of the college. Dean Gifford and Associate Dean Hoddick interviewed and hired me. I began in 1969 as an instructor in Child Development; this was an appointment I viewed, personally, as short-term...a couple of years perhaps. I finally completely retired from the department 34 years later as professor emeritus in 2003. While I moved up the ranks from instructor to full professor I never changed positions within the College or University, except for a year as Interim Associate Dean of the College. This was just a temporary hold while a search was conducted for the new Assoc. Dean and to serve as an administrative experience to let me consider whether higher administration would be a career choice for me; I found that what I enjoyed most was the little time I had with my one class and work with the students. So while thankful for the experience I was convinced I would never want positions such as those to be my primary responsibility.

Service within the Department: included teaching, research, and service. Service positions I held within the department were wide and varied....but the three I held for the most prolonged periods of time were Graduate Chair (1982-85, 88, 96-97), Chair of the Tenure and Promotion Committee (1981-1994, 1998-2001), and Executive Committee (1977-80, 1985-88, 1992-94, & 1996-1999). Also, Faculty Council Representative for 20 years.

College Service: included a wide range of search committees, Reorganization committees, Research, Graduate Education, Scholastic Standards, Fulbright Program, Curriculum, Dean's Advisory Committee, and many other one-time efforts, such as the New Building Committee, College Name Committee, etc.

University service: was an area where I enjoyed learning more about the University as a whole and working on projects with many wonderful CSU faculty and administrators across the campus. Some included:

- Faculty Women's Caucus- 1983-2000 (Co-Chair 1997-2000)
- Faculty Governance Committee Chair and member 1994-2000)
- Chair of Faculty Council 1990-1992, Vice-Chair -1988-90 -- these were first years faculty held positions.
- Wrote first Procedures Handbook for Faculty Governance System at CSU
- University Executive Committee (1980-82, 86-88, 89-90, Chair 1990-1992)
- On a number of Search, University Planning, and Benefits special committees
- University Grievances Committee, Faculty-Graduate Student Responsibilities, Study Abroad Committee, SAFSA Self Study on International Education, and many others.

Research Interests/Pursuits:

Early research interests revolved around early cognitive development, particularly in the area of early language learning and comprehension of concepts within the area of emotions.

The last few decades my research focused on the areas of risk and resilience (focusing on early prevention programming and social/emotional issues of hospitalized children) and social cognition (focusing on the construct of Self-Efficacy and perceived competence). In addition, a large number of my publications were co-authored with my graduate students which might include my area of emphasis or were within the area of cognitive development, but based primarily on their topic of interest. I felt strongly that at the Masters level one should focus on teaching basic techniques of sound research around questions that excited the student's interests. The majority of my later grants related to early intervention program evaluations in collaboration with Jan Miller-Heyl and David MacPhee. My vitae lists the majority of my publications.

While I had a few publications related to intercultural understanding, one that had the largest impact on our professional field and one I am proud of was a publication in our major journal that dealt with the success of infusing a diversity perspective into human development curriculum. While this journal did not publish articles that focused on educational endeavors, it accepted this one which was data driven in studying the success of a program in higher education that would have positive outcomes for future practitioners and researchers in our field. It stemmed from CSU's program with faculty to infuse a diversity perspective into the course content throughout our various fields. Dr. MacPhee had the vision that these efforts had a good deal to say to departments of HDFS and so an empirical study was completed to substantiate the significantly greater awareness and attention to diversity issues by students that can be achieved through programmatic changes in curriculum following faculty investment.

Describe highlights relating to your teaching and mentoring of students: This is hard to answer because that part of my career at CSU would be one large highlight. I enjoyed my students from freshmen to seniors...whether in an introduction to the field or the capstone seminar...it was a joy to watch the developing capabilities of my students in their ability to think critically and creatively about the research findings, theoretical underpinnings, and programmatic applications within the field. Helping to problem solve one on one, whether as an advisor or a faculty member in one of their classes was always a pleasure. Working with graduate students was a particular pleasure because of the length of time one had to work with an individual to influence a young professional become more and more competent and confident.

A particular highlight for me was the development of the Child Life Specialist program within our department. This is a program training individuals to work with children and their families in terms of the psychosocial care of a child during hospitalization. I became aware of the field from a student and from my earlier work in hospitals decided that our program had the all the ingredients to educate students in this area. Our students were well received in their internships and our department gained recognition at both the undergraduate and graduate level for the quality of the students graduating from HDFS. Joining the Child Life Council and being active gave me some wonderful opportunities to shape our program, but also the national requirements; for example, I

was one of a group who advocated and pursued national certification for the field and helped develop the first national exam. Our students are now in hospitals around the country and in Japan and three have served as President of the national association.

Another major highlight was the chance to do more and more with international activities due to the support the University offered in that area. I began with a Fulbright Study grant with 14 other faculty to India for 6 weeks following a year's seminar. When I returned I took my turn at coordinating the India class on campus. Other opportunities included attending a work session on Self Development in Moscow with American and Russian psychologists and also attending a meeting of faculty from the former Soviet Union satellite countries who were trying to democratize their universities again in Krakow, Poland. Both these opportunities were rich with cross-cultural challenges and learning. I was able to spend time studying child-rearing and education at an Israeli kibbutz and on the West Bank. Near the end of my career I was part of the Internationalization of the Curriculum project at CSU directed by Dr. Alicia Cook. A part of that included being able to do a field project on resiliency of AIDS orphans in Kenya which informed my classroom teaching and led to a chapter in a book on children in Africa confronting AIDS entitled "Understanding the Psychological and Emotional Needs of AIDS Orphans in Africa" coauthored with Alicia Cook and Rose Mwonya.

Describe challenges, rewards, and lessons learned during your career at CSU: This is a question that could take days to consider and pages to write. So I will just give some generalities. The major and constant challenge for me was trying to balance teaching, research, and service...all were so important, but there never seemed the time to give justice to any one with the others calling. I twice thought of leaving academia because of these frustrations and visited graduate student colleagues working in research agencies, governmental agencies, or private practice to learn more about what they did as it seemed more focused. But each time I returned with a sense of gratitude for the independence to chart one's own goals and the stability within academia. The students, needless to say, keep you young and trying new things. Staying in touch with so many of them is one of the joys of university life also.

Of lessons learned...any career provides more than enough of those. The large amount of committee work at any university taught me to encourage compromise and willingness to work toward a shared goal; to work effectively when I was the only female serving on a committee, and that if you don't succeed the first time...there is always round two. A large cartoon I had by my desk was of a frog being swallowed by a crane with the frog's back feet in a strangle grip around the crane's throat.....and the caption "NEVER give up".

I learned to appreciate the true value of sabbaticals. I encourage all younger professors to take them and talk to community members about their tremendous value. That is because I didn't take them until nearer the end of my career. While I would have been eligible for 4 or 5, I took one early to work on the doctorate (along with a leave). That isn't really a sabbatical. Later I must have felt I was indispensable ...graduate students who needed me, projects I couldn't leave, etc. I was so wrong. In 1994 after 5 years of heading Faculty Council through the "Folding Chair" year, I knew

I needed a sabbatical to have time to immerse myself in the research literature in my area and update my classes. Therefore, I obtained a Visiting Scholar appointment at the University of Cambridge in England and had an incredibly stimulating year catching up on work, learning from academics there, and enjoying the freedom to study and travel. I hadn't missed teaching in the least and that worried me...until I returned full of new material and ideas and enjoyed my classes more than I had in years. I kicked myself I hadn't applied for one or two more during my career.

What did you enjoy most about working at CSU? What I enjoyed most about working at CSU were the remarkably collaborative colleagues and students. I had been on other campuses (CU, Cornell, The Johns Hopkins University, and Harvard University) and in all saw such fierce turfdom and rivalries among the faculty. At CSU I experienced very little of that and it is one major factor for why I wished to return to CSU after my doctorate. I was afraid that another campus might not have that sense of working with others who encouraged you and supported you through ups and downs ...rarely looking to minimize your efforts. Joining the university when I did (during a period of expansion) led to many opportunities to help shape a new department and to watch the growth and maturation of the university. Being part of a rapidly changing department I was able to participate in work to become a department (vs. a unit), to develop a Master's degree program, and participate in the move toward gaining a doctoral program. I developed and moved through Curriculum committees the first Life-Span Developmental course at CSU. Later curriculum additions I added were Childhood Socialization and The Hospitalized Child at the undergraduate level. At the Graduate level I developed the Cognitive Development, Social Development, Language Development, Stress and Coping in Children, and Cross-Cultural Development courses.

Who were the people who had the greatest influence on you at CSU? Individuals at CSU who were significant in helping shape my professional values and ideas at CSU were numerous. In the first few years at CSU, Dr. Nan Hoddick, Associate Dean and Margaret Hanson, faculty member were a great help to me. Dr. Hoddick had provided a wealth of good advice while I was at Cornell and was the individual who was instrumental in my being given a position at CSU. She also co-taught one of my first classes ---sharing her strategies and encouraging my ideas.

Margaret Hanson was a mentor to all the young faculty in our department, as well as for hundreds of students. We would gather at her home many Fridays to talk over our successes and our frustrations. Her comments and views were so instrumental in shaping our early work that, after she had died, at faculty meetings when we were struggling with an issue someone would invariably say "What would Marky do in this situation". There is a scholarship in her name in our department begun by several of us who so valued her friendship and mentoring of us during those early years.

My first department head, Dr. Bruce Gardner, also served as a mentor in providing a range of opportunities to try new things and in pushing me (and supporting my application for a leave and sabbatical) to return for my doctorate, even though he said he didn't expect me to return after completion of the degree.

When it came to departmental faculty through the years my friends and mentors , especially in the areas of teaching and advising, were Dr. Jill Kreutzer, Dr. Kevin Oltjenbruns, and Dr. David MacPhee. Lengthy discussions of teaching and advising philosophies and techniques occurred so often during our years of working together. Jill and Kevin were inspirations in the area of teaching and advising and kept me eager to try new approaches and were there when things went badly. While I brought David on board on an Early Intervention project because of his statistical/research skills, little did I realize what a wonderful collaborative relationship would develop. He taught me so very much about maintaining and enhancing an ongoing area of research and always as a friend as well as a colleague. And I must include my 40 (post-doctorate) graduate students as valued colleagues. I so very much enjoyed working with graduate students to help them take their ideas and turn them into a solid research thesis. I remained in contact with so many of them and shared their professional journey. And they in turn made me feel my efforts were appreciated by nominating me for advising awards, writing support letters for tenure and promotions, and sharing their family/work lives with me through the years.

Dean McHugh, Dean Gilfoyle and Dr. Cecilia Martin encouraged me to become more active within the College...opening my eyes to a broader perspective and showing me ways to enhance the activities of the College.

Dr. Patti Cowell and Dr. Carol Mitchell (both in English) worked hard to pull me out of the college and to get more engaged in women's issues across the campus. Once I saw the inequities for women in many departments at that time in CSU's history it was easy to become active...under the guidance of these two and Dr. Karen Wedge. My involvement with the Women's Studies Board and the Women's Faculty Caucus stemmed from their efforts. I was particularly pleased to be awarded the Margaret Hazaleus Award in 2002 for mentoring of women and research in the area of women's issues.

At the University level a number of administrators and faculty provided guidance and support. Dr. Harry Rosenberg, as the first Faculty Chair, mentored me in understanding the University administrative issues and the history of CSU. That first year his desk as Faculty Council Chair was the telephone table in the Conference Room of the Administration Bldg. I would sit at the conference table and work under his guidance. As Chair of Faculty Council two years later I was privileged to have a small office and shared secretarial help...it was an exciting time to see the growth of the faculty governance's structure and role. President Al Yates, VP Jud Harper, and Provost Al Linck all were mentors in helping navigate the University administrative structure and so many senior faculty helped me move issues on to completion.

Other experiences/relationships that shaped your CSU experiences: While some faculty dislike the committee work and see campus service activities as distractions from their main work, I always saw it as the price we pay to shape the culture of the university and not become "employees" at a large business. Therefore, while I did serve on a number of community boards and was a member of a number of professional associations I focused my time more on service activities

within the University. I was surprised and grateful to be recognized for my efforts by receiving the Applied Human Sciences Service Award and in 1996 the University's Oliver P. Pennock Distinguished Service Award.

CSU Campus and Buildings

What buildings did you work in? In my tenure at CSU I moved from the north edge of campus to the south edge in the shifts in buildings that housed our department. I began with an office on the second floor of Guggenheim...a lovely old building where I still smile remembering the large staircase and stained glass windows that greeted my entrances and exits. Then I was in Rockwell Hall...a favorite as the offices were very large (being an old dorm) with windows that opened. When I returned from my doctorate the move had been made to the new Gifford Building. While the new labs and observation rooms were a joy...the sealed windows and poor heating/cooling system were always a challenge. I am now lucky enough to enjoy for a short time (until the department needs more space) to have an emeritus office in the beautiful, student oriented Behavioral Sciences building. While the campus has grown and many buildings infill the green space, the campus itself still retains much of its earlier flavor. I do hope the recent growth does not take over the campus so much that it becomes a clearly urban campus....but that they work hard to retain green, quiet spots for reading, talking, and contemplation for faculty and students alike.

What do you think are the most important issues that the University must deal with in the next several years? Universities always face important issues in order to retain their vibrancy, excellence, and appeal. An area of concern for me is the increased use of part-time, adjunct faculty. There is a tipping point where undergraduate education, particularly, becomes harmed. Adjunct faculty are qualified, but because of the tenuous nature and poor pay of their job, they often have less investment in the university and students as they juggle the responsibilities of other jobs, etc. The service and research activities are not part of their time usually and the development of a department becomes the purview of fewer people stretched thinner and thinner. Advising, collaborative research, etc. with undergraduates is often diminished. Universities are by definition bastions of graduate education, but strong graduate students come from colleges and universities which educate undergraduates with opportunities to learn about research and which provide long-term mentoring of talented students.

It seems to me that I came into academia at a very exciting timeone in which an individual faculty member had a great deal of freedom and a great deal of responsibility...not just to their particular career, but to the well-being of the University as a whole.

