

The Communicator

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Greetings

It seems like I just wrote something for the last Communicator but Debra (Rumford) is telling me it is time to once again to share what is happening at the Margaret Ritchie School of Family and Consumer Sciences. Starting with the issue that the notes from the Director will take a different approach. Each month I will be asking one of our teaching and research faculty members to share information with you.

It has been an exciting busy month for all of us. We recently had a continuation of our Alumni Brunch when we were able to honor Patricia Kempthorne as this year's Honorary Alumni award. Patricia was unable to attend the brunch held on September 22. Therefore, when we found out she would be in Moscow the middle of October we took advantage of the opportunity and honored her at a special luncheon held in the Niccolls building. It was a pleasure to meet such an amazing woman who upholds the values of family and consumer sciences and to be able to recognize her for her outstanding contributions.



Nancy Deringer & Patricia Kempthorne

The month of October, though, started with an amazing opportunity for the students, faculty, and staff of not just FCS but campus wide. Gloria Steinem was on campus! She was here two-days for the 40th anniversary of the Women's Center on the UI campus. This celebration just happened to coincide with the 40th anniversary of MS Magazine. Because the School helped bring Ms. Steinem to



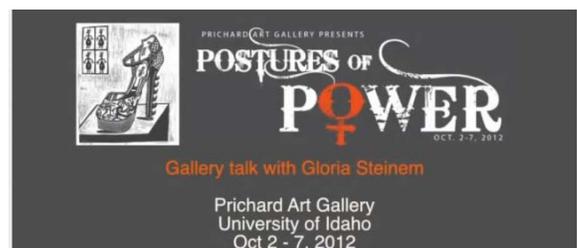
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campus we were included in some special opportunities. Five of our students had the privilege to be part of a special student only question and answer session with Ms. Steinem. Many of us attended her keynote address in which she continually voiced her support for families and her concern for the treatment of women and children worldwide. Probably the most memorable opportunity came during a reception for Ms. Steinem held at the Prichard Art Gallery.

David Trayte's exhibit of shoes from the Leila Old Historic Costume Collection enhanced the "Postures of Power" exhibit of local artists' work, click [here](#) to view the video, pay very close attention to what she has to say about FCS. All of the school's faculty and staff were invited to attend for "our" time to interact one-on-one with her. Rather than my continued words about this opportunity though, I am turning this page over to one of our teaching and research faculty members, Dr. SeAnne Safaii. SeAnne's reflection on her interaction was published in the Coeur d'Alene Press. Unknowingly she summarized the thoughts of many of us about Gloria Steinem's visit.





SeAnne Safai

Health and Nutrition Begins with Family

The University of Idaho's Women's Center sponsored Gloria Steinem to speak at the Women's Leadership Conference. Over the last 40 years, Ms. Steinem has played a pivotal role in the women's equality movement and is the co-founder of Ms. Magazine. In 1995 she was listed as one of the 25 most influential women in America. My dream of meeting this woman was far surpassed when my colleagues and I actually got the chance to chat with her about her take on the decreased health status of our children and families in the United States, specifically obesity rates.

What were her jewels of wisdom? She brashly asserted that Family and Consumer Sciences was the most important school on campus because of the significance it plays in the threads of family. What goes on in the family is the most important factor in raising healthy children; healthy children are the fabric of the future. In her studies of other cultures Ms. Steinem believes that the home is where it begins—food, love, communication, etc. This is where modeling healthy behaviors also starts. In cultures where men and women are both involved in raising the children (partnership cultures) children flourish. Equality equals harmony and health.

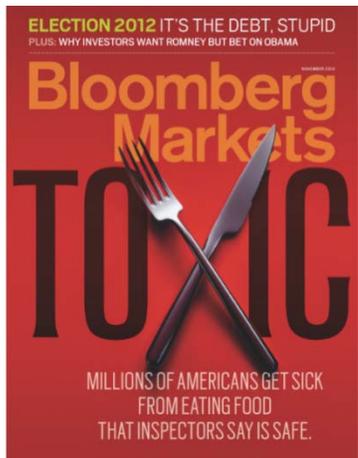
If we transfer this philosophy to the obesity issue, then teaching children to lead a healthy, active life-

style begins in the home. While we can teach health and nutrition in school, it is most powerful to teach and practice good nutrition and physical activity in the home—by both parents. When I naively suggested that more women in the work force means more reliance on fast, processed, less healthy foods, Ms. Steinem quickly reminded me that women making healthy dinners for their family was only half of the equation. Men were equally responsible. When I ignorantly suggested that men "can't cook," she again reminded me that in the '50s men "couldn't type." But with the computer revolution of the '80s they quickly learned how to. Anyone can learn anything if the motivation is there.

So what is the take home message here? We gift each other with the power to choose and make choices. We as a culture need to choose to turn around the obesity epidemic by having a unified force. That unified force starts in the home with parents teaching, modeling and practicing healthy eating for their children. Filling your plate with 1/2 fruits and vegetables, a forth starches/grains and a forth protein/meat, with dairy as a chaser is a great beginning. When children ask for snacks offer fruits and vegetables. I remember when I was young and my family would sit around watching TV, my dad would bring out apples. He would meticulously peel the apple in circles with a paring knife and give each of his four children a "peel." Then he would slice it and give us each a sixth. Then he would start all over again on the next apple. I am not particularly fond of apples, but I loved this ritual and any food experience that involved my dad. The moral of the story is getting right back to the wisdom of Gloria Steinem—the family dynamic is the backbone of the health and nutritional status of our children... and the future.

Source: SeAnne Safai, assistant professor, University of Idaho Family and Consumer Sciences. Excerpted from *CDA Press*, October 10, 2012, http://www.cdapress.com/news/healthy_community/article_b09f715b-6d72-5c8a-88ac-67137f5b6175.html.

Keywords: family, nutrition, education.



Food Safety

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Real Life Stories of Foodborne Illness

An extensive article about foodborne illness is the cover story on the November 2012 issue of *Bloomberg Markets* magazine. (*Bloomberg Markets* is a monthly magazine based in New York City, published as part of Bloomberg News, and aimed at global financial professionals.)

One of the most useful aspects of the article is the real life stories, the experiences of 7 victims and their family members of some recent large outbreaks of foodborne illness. Putting a face to the human suffering caused by foodborne illness can communicate the seriousness of the issue in a way that numbers cannot. The article also contains many photos to illustrate the issues and a couple of graphics related to the extent of imported food.

The article suggests that the Food and Drug Administration does not have the resources to adequately inspect the food Americans eat, with the result that contaminated foods are sold to the public. In many cases, the industry is left to police itself. Some companies take food safety very seriously and do an excellent job, while others cut corners and spend as little on food safety systems as possible. Consumers are unable to evaluate the food systems used by companies and food companies do not, for the most part, advertise their products based on food safety inputs.

Companies often hire private agencies to inspect and audit their operations for adequate food safety practices. But the story notes that sometimes the

auditors may have financial ties to executives at companies they are reviewing. Often the food producers themselves set the standards for the inspection. Much of the time, the inspectors do not test for pathogens. The story identified several instances in which a private food inspection agency certified a producer as safe shortly before or after food from that producer sickened and killed people.

“Six audits gave sterling marks to the cantaloupe farm, an egg producer, a peanut processor, and a ground-turkey plant—either before or right after they supplied toxic food. Collectively, these growers and processors were responsible for tainted food that sickened 2,936 people and killed 43 in 50 states.”

The article profiles:

- The case of 87-year-old William Beach who died from a *Listeria* infection as a result of eating Jensen Farms cantaloupe. This *Listeria* outbreak caused the 33 deaths in 2011.
- The case of 11-year old Jake Hurley, who may suffer rheumatoid arthritis and irritable bowel syndrome for the rest of his life, as a result of a *Salmonella* infection from eating Austin Toasty Crackers with Peanut Butter. The peanut ingredient was from the Peanut Corporation of America *Salmonella* outbreak (2008-09) that sickened over 700 and resulted in 9 deaths, includ-

ing 80-year-old Nellie Napier, who is also profiled.

- The case of 32-year-old Sarah Lewis, who continues to suffer from inflammation due to her *Salmonella* infection and will probably need to take drugs for the rest of her life. Her infection occurred from eating a custard tart containing eggs from Wright County Egg farms, the producer of *Salmonella* containing eggs that sickened almost 2000 in 2010. About 0.5 billion eggs were recalled.
- The case of 7-year-old Abby Fenstermaker who became ill and died from an *E. coli* O157:H7 infection. She likely became infected as a result of contact with her grandfather, who had become infected from an *E. coli* O157:H7-containing hamburger consumed at a veterans hall event. The meat company recalled nearly 96,000 pounds of beef 4 days after Abby died.
- The case of Raul Rivero who died from a *Salmonella* infection acquired in a Mexican restaurant due to consuming *pico de gallo* which contained contaminated jalapeno peppers. The contaminated peppers sickened 1,442 people and killed two in 2008.
- The case of 10-month old Ruby Lee who developed a drug-resistant *Salmonella* infection and may suffer from respiratory problems and arthritis later in life as a result. She developed the infection in June 2011 from eating contaminated ground turkey produced by Cargill, as did 136 others, one died. Cargill recalled 36 million pounds of ground turkey.
- The Earthbound Farms *E. coli* O157:H7 in spinach outbreak of 2006 that sickened 204 and killed 3, including 2-year-old Kyle Allgood of Chubbuck, ID, is also discussed.

The article can be accessed at the website listed below or a PDF of a scan of the article is available from FoodSafetyNews.com at <http://www.marlerblog.com/files/2012/10/Food-Safety-Bloomberg-Markets-Stephanie-Armour-Food-Piece.pdf>. If you print the PDF, please note that a few of the pages were scanned out of the correct order.

Source: Armour, S., Lippert, J. & Smith, M. "Danger on Your Dinner Plate: Food Sickens Millions

as Company-Paid Checks Find It Safe," *Bloomberg Markets*, November 2012, page 26-46, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-10-11/food-sickens-millions-as-industry-paid-inspectors-find-it-safe.html>.

Keywords: food safety, foodborne disease.



Humane Slaughter Video

The American Meat Institute and animal handling expert Dr. Temple Grandin have released a 10-minute video that depicts and explains the cattle slaughter process at a large plant. Dr. Grandin is a professor of Animal Science at Colorado State University; the first 1.5 minutes of the video documents Dr. Grandin's expertise in the subject. In the remainder of the video, Dr. Grandin shows and talks about the many aspects of handling and slaughter, and the procedures to keep animals calm. The video takes the viewer from live cattle being unloaded from the truck through the stunning and slaughter process and includes this warning: "We do want to caution viewers that the scenes are graphic at some points. In an effort to provide true transparency, we are shining a light on the complete process." Dr. Grandin points out that the benefits of good animal handling are better quality meat, better safety for plant employees, and that maintaining high standards for animals welfare is the right thing to do. The video can be viewed at the website listed below.

Source: Gabbett, R.J. "AMI, Temple Grandin release video on humane slaughter," *Industry News*, August 24, 2012, <http://www.meatingplace.com/Industry/News/Details/35593>.

Keywords: food production, meat and poultry, resources.



Divorce on the Rise for Older Americans

Divorce rates climbed steadily for American couples in the decades of the 60's-70's, leveling off by the mid-80's. A recent analysis shows that divorce rates have remained essentially flat for the most recent two decades with one notable exception. That is, divorce rates have doubled for those aged 50 years and older.

Between 1990-2009, divorce rates for those 50-64 years increased from 6.9 to 12.6 per 1,000 married persons, while the rate for those 65 and older grew from 1.6 to 4.7 per 1,000. This is a sizeable share of the divorcing population—1 in 4 divorcing adults was 50 years or older in 2009, compared to fewer than 1 in 10 in 1990.

Several factors are linked to divorce for older couples:

- For any age group, marriages of previously divorced adults are more vulnerable to divorce. Among those over 50 years of age, the divorce rate is 2.5 times higher for those in remarriages than for those in first marriages. Today's elders are part of the cohort that led the growth in divorces in the 60's and 70's, thus there are more previously divorced couples among this age group.
- Longevity of relationship is another predictor of divorce, with the divorce rate for 50+ year olds 10 times greater for those married for 0-9 years, compared to those married for 40 or more



Family Development



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years. Remarried adults are more likely to be among those with shorter relationship longevity.

- Race is also a predictive factor, with the lowest divorce rate among older whites (8.7 divorced persons per 1,000 married persons), intermediate for Hispanics (12 per 1,000), and highest for African-American seniors (18.6 per 1,000).
- Finally, those with a college degree have a lower divorce risk (8.4 per 1,000) than those with less education (9.6-11 per 1,000).

Divorcing seniors may pose particular challenges to families and communities. When couples divorce, the strained finances of under-resourced retired couples will be further stretched by the need to fund two separate households. In addition, increasing numbers of separated adults will face the impending disabilities of aging without a helpmate, and will also struggle to pay for their health care needs.

Those nearing the end of their working years have little flexibility to recover from these economic setbacks. Families, nonprofits, and government programs may be called upon to help meet the needs of this aging divorced population.

Source: Based on Susan Brown & I-Fen Lin, *The Gray Divorce Revolution: Rising divorce among middle-aged and older adults, 1990-2009*, National Center for Family and Marriage Research, March 2012.

Keywords: senior, marriage, divorce.



Parent Time and Kid's Diet and Exercise

When it comes to cooking, grocery shopping and playing with children, American moms with full-time jobs spend roughly three-and-half fewer hours per day on these and other chores related to their children's diet and exercise compared to stay-at-home and unemployed mothers according to economists John Cawley and Feng Liu.

Their male partners do little to make up the deficit: Employed fathers devote just 13 minutes daily to such activities and non-working fathers contribute 41 minutes, finds the study. The findings are consistent across socio-economic class measured by the mothers' education, family income, and race and ethnicity.

To make up for this gap, working mothers are significantly more likely to spend time purchasing prepared foods—takeout from restaurants or prepackaged, ready-to-eat meals from grocery stores—which are generally less nutritious than home-cooked meals.

Past research has shown links between women entering the workforce and childhood obesity—the rates of both have grown sharply in the United States since the early 1970s—but this study is the first to show the difference in time spent by working and non-working mothers on activities related to their children's diet and physical activity. These differences in time allocation represent plausible

mechanisms by which maternal employment could affect childhood obesity.

However, cautioned lead author John Cawley, "it's inaccurate to pin rising childhood obesity rates on women, given that husbands pick up so little of the slack." And, Cawley said, the study does not prove that employment alone drives the way mothers spend their time. "For example, mothers who choose to work might be those who enjoy cooking less and who would cook less whether working or not," he said. He added that working mothers produce additional benefits for children such as more money to provide for family needs.

"It's important to remember that we can take steps to enhance childhood nutrition and physical activity without advocating that women exit the workforce," Cawley said. For instance, the authors argue, parents should be better educated about the nutritional content of restaurant and prepackaged foods. "In order to make more informed decisions, consumers need to have nutrition and calorie information available where they buy their food," said Cawley, who noted that federal health care reform rules will soon require chain and fast-food restaurants nationwide to post calorie counts of the foods they sell.

And Cawley noted that schools shoulder a greater burden for supporting healthy lifestyles. "Our findings underscore the importance of schools offering high-quality foods and physical education classes," he said. "In general, the Institute of Medicine and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are urging comprehensive changes in school environments to promote healthy eating and active living."

For the paper, Cawley and co-author Feng Liu, assistant professor of health economics at Shanghai University of Finance and Economics (SHUFE), analyzed a sample of 24,902 women with at least one child under age 18 living at home. They also studied data from the American Time Use Survey from 2003-09, an annual survey that asks U.S. adults to account for every minute spent during a typical 24-hour period.

Source: Cornell University ChronicleOnline, www.news.cornell.edu.

Keywords: work and family, nutrition, obesity, fast food.



Are Parents Good Role Models for Healthy Eating?

Many young adults plan on being good role models for eating healthy when they have children. Unfortunately, a study conducted on 2,000 young parents found that they did not eat healthier than before they had children.

Researchers at the University of Iowa compared eating habits of young adults with and without children for seven years. They monitored consumption of saturated fat, calories, fruits, vegetables, sugar-sweetened beverages, and fast foods.

There was no difference in dietary intake at baseline when comparing adults with or without children. Seven years later neither group was consuming a healthy diet and the only significant difference between the two groups was a higher saturated fat intake in young adults with children. The researchers speculated that this was due to parents of younger children purchasing more convenience foods.

Lead author, Dr. Helena Laroche, stated, "Parenting provides great teachable moments when you can make sure the whole family eats well—because kids do want to eat what you eat. If they see you eat vegetables, they will want to do that too. We need to take better advantage of our influence here."



Nutrition Education

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New parents in the study reported how chaotic and how difficult it was to balance life with kids. Researchers suggested that nutrition education programs focus on strategies to support and motivate young parents to eat healthy.

Source: www.andjrl.org, June 2012.

Keywords: eating habits, parents.

McDonalds' Posts Calorie Information

A national law passed by Congress in March 2010 stipulated that national chain restaurants with 20 or more outlets were required to list calorie and other nutrition information on their menus and menu boards. This will help Americans, who consume approximately 1/3 of their daily calories and spend half of their food dollars at restaurants, make healthier food choices.

During the summer of 2012, McDonalds' started listing the calorie content of some of their menu items by promoting their "Favorites Under 400." These items, which include a cheeseburger, egg mcmuffin, and medium size fries, each contain 400 calories or less. On September 12, 2012,

McDonalds' expanded their calorie listings by showing calorie content of their food items on their menu boards.

In a December 2011 article published in the *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, researchers at the University of North Carolina found that calorie labeling did not decrease subjects' purchasing or consumption of high calorie items.

Time will determine if McDonalds' customers use calorie labeling information to choose a lower calorie sandwich (e.g. Big Mac at 550 calories) over a higher calorie (e.g. Angus Deluxe at 750 calories) sandwich.

Source: www.usda.ers.gov; www.aboutmcdonalds.com; www.ijbnpa.org/content/8/1/135.

Keywords: calories, fast food restaurants.

Human Interaction Better Than Computers for Weight Loss

Researchers at Columbia University Medical center studied results from 14 weight loss studies for six months to determine the most effective weight loss treatment. The three treatments they studied were: (1) computer or online intervention, (2) in person treatment, and (3) minimal (e.g. received a brochure) or no-treatment intervention.

Those who had in person treatment lost the most weight (2.1 kg) followed by those receiving computer or online treatment (1.5 kg). Those who had minimal or no treatment lost the least (0.7 kg) weight.

The computer-based treatment was effective in helping people set goals and log their calorie intake and exercise. A combination of in person and computer interventions may be an effective treatment for weight loss.

Source: www.summaries.cochrane.org, August 15, 2012.

Keywords: weight loss, computers.

Metabolic Syndrome May Lower Teens' Thinking Skills

It is well documented that obese teens are likely to have a condition called "Metabolic Syndrome (MetS)." These individuals have abdominal obesity, and elevated cholesterol, triglyceride, and high blood pressure levels. In adults, MetS causes cognitive and brain impairment.

Researchers at New York School of Medicine studied 49 adolescents with MetS and 62 that did not have MetS. Both groups were similar in age, school grade, gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic background. All subjects completed 17 tests that measured level of attention, mental flexibility, reading, writing, and arithmetic.

They found that adolescents with MetS performed lower on all of the tests and scored significantly lower in math, spelling, attention, and mental flexibility. Brain scans revealed that those with MetS had a 10 percent smaller hippocampus and fewer neural connections, both of which play a role in learning.

Lead researcher Dr. Antonio Convit commented, "We should be looking at a wide range of healthy measures, and looking out for how these kids' brains are working. And parents should be made aware that lifestyle changes at home, where it really needs to begin, may be critical to keeping their kids healthy and ensuring that they perform at their potential."

Source: www.pediatrics.org, September 2012.

Keywords: adolescent, metabolic syndrome.