WHY MEN ENTER THE GENDERED PROFESSION OF FAMILY AND
CONSUMER SCIENCES EDUCATION: AN EXPLORATORY CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) has a rich history dating back to the mid 1800’s. Under various professional names (i.e. domestic sciences, home economics, human ecology), its evolution has been closely associated with teacher preparation due to historical ties to the education of women.

Within the framework of the literature on men in non-traditional occupations, this study explores why a man would choose to enter the gendered career field of FCS education and his experiences as a FCS teacher. Using ethnographic techniques from case studies developed from interviews of two men who are licensed family and consumer sciences teachers the following questions guided this study. 1) What personal and society influences played a role in the decision to enter a gendered occupation? 2) What barriers or scaffolding does the school culture provide for men FCS teachers to be successful and remain in the field? 3) How does being a man in a female gendered occupation affect his everyday life? 4) How do men FCS teachers see themselves in the history and future of FCS?

The results of this study confirm that FCS education is gendered² by its status as a gendered profession by two different standards: 1) predominance of women in teaching; and 2) predominance of women in FCS. Analysis indicates that these two men FCS teachers entered the FCS educational program by chance. They were both greatly influenced by faculty and staff in their teacher preparation programs. Although both men encountered gender bias at various points in their careers, both successfully overcame the
barriers. Elements of “doing gender” were seen in both cases, but were more pronounced in the case of the older participant. Systemic gender bias was seen within the teacher education program as well as within professional FCS organizations.

Further research is recommended that would validate that teaching is a career which requires specialized training; document the positive impact of the FCS curriculum on individuals, families, and communities; identify barriers that keep men from pursuing a career in FCS education; and inform and motivate current FCS professionals to participate in gender bias self-reflection.
DEDICATION

To my family: Mark, Luke and Maggie
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During the process of seeking this degree and writing the dissertation, I have been greatly blessed with the wonderful support of family, friends, colleagues, as well as my dissertation committee.

Many thanks go to “Patrick” and “Timothy” who graciously gave of their time for this project. Their stories will resonate with many FACS teachers as well as men in non-traditional careers. May their stories be proudly shared with their families and inspire future generations.

As a result of this experience, I have become more aware of the impact of one’s formative years on his/her success as an adult. Although my father cannot be witness to the culmination of this degree, his practice and expectation of excellence has been a constant source of inspiration. My mother’s love, support, and pride in me as well as encouragement from my two “big sisters” has always been present.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) has a rich history dating back to the mid 1800’s. Under various professional names (i.e. domestic sciences, home economics, human ecology), its evolution has been closely associated with teacher preparation due to historical ties to the education of women. Today, the profession of FCS education seeks to become a viable career for both women and men.

Targeted recruitment of men would be appropriate in the effort to meet the demands for FCS teachers. Miller and Meszaros (1996) predicted a nation-wide shortage of FCS teachers early in the new century. Werhan and Way (2006) confirmed that a national shortage of family and consumer sciences teachers is a reality. They reported that of the 37,500 FCS teachers in the United States, only 252 were men, indicating that the stereotype of FCS education being “women’s work” continues to be prevalent. Recruitment of men may help meet the demands for credentialed FCS teachers and perhaps more importantly, help break down stereotypes that serve to limit the impact and respect for an entire profession.

Career development theory gained prominence early in the twentieth century, with efforts concentrated on explaining why white, middle class men choose particular careers (Parsons, 1909). More recently, career development theorists have considered the uniqueness of women’s career development and the efforts to encourage women to enter
male-dominated occupations, arguably to the detriment of historically female-dominated careers (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Gutek & Larwood, 1989). However, relatively little research has been completed specifically considering men seeking non-traditional careers (Bradley, 1989, 1993; Chusmir, 1990; Williams, 1992, 1993; Budig, 2002; Cross, & Bagihole, 2002). The literature that is available on men in non-traditional careers is primarily based on men in the areas of early childhood education, nursing, and social work, not FCS education (Chusmir, 1990; Bradley, 1993; Williams, 1993; Sargent 2000, 2004, 2005; Dodson & Borders, 2006). Research published in the past twenty years with even a limited mention of men as FCS education teachers has been limited to essentially three studies (Dohner, Loyd & Stenberg, 1990; Stenberg & Dohner, 1992; Werhan & Way, 2006).

Purpose of the Study

Within the framework of the literature on men in non-traditional occupations, this study explores why a man would choose to enter the gendered career field of FCS education and his experiences as a FCS teacher. Using ethnographic techniques with two case studies, this exploratory study adds to the body of knowledge regarding men in non-traditional careers and contributes to an understanding of the motivations and barriers men face when choosing to follow a non-traditional path. A better understanding of this contemporary phenomenon may facilitate men filling the national shortage of FCS educators as well as provide a basis for the conversation concerning why women’s work is devalued. This will ultimately serve to elevate the status of the profession. The following questions guided this study:
1. What personal and societal influences played a role in the decision to enter a gendered occupation?

2. What barriers or scaffolding does the school culture provide for men FCS teachers to be successful and remain in the field?

3. How does being a man in a female gendered occupation affect his everyday life?

4. How do men FCS teachers see themselves in the history and future of FCS?

Delimitations

This study focuses on the stories of men who are credentialed family and consumer sciences teachers currently working in a middle or high school family and consumer sciences classroom setting in the United States. The participants were chosen based on availability to the researcher and number of years in the profession.

Conceptual Framework

This study is grounded in social constructivist views drawn from the literature of “men doing women’s work,” i.e. men in non-traditional occupations (Williams, 1993). Research published in the past twenty years regarding men as FCS education teachers has been extremely limited (Dohner, Loyd & Stenberg, 1990; Stenberg & Dohner, 1992; Werhan & Way, 2006) thus, the themes were drawn primarily from men working in the areas of early childhood education, nursing, and social work (Chusmir, 1990; Bradley, 1993; Williams, 1992, 1993; Sargent 2000, 2004, 2005). Concepts that emerged from the literature review are delineated with citations and sorted into categories based on this study’s research questions (see Figures 2-5). These concepts were summarized into three primary categories for investigative analysis (see Figure 1).
Figure 1. Themes for investigative analysis used as a framework for this research study.
The category, *FCS Ed – a career that is gendered*, focuses on the uniqueness that teaching FCS is not only a gendered career based on the teaching component but also the content itself is gender-stereotyped. By combining the two, the career becomes particularly laden with gender-stereotypes. This investigative category also includes a look at the historic inclusion of men in the FCS profession and seeks to identify any historic elements that would impact the current study.

The middle category on Figure 1, *The road less traveled and how did I get on it*, focuses on what motivates a man to become a FCS teacher. The components of this category are further classified into intrinsic, extrinsic and the unique problems one may face and overcome when entering a gendered career field.

The final category represented on Figure 1, “Doing gender” concentrates on issues which are not present when a man enters a career field that falls into the current society’s perception of appropriate work for men. This area of investigation explores how men manage their career and the impact on their personal life when they have chosen a career that is gendered.
Operational Definition of Terms

**Comparable worth:** A concept based on the subjective judgment of equal pay for comparable work. Current focus on the concerns of pay equity between men and women (Mahoney, 1983).

**Doing gender:** “Socially guided perceptual, interactional, and micropolitical activities that cast particular pursuits as expressions of masculine and feminine ‘natures’” (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 126).

**Family and Consumer Sciences Education:** Also called FCS or FACS education. A course of study in middle schools and high schools with a national curriculum that includes the following content areas and the career pathways associated with each: Reasoning for Action; Career, Community and Family Connections; Consumer and Family Resources; Family; Housing, Interiors, and Furnishings; Human Development; Interpersonal Relationships; Nutrition & Wellness; Parenting; Textiles, Fashion and Apparel (National Standards, 2008).

**Gendered**²: The concept that FCS education can be viewed as a gendered profession by two different standards: 1) predominance of women in teaching; and 2) predominance of women in FCS.

**Gendered occupation:** An occupation that has at least 85% of the employees being either men or women, the work itself typically has gendered meanings, and is defined in gendered terms (Sargent, 2005).

**Glass escalator:** The phenomena of men’s inherent advantage in the workplace environment to advance their career (Williams, 1992).
Identity bruising: The emotional reaction new men teachers have to working in a female gendered profession (Foster & Newman, 2005).

Token: A descriptor of an extreme numerical minority in a workplace setting (Kanter, 1977).
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The review of literature for this exploratory study covers several topics which are inter-related. Only in the last few years have researchers studied men in non-traditional occupations and that research is minimal compared to research on women in non-traditional occupations. This review of literature provides a brief review of the literature on non-traditional occupations for men. More specifically, this review includes the profession of teaching and the specific content areas that are even more gender-stereotyped – early childhood education, elementary education, and FCS education. A brief review of FCS education’s place in history is required in order to understand its multiple qualifiers as a gendered profession, i.e. early employment of women, teaching as a profession, and content related to the home. Finally, the literature on men in the profession of FCS, boys taking FCS courses, and men as teachers of FCS are covered.

Gendered Professions

Sargent (2001) offered a way to conceptualize gender with the following statements: (1) recognize that gender is constructed and reconstructed regularly; (2) be free of concepts that define gender as some kind of fixed essence; (3) appreciate that gender is fluid and may be constructed differently in different situations; and (4) understand that there can be multiple femininities and masculinities present at any given
historical moment. West and Zimmerman (1987) coined the phrase *doing gender* which they defined as “socially guided perceptual, interactional, and micropolitical activities that cast particular pursuits as expressions of masculine and feminine natures” (p. 126). These activities, including traditional division of labor, have placed a gender label on various career choices.

The literature uses several methodologies and terminologies to describe the phenomena of a large proportion of one sex employed in particular professions (Hayes, 1986). Terminology can vary to describe such professions and includes: gendered, asextypical, gender-dominate, gender-nontraditional, male dominate, and female dominate. Percentage standards to define a profession as gendered vary from 50 percent up to 85 percent of one sex. The terminology and definition provided by Sargent (2005) were used for this study. Therefore, an occupation is gendered if two conditions exist: at least 85 percent of the employees are either men or women; and the work itself typically has gendered meanings and is defined in gendered terms. Bradley (1989, 1993) posed that there are gendered occupations and stereotypes, though ever changing, which have an effect on where men and women work and how they are compensated. Occupations historically held by women average lower pay than jobs that are not seen as “women’s work” even when they require similar skills or education (England, Budig & Folbre, 2002). Karlin, England and Richardson (2002) also found evidence of gender bias and devaluation of female work and encouraged federal “comparable worth” policies.

Beyer and Finnegan (1997) stated that gender stereotypes regarding occupations are likely to have consequences for the choice of one’s career. They concluded that gender bias would cause some people to avoid certain careers. The tendency to stereotype
adult occupations begins as early as elementary school (Garrett, Ein, & Tremaine, 1977), and is difficult to suppress (Oakhill, Garnham, & Reynolds, 2005). Thus schools and career counselors need to specifically address the issue of “women’s work” and “men’s work,” its basis in society, and up-to-date information about non-traditional occupations (Dodson and Borders, 2006; Werhan, 2002). To prepare school personnel, gender equity should be a standard component of teacher preparation programs to combat the inadvertent reinforcement of gender stereotypes by teachers (Cano, 1990; Francis and Skelton, 2001; Sanders, 2002 & 2003; Zitttleman and Sadker, 2002).

Federal government anti-discrimination laws provide a mandate to schools to be proactive regarding gender stereotyping of students and curriculum. These include the 14th Amendment to the Constitution guaranteeing equal protection under the law; the Education Amendments of 1972; Title IX, which prohibits sex discrimination in federally funded education; the Education Amendments of 1976 used to eliminate sex discrimination and sex stereotyping in schools (Programs and Practices, 2006; Sarkees-Wircenski and Wincenski, 1999).

Federal funding to help combat gender stereotyping, specifically in workforce education, includes the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984. This act specifically mentioned increasing access for women in non-traditional occupations as well as limiting the effects of sex-role stereotyping on job skills, careers, and occupations (Sarkees-Wircenski and Wincenski, 1999). In the 1990 reauthorization of this act, funds were again set aside to foster gender equity in vocational education. However, in the subsequent reauthorization of this act (known as Perkins III), specific funding for gender
equity programs were eliminated (Brown, 2002) but state leadership funds could be used for this purpose (Programs and Practices, 2006).

Bradley (1993) did not expect men to be willing to enter a non-traditional career unless one of three things occur: dramatic social change where gender roles are eliminated, new technology which would allow men to assume their historic role of “better with machines,” or unemployment. Jacobs (1993) stated that men are less likely to pursue non-traditional occupations than women because women are not stigmatized when they seek a non-traditional career. Men, however, would have to accept lower pay and status, and there are just fewer jobs that are considered “female.”

Some scholars, in their attempt to break down barriers for women, inadvertently or perhaps intentionally discredited those roles once held only by women. Bradley (1993) gave a list of “obvious” reasons women seek out professions held by men. This list includes “more interesting work.” Betz and Fitzgerald (1987) noted women career development authorities use terms such as “under utilization of skills” and “wasted abilities” when discussing women choosing homemaking or traditionally female occupations. Stone and McKee (2000) indicated that women are not living up to their potential if they seek family friendly occupations. This discrediting of women’s traditional professions has not only discouraged women from these fields but make it more difficult to recruit men into these fields.

Chusmir (1990) stated that men who choose a non-traditional career tend to have the “feminine” qualities that women in the field possess which is a parallel pattern to women who choose careers in male-dominated fields. However, these men seem to be very self-assured and comfortable with their masculine sexuality. Chusmir’s model
suggests that a nontraditional career choice for men is an interaction of personal and family influences with societal influences playing an external moderating role.

Class and gender should both be considered when seeking to explain why men enter non-traditional careers (Lupton, 2006). Men from working-class backgrounds do not purposefully choose to enter a female-dominated field, but rather “fall into” their field due to life circumstances (Lupton, 2006; McLean, 2003). This is unlike middle-class men who are groomed from childhood to seek out higher paid “male” professions.

Men in female-dominated work are very concerned about issues and perceptions of masculinity due to their work environment (Lupton, 2006; Sargent, 2005). Men who are in non-traditional occupations encounter prejudice from individuals outside their profession (Williams, 1992) and have greater gender role conflict than women in non-traditional careers (Luhaorg and Zivian, 1995). Because society often has these men under intense scrutiny, some men in non-traditional occupations actively maintain and/or promote traditional male values (Cross and Bagilhole, 2002; Francis and Skelton, 2001) and may conceal their occupation from others (Cross and Bagilhole, 2002).

Kanter (1977) suggested that any person who is an extreme numerical minority or “token” will inherently suffer from disadvantage within the workplace environment. However, more recent studies addressing gender tokenism seem to indicate that men are not disadvantaged in a non-traditional career, but actually are advantaged (Cognard-Black, 2004). Williams (1992) coined the term, “glass escalator,” to represent the phenomena of men’s inherent advantage in the workplace environment to advance their career, and has been supported by other researchers (Cognard-Black, 2004; Maume, 1999). However, Budig (2002) noted:
like all men, male tokens in female-dominated jobs are more likely to be
promoted into male or gender-mixed jobs than are their female colleagues;
however, their comparative advantage is actually smaller than that
experienced by men in male and gender-mixed jobs. (p. 274)

Budig believes that researchers “incorrectly attribute to token processes what was
actually explained by more generic male advantage” (p. 275).

Additionally men may not pursue careers in nontraditional fields because of a lack
of knowledge. Bernstein, Reilly, and Cote-Bonanno (1992) found a strong relationship
between knowledge about nontraditional careers and attitudes toward those careers.
Students who had been exposed to the opportunities of nontraditional careers were more
receptive to nontraditional careers both for men and women. Role model (not necessarily
the same gender) supportiveness and influence also contribute to career decision making
(Perrone, Zanardelli, Worthington & Chartrand, 2002; Benton, DeCorse, & Vogtle,
1997).

Teaching as a Gendered Profession

Organizational structure is not gender neutral (Acker, 1990) and schools in
American society have a long tradition of women teaching and men administering
(Hansot & Tyack, 1988, p 756). Acker (1992) discussed gendered institutions and
offered the following to further explain the underlying reasons for the institutionalization
of “feminine” professions:

in an industrial capitalist society, production is privileged over
reproduction. Business and industry are seen as essential and the source
of well-being and wealth, while children, child care, elder care, and education are viewed as secondary and wealth consumers. (p. 567)

Spring (1997) reported that men were the primary teachers during the early years of the United States. However, the development of a professional teacher corps for the common schools in the 1800’s brought about a change in occupational gender stereotypes. Women were seen as better teachers because they could nourish young children, they were less distracted by worldly forces, and had purer morals. Women were also available to teach due to fewer occupational options and they could be paid less than their male counterparts. E. Willard began the Troy Female Seminary in 1821 to train women to be teachers, primarily to fulfill a duty to the Republic and secondarily as a means of earning a living (Reynolds, 1988).

The 2003-2004 National Center for Educational Statistics schools and staffing survey reports a continuation of the historic trend that women outnumber men in the elementary/secondary teaching profession (Strizek, Pittsonberger, Riordan, Lyter, & Orlofsky, 2006). The trend continues. The National Education Association (2003) reported that of the total number of teachers in the United States +24.9 % are men. Within the teaching profession there are specific fields of teaching that are even more stereotyped as a woman’s teaching area. Those fields are early childhood education with 2.3% men, elementary education with 9.0% men, and family and consumer sciences education with 0.6% men (NEA, 2003; Werhan & Way, 2006).

Early Childhood and Elementary Education

Researchers cite the following reasons men choose the career of early childhood education or elementary education: interest in working with children (DeCorse & Vogtle,
1997; Gaskell, 1992; Wiest, Olive, & Obenshain, 2003), previous positive experience with children (DeCorse and Vogtle, 1997), teacher role models (Wiest, et al., 2003; Stroud, Smith, Ealy, and Hurst, 2000; DeCorse and Vogtle, 1997), family influences (Wiest, et al., 2003; Stroud, et al, 2000; DeCorse and Vogtle, 1997), and intrinsic reward, personal satisfaction and/or relationship-oriented (Galbraith, 1992; DeCorse and Vogtle, 1997).

Johnston, McKeown and McEwen (1999) identified perceptions of men who had chosen teaching elementary children as their career. The respondents perceived elementary education as:

- A job in which their ‘maleness’ was necessary and of value;
- A job suited to females, but not exclusively a woman’s job;
- A job in which a male presence might counter what they see as a female domain;
- A career choice which might be seen by their peers as inappropriate for males;
- A job in which as males they may have to confront societal negativity about males working closely with young children; and
- A well-paying job. (p. 61)

A review of the literature by Cameron (2001) concluded that men who work in early childhood, as with other non-traditional occupations, “import normative male expectations, earn a better salary than women and are more likely to move into better paid and more senior positions or occupations” (p. 449). Men who enter the profession of early childhood education often enter from other fields and thus are older than their female counterparts (Galbraith, 1992; Wiest, Olive, & Obenchain, 2003). They express
that they are more likely to be assigned children with discipline problems and asked to do manual labor based on their gender (Cushman, 2005; Sargent, 2000; Wiest, et al., 2003).

Early childhood teachers who happen to be men seem to face significant social scrutiny and are second-guessed as to their motivation to become a teacher in a predominately female field. Questions regarding sexual deviance and homosexuality are common and can be difficult for a male to overcome, which may lead to seeking a less controversial field for employment (Budge, 1998; Cohen, 1992; Cooney and Bittner 2001; Cross and Bagilhole, 2002; Blount, 2000; Hill, 1996; Sargent, 2001). In addition, these men are faced with questions about their motives behind working with small children, their ability to work with small children and their lack of motivation for a “real job” (Sargent, 2004). Research by Wiest, Olive, and Obenchain (2003), however, found that male early childhood teachers were aware of potential job-related stereotypes, but chose to ignore or minimize those concerns. The researchers proposed that these issues were more important to men who did not choose to enter the field of early childhood education than to those that had the self-confidence to pursue this career field.

Allen (1996) interviewed male elementary teachers and found that what some would consider as “reasons to hire a male elementary teacher” could have negative results. The appearance of affirmative action or potential of a professional relationship with the principal (who is often a man) can cause distrust among teaching colleagues. The aspect of becoming a “role model” to young boys can also be problematic. If the male teacher is perceived as “too male,” he would be considered unsuited for the job. If he is “too feminine,” questions of perversion arise. Foster and Newman (2005) suggested
the term “identity bruising” to describe the emotional reaction new men teachers have to working in a female gendered profession.

The NEA (2003) suggested reasons men do not enter the teaching field: gender stereotyping, low salaries, low prestige, and “prevailing philosophy within education that men go into teaching to ‘teach the subject’ and women enter teaching to nurture and develop children” which contributes to the shortage of men teachers at the elementary level.

Gamble and Wilkins (1997) explored several issues to answer why comparatively low numbers of men were in elementary education. Their study asked deans of teacher preparation colleges to define reasons why men were not enrolled in elementary education programs. The results included:

- low salary and low prestige are associated with elementary education;
- elementary education is perceived as more suitable for the nurturing abilities of women;
- elementary education is not perceived as a “male’ profession; and
- traditionally, elementary education teachers have been female and breaking from tradition is very difficult. (p. 189)

Cooney and Bittner (2001) noted that societal perceptions that teaching is undemanding, low pay, and lacking mentors during pre-service education were significant issues for men who were pursuing a degree in early childhood education. Cushman (2005) confirmed that salary, status, working in a non-traditional field, and physical contact with children are concerns of male elementary school teachers.
Williams’s (1992) “glass escalator” effect is evidenced by the men choosing a career in the classroom and then feeling pressured to take an administrative position. Despite success in the classroom, many men (or those around them) believe a measure of their achievement is “moving up” to administration. This contributes to the disproportionate number of men in administration compared to the number of men in the classroom. The respondents in the DeCorse and Vogtle (1997) study as well as respondents in the study conducted by Sargent (2001) indicated that they saw administrative positions as different careers, not a step-up from teaching.

History of FCS Education

Family and Consumer Sciences’ (FCS) rich history dates back to the mid 1800’s. Prompted by the profession’s focus and societal changes, FCS has been known by many names over the last 150 years, but has maintained its core value of improving the lives of individuals, families and communities. In 1841, C. Beecher wrote the first FCS textbook using the term domestic economy in the title (Andrews, 1912). The name home economics was coined in 1899 at the first Lake Placid Conference where the profession’s early leaders met to discuss this emerging body of knowledge (Stage, 1997, p.6). Since 1993, the term family and consumer sciences has been used by the profession “in order to move beyond the stereotypic connotations of the term home economics that have plagued the field and to communicate a broader focus than home” (Vincenti, 1997, p.306). All of these terms for the profession may be used based on the contextual time period.

From the beginning, FCS education was the primary specialist program in the FCS profession. In 1912, E. Richards, the first president of the American Home Economics Association, stated that not all domestic science graduates could be teachers
(McCullough, 1912). Other FCS specialist programs include nutrition/dietetics; child development; family relations; clothing, textiles and interiors; and consumer economics. Throughout its history, FCS has been closely associated with teacher preparation due to ties to the education of women.

The profession of teacher education and family and consumer sciences was influenced greatly by C. Beecher. In 1841, Beecher wrote *A Treatise on Domesticity*. This book was the first text for the emerging field of domestic sciences suitable for public school use. It was also the first book to instruct women on how to run a home without servants. Although Beecher defined woman’s work as educating children, caring for the sick and newborn, and attending to the management of the household, Beecher believed all children, even girls, needed a formal education (Burstyn, 1974). Beecher established seminaries for girls to prepare them to enter the teaching profession and believed that training in domestic sciences was a part of a science-based, liberal arts education (Andrews, 1912). Vincenti (1997) states that Beecher’s schools for women provided a better education than most of the teacher training schools for men. Although this work should not be judged using today’s social constructs, Beecher sought to professionalize teaching and domestic sciences as unique professions most suitable for women.

The FCS movement as a field of study seems to have two distinct early beginnings in the United States. Depending on the perspective of the author, reasons for domestic sciences, and the rigor of programs vary dependent on region. In the East, prejudice against co-education promoted the “cooking school” movement. In 1860, Professor Blot gave cooking lessons in several large Eastern cities. Massachusetts claims leadership in industrial education and household arts in U.S. schools following the
legislative act of 1872 (Bevier, 1924). The Pratt Institute, a manual training school, was established in 1887 to educate students “using the eye and hand.” In 1895, two-thirds of the three thousand students were girls and women and nearly one-half of those students were in the department of domestic arts and science (North, 1895). In the industrialized part of our country, social issues regarding nutrition, sanitation, and immigrant families were of primary concern. This concern facilitated the “Lake Placid Conferences,” which were held at a New York resort from 1899 to 1909. Those attending included early leaders in FCS from Massachusetts and New York, each with his or her own unique view of FCS. During these yearly meetings, participants discussed curriculum without consensus, the name home economics was agreed upon for the profession, and a professional organization and journal were established. One of the leaders of this group was E. S. Richards.

Richards was highly educated, receiving degrees from Vassar College and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and was the first American women to receive an advanced science degree. She believed that an understanding of science and applying it to everyday life would improve the quality of life for all. In addition to being the first president of the American Home Economics Association, Richards established the first public sanitation system in the world, developed water purity tables, and put into motion the idea of a nutritious lunch program provided for school children. Unlike Beecher who was focused on issues of advancement for women that fit within the traditional culture of the time, Richards seemed to have a more universalistic attitude towards the roles of men and women. Richards did understand that domestic sciences was seen as a gendered field
and for it to be recognized as an academic field, it needed to be “standardized” and “professionalized” (Apple, 1997; Clark, 1973; Stage, 1997).

In the West, domestic sciences gained popularity as a field of study within the higher education system. In 1872, Iowa State University offered lectures in domestic economy and then in 1873, Kansas State University began the first domestic economy program. The purpose of the curriculum was seen by those in the West, specifically President Anderson of Kansas State, to be an educational opportunity developed specifically for women and their roles in society. Anderson stated that this program was not to train women to be “educated play-things” for rich men, but to provide women with the necessary education and skills to take care of their home as well as achieve financial security (Gunn, 1995). This implied negative opinion of the Eastern women’s education movement was matched with a rather negative opinion from those in the East. Rose (1947) offered the Eastern perspective of the work in the Western land-grant schools. Rose states that the land grant universities were a nice “nursery” for the profession of home economics unconstrained by issues of “quality.” However, the issues of a quality education for women at the land-grant schools seemed to be more about the elitist attitude of Eastern private university proponents than it was about the rigor of land-grant programs.

The Smith-Hughes Act of 1917, a landmark legislation, provided federal funds for secondary programs in agriculture, home economics, trade, and industry education. This act represented a national endorsement of vocational education. During the deliberation on the inclusion of home economics in the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917, there were mixed messages as to the purpose and place of home economics in a vocational program. Some
believed that home economics was necessary for the betterment of society and should be a part of a liberal arts education for all girls. Others believed that inclusion of home economics in this significant vocational education bill would provide federal support of home economics programs. Those pushing for home economics to be in this bill used two different arguments for its inclusion: 1) home economics was necessary to prepare girls for their future occupation as homemakers; 2) home economics would provide technical training for future gainful employment (Apple, 1997). This assignment as a vocational subject ties the curriculum more firmly to the gendered roles of child care and homemaker rather than a general-science, liberal arts subject for all students.

In 1972, the Title IV educational act called for the elimination of sex-bias in the schools. This was primarily to reduce discrimination towards girls in public schools. In 1976, the Title II educational act further stressed that there should be no discrimination in schools regarding sex. The 1984 Carl Perkins Vocational Act tied the use of vocational monies to programs that encouraged/recruited students (particularly girls) into non-traditional vocational programs. The general perception was that girls needed to be encouraged to enter non-traditional fields in order to compete in today’s society (Sarkees-Wircenski and Wircenski, 1999). Although boys were also encouraged to take home economics courses for their general well being (and occasionally as a career option), the gender-bias that home economics and home economics related occupations were “women’s work” remained.

During this time period, the American Home Economics Association (AHEA) encouraged textbooks to be adapted to meet the changing roles of men and women. Some would say that AHEA did not work hard enough to de-gender the profession. At
the 1973 AHEA national conference, R. Morgan, feminist, was a key-note speaker. Morgan began the talk with, “... I have come to address the enemy” (East, 1980, p.28). This admonishment from Morgan was followed by the formation of a special committee to look at the negative role home economics plays in the advancement of women. There probably had been a particular point of view that home economics is “our field” as women and the inclusion of men would be an acknowledgment that gender is not exclusionary (East, 1980; Stage, 1997).

Today, a look at a typical FCS classroom would indicate that half of all middle school boys and 40 percent of high school boys take a FCS course (Werhan and Way, 2006). Despite this acceptance and even encouragement of boys to enroll in FCS classes, women remain the primary teachers of FCS.

Men in Family and Consumer Sciences

Stage and Vincenti’s work (1997) indicated that men were very involved in the foundation of the profession of family and consumer sciences. During the Lake Placid Conferences held between 1899 and 1908, several men participated in establishing the profession including W. O. Atwater and J. Dewey. Three months prior to the establishment of the American Home Economics Association in 1908, the first International Congress of Home Economics was held in Fribourg, Switzerland. The founder and first president, G. Python, and two other Swiss men served in the presidential role for forty-six years (Men, the future, 1977).

C. F. Langworthy (1913) stated “though at first thought it might appear that the subject is concerned exclusively with women’s activities, it should be apparent to all that a large proportion of the subject-matter which would be included in the ideal course is of
equal interest to both men and women” (p. 239). Langworthy reported that no college in
the United States offered a complete course in home economics designed primarily for
men students; however, men had the opportunity in co-educational settings to take home
economics courses if they choose to do so. Langworthy indicated that a significant
number of men took college-level courses with home economics content, but they were
listed under other titles. Home economics teacher training for men was not mentioned in
Langworthy’s article, but was summarized with extending opportunities for home
economics content: “if education is to provide all that it might in training for life and its
opportunities” (p. 248).

In the early 1920’s, Oklahoma A & M (now Oklahoma State University)
developed a one credit course in home economics to “give men training in social graces
and table manners” (p. 10). Thirteen men enrolled in that first course and by 1972, the
course and content (adding emphasis on personality development and self understanding)
evolved into a two-hour upper-level course with 220 students enrolled each semester in
six sections (Shipman, 1972).

Nadig (1947) reported an increase in male enrollment in home economics courses
at Temple University. The report encouraged home economists to make the field a “real
part of the life of men and women” (p. 648).

In 1956, Millikin University opened its enrollment in home economics courses to
non-majors following a petition by 15 male students for a special course in home
economics to “meet their needs” (Adams, 1956). Baragar (1960) reflected that men were
competing with women for academic positions in university home economics units;
however, the author “cannot conceive of men taking an entire home economics curriculum at the undergraduate level” (p. 833).

A survey by the American Home Economics Association (Male students, 1965) of home economics departments in 1964 indicated that 20 percent of the United States coeducational colleges and universities offering home economics had male undergraduate students. The 65 colleges that responded to the survey reported that 701 men were home economics majors, which is approximately 1.5 percent of the estimated total of 48,000 home economics majors.

Baker (1969) suggested that as long as home economics professionals were predominately female, the profession had no right to be the voice for families. Baker suggested that the profession itself had not encouraged male participation in an effort to protect a perceived female territory. Although home economics was one of the original safe havens for female professionals, that was no longer the case; women now had more opportunities and need not be threatened by men entering the field of home economics.

In the mid 1970’s, The Illinois Teacher of Home Economics sought reactions from men home economists on the future of men in the profession (Men, the future, 1977). In this research, Kennedy, professor of family and child development at Kansas State University, stated that men should be teaching home economics at the secondary school level to provide added perspective and role models for students. Also, the male home economics teacher could help challenge the sex-role stereotyping of some of the curriculum by the school administrator, i.e. moving home economics family life foundation out of the business, sociology, psychology, and biology departments and back into home economics. Busching, an associate professor of child development and family
life at Montana State University, posed that three social factors will affect the role of men and boys in home economics: 1) societal attention to the “human role” rather than the “sex role”; 2) societal prejudice/discrimination against men in non-traditional professions; and 3) home economics profession reflection upon its own prejudice against men in the profession. Busching stated:

If Home Economics clutches fast to its name, with almost paranoia, holds fast to its female image even while deploring it, and continues its skills orientation even while conducting endless evaluations aimed at revitalization – if this happens in the future, then we shall not be a very exciting science. We shall not gain males, and we are likely to lose females. (Men, the future, 1977. p. 209)

W. H. Marshall, professor of family studies at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, encouraged the profession to examine its traditional views of male-female relationships which affect curriculum at all levels (Men, the future, 1977).

In *Home Economics; Past, Present, and Future* (East, 1980), a section of one chapter is devoted to men in this “female field.” East pointed out that very little research had been conducted regarding men in home economics. What little was known was that the total number of men students in all home economics programs was increasing; the increase was larger for those programs that had changed their name from home economics to another title; and men did not join the professional home economics association in proportionate numbers. East noted that even when men were actively engaged in the profession of home economics, they did not tend to consider themselves home economists; but rather separate from the profession (East, 1980).
Boys Taking Family and Consumer Sciences Courses

The literature indicates that some boys were taking part in domestic sciences coursework in the late 19th century. J. Ingram, contributing author to the 1897 *Encyclopedia of Social Reform*, stated that boys were involved in sewing classes as a part of the manual training movement (p. 730). As early as 1920, boys took required courses in “practical arts” (Spafford, 1938).

Various schools across the nation were visited, primarily in the 1936-37 academic year, in conjunction with a study of Education for Home Living made for the General Education Board of the Rockefeller Foundation. Spafford (1938) indicated that home economics programs were being offered to boys from elementary school through college. Program or course names included: practical arts, personal and social problems, social arts, home crafts for boys. Some of the boys who took these courses preferred that the term home economics not be used, while others did not seem to care. One “extreme” opinion from an administrator was that only a desire for publicity causes a school to offer home economics to boys. Spafford also reported another administrator’s opinion that offering home economics to boys too early can interfere with the boys assuming a masculine role; however, Spafford was supportive of home economics later in high school (Spafford, 1938).

B. Coon (1962), a specialist in research for home economics education at the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, wrote in 1959 that 25.1 percent of students were enrolled in home economics, of which 1.3 percent were boys. However, the implementation of Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, focusing on sex discrimination, called into question the lack of recruitment of boys into
home economics classes. A publication by the Home Economics Education Association of the National Education Association in 1975 provided methods of recruitment for boys into home economics classes (Dowell and Greenwood, 1975). However, the title of the last chapter, *The Inclusion of Males in the Home Economics Curriculum – How to Live with It and Like It*, may be an indication of a common attitude among teachers regarding the implications of the Title IX legislation.

Werhan and Way (2006) reported that during the 2002-2003 school year, a similar percentage of students enrolled in FCS classes, but how those courses were offered and the proportion of male to female students had dramatically changed since 1959. Five and one-half million students were taking at least one FCS course which was 25.2 percent of the secondary school population. At the middle-school level (grades 6-8), 49.7 percent of students in FCS classes were male and 50.3 percent were female. Of those enrolled in FCS classes in high schools, 37 percent were male and 63 percent female.

**Men as FCS Teachers**

Over several decades, there have been calls to increase the number of male FCS teachers (Flagler, 1936; Columbia, 1953; Baker, 1969; Lawson, 1993; Werhan, 2002). The Training School for the Eau Claire State Teachers College included in its junior high school teacher preparation laboratory some home economics curriculum (Flagler, 1936). The principal of the school enthusiastically conducted one of the lessons on family relationships because, “he has a family and so understands the problems of boys and girls” (p. 209). Flagler stated that the interest in the content area is so great that some of the male students in teacher and/or principal preparation programs have asked to teach these classes “as a means of acquiring an understanding of the purpose of the courses and
at the same time of observing the reactions of boys toward the subject matter” (p. 209). Flagler reported that the home economics subject matter is modified to emphasize the home activities which “men are better prepared to teach” (p. 209). The student teachers are rotated through the program thus providing the children with the opportunity to have both men and women teachers in home economics. Flagler first stated that this gives the junior high children both a feminine and masculine viewpoint of participation in home life and then suggested that perhaps the terms feminine and masculine should not be used because “in many present homes there is no differentiation” (p. 209).

During the 1940’s through the 1960’s there is little written about men as home economics teachers. In 1947, one male student was majoring in home economics education at Temple University (Nadig, 1947). “Why not have men teachers in home economics?” is the question asked by a female high school home economics teacher in 1953 after hiring a man to teach a cooking class for boys following a last minute vacancy in the department (Columbia, 1953). Columbia was proud that the school was “turning the opening pages of a new idea in home economics teaching!” (p. 252). In 1965, The Journal of Home Economics reported (Male students, 1965) that 701 of the estimated 48,000 undergraduate students majoring in home economics were men. Of that number, two were majoring in home economics education.

Ohio State researchers (Dohner, Loy, & Stenberg, 1990) reported that they had located thirty-one men who held home economics education degrees and were currently working in the field. Twenty-four of these men participated in the study to identify influences on their non-traditional career choice. The factors identified by this study include: 1) Mothers’ employment (79 percent of the respondents had mothers who
worked outside the home in gender-traditional careers); 2) Parents’ education (50 percent of the respondents had parents with some post-secondary education); 3) Marital Status (46 percent were married and 54 percent had never married or were divorced); 4) Family influences (73 percent of the married respondents reported their spouses to be supportive of their careers. Forty-two percent of all respondents had received support from their mothers to enter a nontraditional career); and 5) Outside influences. The most influential person in their career decision to become a home economics educator was a teacher (Dohner, Loy, & Stenberg, 1990).

Sturzl (1989) described the experience as eleven male home economics teachers convened on the campus of The Ohio State University in January 1988 to discuss issues specific to their unique career choice. Some of the men had taken home economics in high school and some had not. Sturzl wrote that all of the individuals had come to the profession by different paths, which included: content area change; selecting a career of interest; and serendipity. They all recounted stories of how people were disbelieving when they told their occupation is home economics teacher. The group also seemed to be discouraged by the fact that there were so few of them and by the perceived reluctance to embrace change by the profession as a whole.

The only published study since the 1990’s referring to men as family and consumer sciences teachers was conducted by the National Coalition for Family and Consumer Sciences Education. This study collected data on staffing and enrollment patterns using 2002-2003 academic year data from state departments of education. The study reported that at the time, 252 of the 37,500 secondary FCS teachers were men (Werhan & Way, 2006).
Summary

An occupation is gendered if two conditions exist: at least 85 percent of the employees are either men or women and the work itself typically has gendered meanings and is defined in gendered terms (Sargent, 2005). Most research has focused on the gender stereotyping of careers which have inhibited women from entering particular fields; however, men in the fields which would be considered “women work” also encounter discriminatory practices. FCS education is a career field which would be considered gendered based on the two factors of predominance of women in teaching and predominance of women in FCS. Due to few published research studies on men as FCS teachers, research on men in the career fields of early childhood education and elementary education were the primary sources of information for this study.

Although men have been involved in FCS since its inception in the mid 1800’s, FCS education has been a career, primarily for women. Men FCS teachers comprise less than one percent of the 37,500 FCS teachers, however, despite the gendered stereotype of FCS, half of all middle school boys and 40 percent of high school boys take a FCS course (Werhan and Way, 2006).
CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

Introduction

This section provides a comprehensive description of the procedures used in this study. This section includes the rationale for the selected research methodology, research methods, data analysis, ethical considerations, and author perspective clarification.

Rationale

This study was conducted in the tradition of qualitative research, which seeks answers to questions regarding socially constructed experiences (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). A constructivist or interpretive approach was used and assumes that there are numerous meanings to reality based on social, cultural, and contextual constraints. Yin (1994) states that a researcher will choose to use the case study method under these conditions: 1) the research is seeking to answer a “why” question; 2) the researcher has little control over the events; and 3) the study is looking at a contemporary phenomenon in a real-life setting. Therefore, this study used ethnographic techniques with two case studies, providing a thorough and rich description of the phenomenon of why men choose to become family and consumer sciences teachers and of their unique experiences in this gendered profession.
Research Methods

Because case study research is not generalizable to a population in that the sample size is not representational of the entire population, the participants of the study were chosen due to their representing the phenomena being studied, availability to researcher, and length of time in the profession. One participant was identified by a colleague of the researcher. This participant graduated from a FCS teacher preparation program in the early 2000s and is currently teaching in a FCS secondary school classroom. The second participant was identified by the researcher during the literature review process. This participant was a part of a “men who are home economics teachers” research study conducted in the late 1980s. These two men with FCS teaching credentials, currently teaching in a middle school or high school, and graduating twenty years apart from FCS teacher preparation programs, participated in this study.

The ethnographic technique used to collect data for this study was individual face-to-face interviews. The interviews were semi-structured using open-ended questions grounded in the literature (see Figures 2-5). A review of the literature on non-traditional occupations for men focusing on the profession of teaching and the specific content areas that are even more gender-stereotyped – early childhood education, elementary education and FCS education is provided in Chapter 2. This chapter also includes a review of FCS education’s place in history and is essential in order to understand its multiple qualifiers as a gendered profession, i.e. early employment of women, teaching as a profession, and content related to the home. Finally, the literature on men in the profession of FCS, on boys taking FCS courses, and on men as teachers of FCS is covered.
**Research Question #1**

What personal and societal influences played a role in the decision to enter a gendered occupation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Themes</th>
<th>Citation in Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information and awareness</td>
<td>Bernstein, Reilly &amp; Cote-Bonanno, 1992; Werhan, 2002; Dodson and Borders, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former teachers/role models</td>
<td>Dohner, Loy, &amp; Stenberg, 1990; Benton, DeCorse &amp; Vogtle, 1997; Perrone, Zanardelli, Worthington &amp; Chartrand, 2002; Wiest, Olive &amp; Obenchain, 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unplanned life circumstances</td>
<td>Bradley, 1993; McLean, 2003; Lupton, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in/experience working with young people</td>
<td>Gaskell, 1992; DeCorse &amp; Vogtle, 1997; Wiest, Olive &amp; Obenshaim, 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Dohner, Loy, &amp; Stenberg, 1990; DeCorse &amp; Vogtle, 1997; Wiest, et al., 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic reward/responsibility/relationship oriented</td>
<td>Galbraith, 1992; DeCorse &amp; Vogtle, 1997; Johnston, McKeown &amp; McEwen, 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>Johnston, McKeown &amp; McEwen, 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimize/ignore concerns</td>
<td>Wiest, Olive, &amp; Obenchain, 2003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 2.* Conceptual themes from the literature used for this research study to develop question one.
**Research Question #2**

**What barriers or scaffolding does the school culture provide for men FCS teachers to be successful and remain in the field?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Themes</th>
<th>Citation in Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role Models</td>
<td>Benton, DeCorse &amp; Vogtle, 1997; Perrone, Zanardelli, Worthington &amp; Chartrand, 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary/status (positive or negative)</td>
<td>Johnston, McKeown &amp; McEwen, 1999; Cushman, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tokenism</em> (positive, negative, no affect)</td>
<td>Budig 2002; Cognard-Black, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of <em>glass escalator</em></td>
<td>Williams, 1992; DeCorse &amp; Vogtle, 1997; Cameron, 2001; Sargent, 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Bias of school culture</td>
<td>Hansot &amp; Tyack, 1988; Acker, 1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender bias of Individuals</td>
<td>Johnston, McKeown &amp; McEwen, 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Import normative male expectations – exaggerated <em>doing gender</em></td>
<td>West &amp; Zimmerman, 1987 ; Cameron, 2001; Cross &amp; Bagilhole, 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assigned discipline problems or manual labor</td>
<td>Sargent, 2000; Wiest, et al., 2003; Cushman, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexuality questions</td>
<td>Cohen, 1992; Hill, 1996; Budge, 1998; Blount, 2000; Cooney &amp; Bittner 2001; Sargent, 2001; Cross &amp; Bagilhole, 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding meaning of FCS</td>
<td>Vincenti, 1997</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 3.* Conceptual themes from the literature used for this research study to develop question two.
**Research Question #3**

**How does being a man in a female gendered occupation affect his everyday life?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Themes</th>
<th>Citation in Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exaggerated <em>doing gender</em></td>
<td>West &amp; Zimmerman, 1987; Francis &amp; Skelton, 2001; Cross &amp; Bagilhole, 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty being a role model</td>
<td>Allen, 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prejudice</td>
<td>Williams, 1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender role conflict/identity bruising</td>
<td>Luhaorg &amp; Zivian, 1995; Foster &amp; Newman, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceal occupation</td>
<td>Cross &amp; Bagilhole, 2002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4.* Conceptual themes from the literature used for this research study to develop question three.
### Research Question #4

**How do men FCS teachers see themselves in the history and future of FCS?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Themes</th>
<th>Citation in Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part of historic inclusion of men</td>
<td>Stage, 1997, p. 6, 20; Vincenti, 1997, p. 312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject appropriate to both sexes</td>
<td>C.F. Langworthy, 1913; Werhan, 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenger of stereotypes</td>
<td>Men, the future, 1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discouraged by numbers</td>
<td>Sturzl, 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived reluctance to embrace change by the profession</td>
<td>Sturzl, 1989</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 5.* Conceptual themes from the literature used for this research study to develop question four.
The interviews were conducted as guided conversations based on the literature review rather than as a structured inquiry (Yin, 2003). Yin stated, “The interview must satisfy the needs of your line of inquiry while simultaneously putting forth ‘friendly and nonthreatening’ questions in your open-ended interviews” (Yin, 2003, p. 90). Travel was required to conduct these face-to-face interviews. These unstructured, open-ended interviews were audio taped to reduce researcher-biased hearing as well as to allow the researcher to note the body language and facial expression of the respondents. A case study protocol was followed to increase the reliability of the case study and serve as a guide for the researcher (Yin, 2003, see Appendix A).

After the interviews, the audio tapes were transcribed noting not only words used but also other verbal cues. Notes made by the researcher during the interview were integrated into the transcript to augment text with visual cues. The transcripts were reviewed by the subjects to check for accuracy and completeness. This is called *member checking* and contributes to the credibility of the study and builds trust between the researcher and subject.

**Data Analysis**

After establishing the trustworthiness of the narratives by member checking, the transcriptions were coded based on the *Themes for Investigative Analysis* established by the literature review (see Figure 1, p. 5). The cases are presented noting consistency with the literature, recurring themes, and unique elements not mentioned in the literature. Rich, thick descriptions are provided to allow the reader to decide if the information is transferable to a different context. A cross-case analysis is used to make comparisons of the cases while preserving the uniqueness of each. A rhetorical method of reporting the
findings provides a literary narrative using personal language, qualitative terminology, and few definitions (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998).

Ethical Considerations

Application was made to the University of Akron Institutional Review Board and approval was granted for this study on January 28, 2008. A statement of informed consent was provided to each participant identifying the purpose of the study, the intended use of the information disclosed to the researcher, the participant’s right to privacy, and the participant’s right to withdraw from the study (see Appendix C). The statement of informed consent was signed by the participants prior to the beginning of the interview process.

In addition to approval from the review board and full-disclosure to the participants involved in the study, the validity of study should be under ethical scrutiny. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that terms of validity, reliability, and generalizability are quantitative terms that are not applicable to qualitative research and only reinforce the belief that qualitative research is an inferior method of inquiry. However, multiple strategies used by qualitative researchers can contribute to a studies’ validity. Those strategies that will be used to verify the credibility of this qualitative study are: 1) External auditing (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Creswell, 1998); 2) Member checking defined as soliciting informants’ review of the transcriptions and credibility of the findings and interpretations (Cresswell, 2007; Merriam, 1998); 3) Providing rich, thick descriptions (Creswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998); and 4) Clarifying researcher bias (Creswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Merriam, 1998).
External audits examine both the process and product of the research study and determine if the findings or conclusions of the research is supported by the data (Creswell, 2007). This examination was conducted by the dissertation committee chair and faculty members as they reviewed each step of the research process. Member checking was addressed by having each person interviewed review the transcripts of his interview to confirm its accuracy; accuracy not only in what or how he responded, but also if the response accurately conveyed his intent. This required additional conversations between the researcher and subject in order for the study to truthfully reflect the experience of the subjects. Establishing this procedure contributed to the development of a trustful relationship between the researcher and subject. Providing richly descriptive case-study reports allows others to determine for themselves if they believe the data is transferable (Merriam, 1998). Finally, clarifying the researcher’s world view at all points during the study informs the reader of any researcher bias that may have impacted the study.

Perspective Clarification

Merriam (1998) states that qualitative researchers must clarity their perspective or world view to establish credibility. Chase (1995, p. x) proposes the idea that “any representation of another’s speech or action is already an interpretation that reflects the choices and interests of the one presenting it.” As I edited the cases, I became aware that my own predisposition to honor the stories of the two subjects was a constant presence. Although I do not believe I changed their stories in any way, I realize that I played a role in the telling of their stories through our conversation and my presentation of the narrative.
Thus, I will begin by stating that I am the youngest of three daughters raised in a very “traditional” family. My mother was a full-time homemaker and my father a high school vocational agriculture teacher and entrepreneur. Mom only attended one semester of college before the invasion of Pearl Harbor diverted her from school and she entered the workforce. My dad was a WWII veteran who used his GI Bill funds to become the first in his family of Oklahoma sharecroppers to attend college. His greatest influence to attend college was from his high school vocational agriculture teacher.

Raised in a high expectations-high support family environment, the traditional role of full-time homemaker was highly valued. Yet the assumption was made clear that all of “the Lawrence girls” would go to college. Although I was told I could be anything I wanted to be, I knew it pleased my parents when I majored in vocational home economics education. Because my dad was a vocational agriculture teacher, the careers of teaching, vocational education, and home economics were seen in a very positive light.

After spending a total of three years in social services and eight years at home with small children, I finally began my teaching career at age thirty-three, teaching high school FCS classes where close to half of my students were boys. The male principal of the school in which I taught had the philosophy that all students should take at least one year of FCS.

My husband’s career move prompted me to seek a graduate degree at Indiana State University (ISU). The Department of Family and Consumer Sciences at ISU was chaired by a very dynamic woman who was directly responsible for my entrance into university academia. Her encouragement and passion for FCS had a profound effect on my life choices. I strive to be that same type of role model to my students.
I brought to this research study six years of interacting with men who were in a family and consumer sciences teacher preparation program. I was a FCS teacher educator at the University of Akron where I had the opportunity to advise a total of five male FCS education students over that time period. As their academic advisor and professor in several classes, I heard their stories and wanted them to be successful; unfortunately, only two of those students successfully completed the licensure program in FCS education. The conversations I had with these five individuals prompted my interest in this research topic.
CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF CASES

The cases presented in this study were developed from interviews with two men who are licensed family and consumer sciences teachers. The participants of the study were chosen due to their representing the phenomena being studied, availability to researcher, and length of time in the profession. Pseudonyms are used in order to maintain the privacy of the participants as well as those individuals mentioned in their stories. However, I believe that something was lost by making each person unidentifiable. When conducting the interviews, the participants sometimes struggled to remember names and would not move on with their story until they were able to recall that specific name. They would provide spelling of names and would ask if I knew the individual. It was important to the participants to identify the important people in their professional history by name. Although the basic facts of each story remain the same, pseudonyms diminish the power of the stories.
Pat

... this is my calling. ... this is where I want to be. ... this is where I do well. ...

I was directed by the security guard at the front door of a large first ring suburban high school in the Midwest to the career-technical wing of the school. Pat met me at the door of the offices in chef's attire. His office is shared by several FCS and other career technical teachers. During a tour of the high school, Pat described how he had helped to design the school, including the FCS department, as part of his graduate studies. After the school was built, he took the opportunity to transfer to that district. Approximately 1,600 students (half the school population) are enrolled in FCS course(s) in this school with students being turned away from classes due to capacity issues.

He indicated that we should probably go elsewhere to do the interview, but when I indicated that the other staff would hear his responses, he sat at his desk anyway. A voice from a distant desk called out that “he is a wonderful teacher.” His desk was piled high with resources, cans of various foods, and paperwork.

Pat in his 28th year of teaching FCS, Caucasian, in his mid-fifties, married, has three grown children and is a proud grandpa. He has an associate of arts degree in hotel and restaurant management, a bachelor’s degree in home economics education with a minor in child development and family living, a masters in school administration, and 70 credits towards a doctorate at [Land Grant University] in the field of facilities planning. He muses that since our e-mail correspondence, he has been thinking he should go back and finish his degree. In addition to being licensed to teach FCS, he is a Certified Executive Chef and a Certified Culinary Educator with the American Culinary
Federation. Pat is the middle child in a family of five children. He has an older brother and sister and a younger brother and sister. All of the siblings have college degrees, but only one of his sisters also went into the education profession. Pat did not have any experience taking home economics courses in high school, but was aware of the programs.

*The Road Less Traveled*

Pat began his narrative with a description of his serendipitous career path that led him to the profession of FCS education. It all began with his appointment with the wrong academic advisor.

My background, and got into it, was actually kind of by accident. Back in the 1970s, latter 70s, I had finished a two-year Associate Degree in Food Service and I was out in the food service industry and I decided to go back to the [State University] and do a degree in Food Service Administration. I went into the wrong advisor’s office and was in the office of Dr. Donna Fletcher who was the advisor for, at the time, Home Economics programs, both in Business and Education, and after about 20 minutes I said, “What are you talking about?” and realized... she was talking about being an educator. Well it kind of intrigued me at the time, and so I actually dual-majored for, when I first went to Stout, and then as I became more interested in Education and that there were actually programs out there in high schools to teach hotel and restaurant cooking. I kind of just went into Education... if it wasn’t for the fact that I had a person in Dr. Donna Fletcher, you know, back in the 1970s that said, “You know, we need teachers to teach this,”...she got me intrigued, and I swear to people that she could have sold me a used car that day.... she talked me into it, and... I got hooked and it’s, it’s a good thing.

In addition to his experiences at [State University], Pat was encouraged to follow a teaching career path by his wife, who is a special education teacher.

I guess she saw it as just an area of Food Service... My wife’s always been glad I did, you know, it’s been great. Both being teachers in the same school district, you have the same days off and everything, so,... raising our family, it’s been a wonderful thing.
While at the [State University], he received both encouragement and discouragement from the faculty.

There were those that were encouraging and supporting and those that were discouraging and wanted me out of there. I understand both sides. I still had some anger, I guess. . . they hadn’t acknowledged, they never did acknowledge that it was pretty much unfair, but I had to do some fighting and fortunately, at the time, there was things going on in the country that where there was reverse discrimination things and so I was able to… use that I guess. I, I kind of understood where (pause) you know, having a guy with a beard and cowboy boots and jeans and flannel shirts with the sleeves rolled up sitting in the Home Economics class in 1977 with girls that were sitting there with very nice outfits and big hair and bows around their necks and scarves, probably looked pretty much out of place and there was resentment by the instructors that, you know, ‘the guy in the flannel shirt’s going to get the job because he’s unique and these girls who are trying so hard, aren’t’, and that wasn’t necessarily true. …I don’t think they saw that and so I was, there were many times that I was, the door was shut…,

They [supportive professors] were the type that have the open door. If I needed to talk to somebody, they were there and they were supportive, you know. If I was having a problem with another instructor, I knew I could talk to them and they would help…they would guide me through that. There was one instructor, the hardest subject for me, by the way, was (laughs) textiles….especially for somebody who…couldn’t staple a button onto a material if he tried, and Dr. Jones at the [State University] who probably is retired now, had me in apparel construction and was so supportive that even during spring break she came in to help me, and… I never forget that. I sent her roses…because she was so helpful. But …in cases like that where she was not going to differentiate, and I always like to relate the story where I was sitting in apparel construction and she had told us that that day make sure you wore gym clothes or a swim suit or something underneath cause we’re going to do measurements, and you don’t do measurements fully clothed, and so she had told us that and, well, it came time to do measurements and of course I didn’t forget—I was the only guy in the class! And she goes, ‘okay, we’re going to do measurements’ and everybody kind of froze, you know, and apparently half the class had forgot. Well, now they had to do them in their underwear, okay? And she walked back up to the front of the room and she looked at us all, she goes, ‘We are all adults, I am not asking Pat to leave’, and, you know, I, that was probably the most tense hour of my life because I felt like I don’t dare look up…if I look at anybody, they’re going to scream or something horrible’s going to happen. So I and my partner…did our measurements and I had my eyes cast down all the time…cause I was afraid, ‘oh my god’…‘these girls are in their underwear and I’m, if I look at them they’re going to freak’, and it was, but it was interesting that she stood her ground and she was not going to make it different. She was not making exceptions whatsoever,
and it was, I tell you, that was a hell of an icebreaker. From then on everything was fine [with his fellow students]. You know, but it was, that one was a tough class for me, but there, there were instructors like that . . . that were there, and then there were some that they didn’t want to talk to me.

They [some professors] were very harsh on . . . you could see it in the grading. My papers would . . . there’d be a lot of things questioned and such. There were some that they didn’t want to talk to me. One instructor . . . swore she lost my paper and this was back before you had . . . digital back-up, and so . . . you’d have to go back and re-type it, and . . . things that I thought were . . . maybe it was, maybe it wasn’t, . . . but you always had that question, and so, and some instructors were, I mean, they were that way to everybody and you know that, but it was different for me but in the end I made a lot of friends.

Pat has found support from his school administration; however, he did not answer the question as a FCS teacher who is a man, but as a FCS teacher who is part of a team.

He has been supported by the district FCS consultants and other [State] educators.

They [administrators] are because we have, we put the effort into it . . . we don’t sit back and . . . become, ‘well, you know, maybe they’ll support us but they never do’, and I mean you got to get out there and you got to be aggressive and . . . I always say the strongest departments are always fighting with each other (laughs) . . . because you’ve got very fierce, independent-thinking instructors, you know?

. . . where I first was hired at [first employment] High School, . . . the department leader was a very strong. Her name was Elizabeth Smith, she was a very strong department leader, very, very open-minded and very, very supportive.

Our district Family & Consumer Science consultant, cause we had district consultants at the time, also was very strong . . . Ginger Ries, who was very strong in Family & Consumer Science, and . . . another good platform for me. They were very supportive of me. They’re retired now, but there were some very, very strong female advocates in [State]. Rose McIntyre . . . I’m trying to think of some of the others . . . they were very, they were there, you know? When I was doing my graduate work at the U, Dr. Brosnan was very supportive of what I was doing and we had many a long talk... so, [State] was probably one of the right places to come . . . some very forward thinkers.

Although Pat intentionally sought out men FCS teachers over the years he believes he would have benefited from having a formal network support group for men FCS teachers.
I try and actually find them through the ACF [American Culinary Federation] . . . what I get quite often are actually, they’re actually not teaching in the high school, they’re teaching in a college, . . . or a technical school somewhere. So to try and find actual males in a high school, that’s . . . we do have them in [State]—I know they’re there. I know they’re there . . .

Pat named a few men FCS teachers who he has known over the years. In the 1980’s, a land-grant university research team contacted men who were FCS teachers for a national study. Pat participated in that study, formed friendships and published an article with one of the participants.

Dr. James Nelson from [Land Grant University], and at the time he tracked down who the teachers currently were and I think, believe there’s only 12 at the time and this was in 80, I believe in ’85, ’84, ’85 maybe. And he had a bunch of us out to [State] and we all got to meet each other, which was really interesting because we all came from really, literally different walks of life. I mean, for, came into it for different reasons, and so it was, it was kind of interesting to see, you know, who, who gets into it, is there any kind of reason or rationale, no, we just, people, we just did.

FCS Ed – A Career that is Gendered

Teaching as a profession did not seem to be gender labeled for Pat; he has been encouraging one of his son’s to pursue a teaching license. However, despite his interest in taking FCS coursework in high school, the gender stereotyping of FCS affected him as early as high school and into his university program.

I was still in that era, graduating from high school in 1973, that they really didn’t want males in the Home Ec classes. We did get two, males did get to take a cooking class once, and one of them even got the Betty Crocker Award or whatever, but that was because their parents’ were on the school board and they pretty much could take anything they wanted. But other than that, when I tried, cause I was really interested in cooking, my mother taught me how to cook, she’s an Italian, and when I did ask my guidance counselor, you know, I’d like to take a cooking class, he said ‘no’ . . . .
In addition to lack of support from the school counselor and hostility from some university faculty members, Pat was presented with additional roadblocks, which included institutional bias, but he does not consider himself a pioneer in the field.

I always kid that I was a male chauvinist and I had papers to prove it, but after going through the Home Economics program at [State University], you know, I, it was a real eye-opener for me for a different career field, and it was also, I guess, interesting because in the late 70s you assumed that most things were integrated by gender, and . . . later I found out that no, it wasn’t integrated as much and I guess I never really, you know, focused on that . . . We were integrated by gender, and so I, I guess I just assumed that Family & Consumer Science had already had lots of males enrolled, and the truth is when I asked, they said, “Well, he graduated last year” (laughs) and I thought oh my gosh, what have I gotten into?

That’s probably changed now, but back then it hadn’t. And there were a lot of things that were different: when I filled out my student teaching forms back in 1979, the form said, “If married, state husband’s occupation” and I had to type-out ‘husband’ and type in ‘wife’, and, you know, and there was a policy that preferential placement was given to only those women with children. Well, I was a male with a son, but it didn’t matter, I was going to be placed in Timbuktu and so I had to fight to get placed locally so that I wouldn’t be away from my family. And again, you know, it was gender specific. That’s changed now, of course.

[in the early years] It did make a difference in where I could locate because smaller school districts weren’t real interested and especially if they were a one-person department, they weren’t very interested in, you know, having a male, so they would rather have a female teaching their coursework.

James Rust, who was a male Home Ec teacher here in [State], he was the first . . . he retired a couple years ago, but he was the pioneer and his license, his teaching license, was held up for almost a year as the state debated whether they could license a male in Home Economics. That was in 1970, I believe . . . so he had seen a lot of . . . the bias, so to speak, he kind of paved the way.

Within the profession of FCS, Pat experienced some roadblocks and did not appreciate being considered the “token” man FCS teacher. Due to his experiences, he has chosen to be professionally active in the Culinary Federation rather than the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences.

. . . I never really did belong to what used to be the American Home Economics Association, which is now . . . AAFCS] I always said it was because every time
they sent me a letter in the mail it said “Ms.” It did... yeah, although I did belong to the [State] one for a while. In fact, at one point they wanted me to run for a state officer’s position, and I would, told them I would only do it if I could put my name on the ballot as ‘Pat’, not ‘Patrick.’ And they said, “No, no, we want it as ‘Patrick’,” and I said, no, cause then I’ll get it. ... You’ll see that... I think that’s one of the things we found at [Land Grant University], too, when we all met, is we didn’t like that being ‘token’. We didn’t care for that—nobody did. And... we pretty much all saw it the same.

... For 18 years I was an FHA HERO Advisor, so I was very active in that, mostly HERO, and when I would go to the national conventions you felt a little strange, you know? I, I wasn’t exactly a non-red and white, but... somebody had warned me when I went to my first national convention, they said, “Be prepared. If you haven’t seen the strong “home eccy” before, this is where you’re going to see them”, and boy were they right. I thought they were kidding, but yes they were right. I mean there were women there from down south that were in their red skirts and white blouses and red fingernails and red high heels... and they were Home Economics dyed-in-the-wool so to speak...They were very strong and being a male was almost like...things froze. So, I don’t know, that, and oddly enough, during that time that I was an advisor, Alan Raines was the director. Somehow they had no problem having a male director of FHA HERO, but they have a hard time with male instructors. All the time I went to those I never ran into another male instructor. That was kind of weird, too.

*Doing Gender*

Pat was unfamiliar with the phrase, “doing gender,” but when given the definition and asked if he found himself doing traditional masculine behaviors to offset his career choice, he responded repeatedly that he finds that to be true.

... In fact one of the custodians... for the first two years he was here, he thought I was the auto teacher (laughs) because... I walked around with the same key ring that the Tech Ed teachers do and I, and most of my friends here are in the Tech Ed department... And, but... yeah, I think so. I work strongly with the Boy Scouts of America. I’ve been a scout leader for many, many years, and now I work with the boys that are trying to achieve Eagle, and so I’m still active with them. I do that mostly because I was raised in a scouting family, but yeah, I think you do. I really think you do. Yeah, that, that would make sense. That would make sense. I think that you can’t deny it. You are what you are. ... So, yeah, I find myself doing that stuff. I mean I grew up in northeastern Wisconsin, in Rhinelander, so I mean I grew up... hunting and fishing and... so I still enjoy that anyway but yeah, I think sometimes I catch myself doing that... I, I don’t... you don’t want to seem weak or something... like that. So yeah, I think that’s true.
Pat also shared that there was an assumption that if you teach home economics, you must be gay. Although he is aware of several men FCS teachers who are gay, he is not. He believes that stereotype is not as prevalent today. However, due to these stereotypes he has not always been truthful when asked about his profession.

... people say, ‘well what do you teach?’, and I did catch myself years ago saying, ‘oh, business’ (laughs) ‘I teach social studies’, ... something else, especially depending on who the crowd was...I remember one time in my wife’s home town sitting around the local auto garage in a farm town. We’re talking about different things and they said, ‘oh, what do you teach, you graduated from [State University]?’, and I said, ‘oh, Tech Ed’, (laughs), you know, ‘oh yeah, what do you teach, you teaching autos?’ ... ‘sure, whatever’. Fortunately I knew something about cars so I didn’t sound like an idiot. ... I lied, because I was afraid of what people would think and now I don’t. ... Of course you get older and you really don’t care ... it doesn’t matter as much anymore.

Pat repeatedly made statements which indicated he did not see the overt normative masculine expectations as in the past. He was disappointed to hear how few men were entering the FCS teacher education programs. He attributes the increased number of boys in FCS secondary programs to a variety of reasons.

Foods classes, it’s actually 60/40[male to female students]. It’s predominantly male. But that’s true in a lot of schools. Child development, probably more girls, needs to be [50/50], actually our clothing courses are pretty diversified, there’s quite a few males.

Yeah, I think that’s some of it [HGTV], that’s some of it. Actually, I think what it is, the same thing with Tech Ed and with Family Consumer & Science, the kids want to, they’re looking for the application of knowledge. They’re looking to apply the math skills and the science skills and this is their opportunity, this is what we do. ... we’ve been the vanguard of that for generations, you know?

Additional Thoughts

Teaching food service was what first drew Pat’s interest to FCS, however, other aspects of the curriculum also interested him. He indicated the value of the FCS
curriculum is why people go into FCS education. He is very passionate about the
importance of the content for all secondary students, both girls and boys.

…but then as time went on [at State University] and I started learning things
about child development which really intrigued me. I mean I couldn’t believe the
things, how, like I say, when I started, I, I was very, I was a traditional male, I
guess you would say, from a small north woods community in Wisconsin, and I
would say that the benefit was that I really changed my attitude. I mean as far as
raising children and the role, the definition of roles in the house, responsibilities,
attitudes in the community and jobs, and I, I, I really did an about-face. I really,
really opened up my feelings that everybody is going to get a shot at it, you know,
and it really changed me a lot. So, . . . that I always saw as a real benefit.

We [men from the research group] just went into it because we enjoyed teaching
those topic areas. We had very strong feelings about those areas, and so … we
look at it the same way women do. I mean we have very strong feelings about
those subjects, and, that they’re extremely important and all for the same reason.

I’ve taught, pretty much everything except clothing and housing—those are
probably the only two although I did student teach courses in that. Primarily the
foods classes, child development, interpersonal relations. . . eventually I quit
teaching hotel and restaurant cooking classes and went down because we needed a
Foods 1 teacher. I covered that class for a year until we could find a Foods 1
teacher. I stayed with it because I found that even though I thought it was like
beneath me, it was actually very, very good. I have a blast teaching a very basic
class, and today we turn away hundreds of students. These programs are
extremely vital in society and in the schools and try to encourage them.

It still baffles me how we did not get child development required. . . because of all
the. . . when you see all the child abuse how much of it would be eliminated
simply by requiring child development—not in the junior high—but in the 11th
and 12th grade. Ninety-eight percent of all graduates are going to become parents,
you know this, and so therefore why aren’t we doing anything about it?

I try and encourage guys to take it [child development], and it helps, cause I know
some of my males in my foods classes will take child development. That’s
probably one of my biggest . . . because when you see child abuse in the papers . . .
eight times out of ten it’s a male committing the abuse and shaking a baby . . .
this could have been solved by having them take child development, ‘cause you
deal exactly with that and what to do, and here we have, we have the tools in our
society to change that. Just do it. Don’t talk about it, look at it, do it. . .

As a proponent of teaching and specifically FCS, Pat is perplexed why more men
or women do not go into the field.
I think there were things that were difficult at first, but I think those things have changed. . . I don’t see it anymore, and it would be nice to see more guys in it. I still don’t know why there’s a difference. I’m actually at a loss. I don’t understand why they [men], they wouldn’t go into it. Maybe they will, maybe we just need more Foods teachers. Maybe that might be the hook and then saying, “Well, you can teach cooking but, you know, there’s all these other neat things, too”. And we do have very successful males in the Family & Consumer Science programs. FCCLA has a lot of males and, you know, more than ever, and why aren’t they going into it? . . . Right now actually is a tough time to judge that because we, overall, kids aren’t going into, becoming teachers. There’s a very, there’s going to be a shortage and right now we’re lucky if we can find any Family & Consumer Science teachers.

I guess I was hoping that you were going to tell me that it’s all changed… I guess it’s gotten to the point where yeah, I would like to see more males in the field but I just would like to see more quality teachers coming out of the colleges—that’s my biggest concern. So it’s, you know, changed my focus a little bit here. . . Male or female, you know, just ones that are go-getters, ones that are going to come into the school and say, “All right now, let’s get this program up and running. Here’s what we got to do . . . let’s get these kids involved, let’s get a chapter going of FHA or FCCLA, and get involved”.

As he begins making plans for his retirement, he does not regret his career path.

I still consider myself a Home Economics teacher . . . . That’s still what I am . . . I’m glad I was. I’ve very glad I was. I think it was a perfect fit for me. But, you know, it’s, had it not been for Home Economics . . . and having stumbled into that office, I wouldn’t have been doing what I do. I probably would have stayed in Food Service and never got into teaching at all, and yet I found that teaching was…this is my calling. My happy place is in the room with the kids when I close the door… that’s my favorite place. . . not all the paperwork and administration and stuff like that, I have a, actually my Master’s is in School Administration so I was, I could have been, a principal, but I always thought I’m happier in the classroom. This is where I want to be, this is where I do well. I don’t want to deal with [just] the bad kids, I deal with the good kids, too.

Somebody once had the sarcastic comment that the only reason you become an administrator is you either don’t like kids or you need more money or both. And, you know, maybe that’s not so sarcastic, maybe that’s true, because I don’t think the extra income is worth . . . the aggravation. I always say the greatest impact you make is in the classroom, and most kids are going to always remember you. Today I can’t go anywhere in the [metro area] without running into somebody and they always remember me.

I tell you . . . I got, I got one of those ‘teacher letters’, you know, that you get from a kid? And oddly enough she’s at [State University] and she said,
“Remember when you talked to me after class? Here I am now, I believed you”, you know, you get, aw, . . . it’s like, oh, yeah, it does. . . . it’s like, “Oh, okay, that’s it! . . . I can retire now, you know, I did it!” You only need one of those . . . and it’s that great feeling. I have no, absolutely no, regrets.
Timothy

...I was... not satisfied with the pillow and thought there was more than a soufflé to nutrition...

Timothy suggested that I come to his home on a Saturday morning to conduct the interview. He and his wife live in a nice upper-middle class neighborhood in a second-ring trendy suburb of a Midwestern capital city. Timothy, his wife, and two large dogs greeted me at the door and I conducted the interview at the kitchen table while his wife left us to do some grocery shopping. He and his wife plan on having children in the near future. He completed his bachelor’s degree in Family and Consumer Sciences Education in 2002 and he recently completed his masters’ degree in Curriculum and Instructional Studies.

Timothy is in his late twenties, Caucasian, and in his fifth year of teaching FCS at a Junior/Senior High School with a student enrollment of 636. The school serves a small community just 10 miles from an economically depressed industrial city. He has a 45 minute drive to his workplace in the opposite direction of where he and his wife do most of their socializing and where they are active members of a church. Timothy plans on beginning a new position in a charter school in the capital city this fall. Although it is not a FCS position, he believes that he will be “using his FCS methods” in this project-based school.

The Road Less Traveled

Timothy did not have a good impression of FCS from his high school experience.

I took a [FCS] class that my older sister recommended. She told me I would love the teacher, and so, I said, “Okay, well whatever”. So, I signed up, I think it was my junior year, and the all-star lady’s name was Mrs. Watson. She was, like, the
goddess of the department, I mean, had her following, it was like a cult. And so, I mean, I knew of her. I had taken pictures in her classes for yearbook, and, so I was excited to have her. So, then the next year I sign up and I get somebody else. It was a new person. The department was growing, and so they hired somebody; and since there weren’t, there aren’t a lot of FACS teachers, they called somebody who had been trained several years ago who never taught, who never got a job when she graduated. So, she came in and I remember I took it, it was called Adult Roles and Responsibilities. I was really excited about it because my sister was all, you know, ‘oh this is great’. And I remember we had a gratefulness journal. We grew a plant. Most of the time we just made fun of her. It was a horrible class. Oh, we also learned how to wrap a present. . . . I was like, ‘yeah, well, that was big fat waste of time’. That lady quit after that semester. Well, we were told she quit. I don’t know if she got fired or quit, but, so, anyway, that was my experience with Family and Consumer Sciences in high school. I wanted to take some of the nutrition classes, but never, with yearbook, I was in yearbook and choir, could not fit in any of them. So, that was kind of a bummer.

When he left home to attend [State University], FCS education as a major was never a consideration. However, while enrolled in a career exploration course, he heard the academic advisor from the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences speak and that sparked some interest. However, he did not see FCS education as a specific career goal, but rather a major that would provide the tools to work in a “helping” profession.

. . . I remember my first semester [at State University]. I was actually in a Sociology 100 class and it was fairly interesting, but I started realizing that if I wanted to study Sociology I was basically going to be Ph.D. oriented . . . and wasn’t interested (laughs) but I still knew that I wanted something related to people, how people worked and operated, and something that was more of a helpful profession…I had no clue on what to do. I remember I went to, they had all these flyers all over campus about career counseling, and I went to the Dean of Students and met with a career counselor for a little bit and did all the Myers-Briggs and I loved it—I liked taking the tests and it was a great experience, and she actually put me in a class that was geared for people who didn’t know what they wanted to do and they had all of the departments—either academic advisors or professors or somebody coming in and represent what their degree program was about and what you could do with it. . . that’s when I first was exposed to, cause I didn’t even know that . . . it [FCS education] existed. I didn’t know what it was.

When I was in this class at [State University], I remember Renee Jackson . . . she was our advisor and . . . came in and started talking and they broke us up into the different departments and we went over to the school of FCS and learned about
different things. So, I went to that one, I thought, you know, at the time, I was looking at social work. [State University] doesn’t have social work, and so I was kind of thinking what is the next best thing. All of my career counseling stuff said it was education, some type of health or health-oriented or helping-profession type stuff. . . . so, I was very interested and intrigued. I looked at the other programs, youth, adult, and family services, individual and family studies, and I think it was child development and family studies as well, and I looked at all of them and I thought well they are basically all the same coursework, so what’s the difference, and, and they seemed very vague, or loose, in what you had to take. . . . I looked at the education option, I still didn’t connect that’s what it was [FCS education], but it had the education element, and it had a little bit more beef to it. I got to take all the classes in all the areas and it seemed a little bit more versatile, and so I, went ahead and did that.

. . . I talked with Renee and I remember her going through the papers; and I remember her looking at me like, and she even said, “Are you sure you’re at the right one?” And I said, “Well I think so, you know, this is the education one, right?” And she said, “Yes”. So, there was about five of us and we sat down and listened and she went over papers on what you would do and what other career opportunities there were, and then it hit me, I was like, “Oh, you mean Home Ec!” And she very graciously said, “Well, you know, we are Family & Consumer Sciences now.” I don’t remember much about that, but I remember leaving thinking ‘well that was a waste of time’ because of, I was like, ‘oh, we’re going to teach people to wrap presents, let’s go’. So I, I didn’t, I think I went a whole other semester, at least that, rest of that semester and didn’t give it a second thought and then, you’re, I’d already switched out of Sociology into what was called, I think, undergraduate studies. It was like an ‘undecided’ type major, and they were telling me, like, you need to select a major by such and such date. So, it was coming close, I didn’t know what else to do, and so I remember looking around more. I remember looking at social work. I didn’t want to leave [State University]. . . . I had a lot of friends. I was involved in some ministries and stuff and I loved it and didn’t want to leave. So, I was like well, I have to find the next best thing. So, I went into the FACS Ed Program and thought, you know, well I’ll just get through it, and then I’ll do what I want. At least I’ll have a major, and then I’ll do what I want after college. It’ll still prepare me. I remember looking at like the social work, or there was a family preservation worker job description, and it was basically the FACS curriculum. So, I was okay, it will be relevant.

Timothy was the middle of three children, the only boy, born to a father who was a steelworker and a mother who did not work outside the home. He was the first in his immediate family to graduate from college. Although his parents were encouraging, they
did not have the experience to provide much guidance in his academic pursuits. His Aunt Cheryl provided the encouragement he needed to go away to college.

. . . I remember her [Aunt Cheryl] calling me from, she lived in Chicago at the time, and saying, . . . “I don’t care where you go, you have to go away.” . . . So, she was the one who kind of, basically my only college guidance. My parents had no idea. I think part of the reason my sister wasn’t successful was because she didn’t have anybody, she didn’t know how to navigate the system. It wasn’t something that our family did. And, like I teach my freshman now basic things, like the Office of Admissions, and what is an admissions counselor, and where do you get an application? Because, if nobody in their family has ever done it, they’re clueless. . .

Despite his average success in high school, Timothy found that he needed to be his own advocate in his academic and career success.

I had actually gone to [State University] as a youth retreat type thing, and that was the first time I was on a college campus and fell in love with it. I had wanted to stay in the dorm that we stayed in for that, but then I found out later that it was a women’s’ dorm, and we were just there for the summer conference, so, I was, ‘oh, that’s not going to work out.’ So, yeah, Aunt Cheryl, my aunt started nudging me a lot more. My senior year she kept telling me even what school to go to if you want do engineering or a science technical field, you go to [State University]. If you want liberal arts or anything else, go to [different State University], and that’s where you will do well. So, I started applying. I really didn’t know what I was doing, and my persistence came in. . . I know that our counselors were still kind of trained in the tracking era, and I was not college material based on my GPA and my SAT scores. I was not considered college bound, mainly if you were in the top 20% you would be, they would focus on you. They would give you the time of day. I was not, and so nobody was really all that helpful. . . Usually the only time we saw our counselors were when we were scheduling and that was maybe a 5-10 minute appointment...there was no guidance on that. I remember I filled out my application. [State University] does rolling admissions and so they had said, “You know, you’ll find out in about two weeks whether you get in or not”, so I think I applied like the first day of my senior year and it was almost two months before I heard anything back and I thought, what in the world? So, I called down there, and they said, “Well, we’ve never received your transcripts from your high school.” And so, that was when I started going to the guidance office and asking to speak to my guidance counselor every day, and they kept putting me off and putting me off, and finally, the secretary said, “What do you need?” and I said, “Well, my transcripts weren’t sent to [State University] and that’s the only thing they’re waiting for,” and she said, “Oh,” and so she did it. She was my friend’s mom, so she finally did it under the table. . . Yeah, it
was... about the end of that week I heard back from [State University]. I got my big, you know, fat congratulations envelope! I remember going down the first time [to State University] and I was so nervous because I knew my parents didn’t know. They were looking to me to figure everything out.

There were some influential high school teachers in Timothy’s life as well. As much as he was under-whelmed by the experience in his FCS course, he was influenced by a couple of teachers that taught and/or advised in areas that weighed heavily on his consideration list for a college major. Timothy was the photo editor of the yearbook, but after working in a photo lab, he decided that photojournalism was not family-friendly, which from a young age he realized was an important consideration for a career.

... every night at about, right before I would start shutting the machines down, about 8:30, all the photographers would come in begging me to process their negatives. This was before everybody had digital. And I thought, well what are you guys going to do after this? “we have to go back and do other stuff,” and I’m like, and I, and I remember looking and thinking, they’re all single and none of them have kids. The only one who had kids was the photo editor and he could set his own hours. But, all the others had no life outside of their job, and I saw my Dad do that. And I was like, that’s not what I want. I knew that not having my Dad around was very irritating, and always going by the shift work. I knew that I wanted something that was relatively set as far as the schedule and more family friendly, so yeah. So, yeah, photography didn’t work out... I only had really, maybe two or three good teachers, and, that what I thought were good teachers. One of them was my Sociology teacher, one of them was my choir teacher, and one of them was my journalism advisor. And that was pretty much it.

I’d actually applied to Liberal Arts for Sociology. I, one of my favorite teachers was my Sociology teacher. I loved that class, and, I didn’t know what else to do. I knew I wanted to go to college, but really had no, any guidance on what to study. And so, I thought, ‘well, I liked him, I’ll try Sociology.’

Timothy related the importance of the academic atmosphere of the family and consumer sciences department, faculty and staff as major influences in his success in college. Ultimately, these factors coupled with a field experience, changed his opinion on FCS education as a profession.
I wasn’t planning on going into teaching until I did student teaching. The whole time I was still focused on, social work translated then to counselor. I was going to be a professional counselor. I was going to work with people, all that stuff, and it just, then I thought ‘well, do I have to go to Psychology and then I’m going to have to do all this other, you know, graduate school.’ So, I was still open to what was available, but I was not very open to teaching. I went in, I think it was the next semester, my sophomore year is when I actually started some of the FACS classes as far as the Intro to Education, and because the programs are so small, they only offer some of the methods courses like once every three years or something, and so if you miss it that time, you basically are, you have to wait another three years, and if you’re a junior, you’ve got to wait three years for that class to come around again.

. . . when Renee found out that I was serious, they [the faculty] were nothing but encouraging. So, I remember that Renee had to do an incredible amount of paperwork to get me into some of the classes that I would need so that I could graduate, still, in four years. She was a wizard at making classes fit. All the other coursework that I’d already taken, she had fit in to make it work on the FACS program, and she was always going back [and forth between departments], cause it, being interdisciplinary between FCS and the School of Education.

But, I had to take methods classes as a sophomore just so I could get graduated on time, which was great because in reflection, I had Dr. Smith [FCS teacher educator] almost every semester. I mean, talk about mentoring and seeing somebody grow! I had her for at least three years in one or two classes a semester, and then she was my graduate advisor as well. So, I mean, she was with me through the long haul and saw everything that I was doing and could really help you develop and know where you’re at, so, that was great. So, I was also seeing my academic advisor once a week for at least two years straight, and I remember talking to my friends in Engineering and they’re like, “I don’t even have an advisor. Like we go in and have group scheduling.” . . . I was like, “Doesn’t everybody have this?” So, I was really liking the individual attention that I was getting.

I also appreciated, that there was a genuine concern in my achievement, mainly from Renee and from Dr. Smith. They really wanted to see me do well…

It [FCS education] was very interesting, but I still didn’t really plan on doing it. I liked the other classes. I remember taking a Child Development class, and didn’t really like the food stuff, but I liked the family-oriented classes, stuff like that. So, that was a lot of fun for me. I think it was understanding the family, the dynamics, and seeing, you know, how important parenting and all that stuff was. That was very intriguing to me.

And then also, in the FCS office, there was a woman who was a legacy at [State University], Maria Dowell, I think that was her last name. That woman, if you
talked to her once in the hallway, she would know your name the rest of your life, and she retired when I was a senior. I’d only, I’d only talked with her once cause I was redoing a schedule and Renee wasn’t there and so I had to go to her, and that was the only time I’ve ever talked to her, and like two years later at her retirement, I think it was, she was like, “Hey, how did that Child Development class work out for you?” And, I’m like, ‘you’re crazy, like how old are you?’

That’s what they did. . . . That was who they were.

Timothy took the opportunity to substitute teach during semester breaks with mixed experiences…

I did a little bit of substitute teaching at my high school once because college was done like a month earlier than the high schools, and I went back and I remember the first one I did was middle school, and I was going to kill them. Then I did high school and they were all right. I remember going back and telling Renee and Dr. Smith – I think they thought I was kidding—I said, “Whatever you need to do to get me out of student teaching in a middle school, do it! I will do another semester of high school teaching. I will do whatever you want. I will kill them!” I think they thought I was kidding—no—I’m serious! (laughs) Get me out! They didn’t, but we had to do two placements.

While I was at my old high school, I was substituting for Mrs. Watson who was the goddess of FACS, there was another woman there who they had hired. She was actually, used to be a social worker and transferred into education, and I remember watching her and thinking this woman is amazing. The funny thing is my wife taught in downtown [Capital City] in an inner-city school and started talking about this incredible FACS teacher that they had and I was like, what is her name? And she said Jackie Mc-something, and I was like McMasters? . . . she was actually working on her administrator’s internship and was teaching FACS in the inner-city and getting the internship all at the same time. . . . The woman is brilliant and actually is working on her Ph.D. and is trying to be an administrator. She’s licensed to teach like nine things and knows Spanish. I mean she’s just brilliant. My wife and I said if you ever start a school, we’ll drop everything, we’re there. We will be at your side doing whatever you ask us to do. So, if you ever hear of Jackie McMasters, she’s a genius.

So, I was going to do counseling. I wasn’t going to do teaching. . . .

Timothy attributes his entering the field of FCS education due to his difficult, but rewarding, student teaching experience. He considered his cooperating teachers to be exceptional teachers and mentors.
I student taught with a woman named Jane Adams. She was my first [cooperating teacher], I was at the middle school first, and I was very intimidated by her. She was, we had heard about her through my 3-1/2 years of being in FACS Ed, you know, Jane Adams this, Jane Adams that. She is the associate editor of the Journal of Family & Consumer Sciences, she is the [state organization] president . . . teacher of the year . . . in the FCS Ed magazine. She, I mean, AAFCS everywhere, and I’m going to go with this woman? I said, Dr. Smith, you’re not, like, I don’t know anything. You know? And she just kept encouraging me saying, “You know, you’re going to be okay and Jane is really nice”. So, I went out. . . I had to observe her once before I actually do student teaching. . . . I went back and told Dr. Smith, “I don’t think it’s going to work.” And she said, “Well, at this point we pretty much don’t have any options so you’re just going to have to do it.”

We [Jane and Timothy] kind of had this agreement, it was unspoken, but it worked. She was very gracious and said, “Why don’t I teach the first class of the day, and then you can do the others?” So, while she was teaching that first class, I’m in the back writing like writing everything the woman is saying down. And the funny thing was the second class would come in and I would get up and teach it like I had known it for years. . . . So, we never really talked about it or said that it was an official process, but that’s the way it worked out. She—to this day—is still a mentor to me . . .

So, that was my first [student teaching] experience. I remember getting up in front of the class at [current school] and I started teaching, getting to know the kids, and I thought this is it. This is it. It got even better. I had a wonderful experience at the middle school, and it got even better when I went to the high school because I had, again, another award-winning . . . brilliant woman. And she, again, was very gracious. That semester, that eight weeks there [at the high school], taught me more about teaching than a lot of the general School of Education classes did. So, I mean I got full the full ringer at the high school. And it was, but it was a great experience. They [cooperating teachers] were both geniuses, and I’m thinking like ‘I don’t know anything, like how can I compare with these women?’

The mentors really instilled a lot of classroom management and organizing. In fact, at the high school there was a department of, I think, four women and they had a rule you were not allowed to be in the department alone. So, if school got out at, you know, 3:15 and it was just you and another person at 3:45, if that other person was leaving, no matter what you were doing you had to leave too, because they loved what they did and they could easily spend until 7:00 there, and so, they had a rule, you cannot be here alone because you will overwork yourself, and you have a—they all had families—you have a family at home and you have to go home. It’s more important for you to be with your family than it is to create a worksheet . . .
Dr. Linda Smith’s name came up many times in his narrative. She was also highly instrumental in Timothy’s decision that teaching was the career field for him.

Probably within in the first week of me actually teaching and doing the curriculum, [I decided that this is what I want to do]. I mean it was a horrible mission, because Dr. Smith is, again, being very detail oriented. For every lesson that we did for student teaching, we had to have a full out detailed lesson plan. We had to have our week plan approved the Thursday before the next week and all of our lesson plans had to be done two weeks—or two days—before we did them so that way our mentor had a chance to review them.

Gosh, I don’t know (pause) as far as my awareness or methods and my mind set, I would not be anywhere near where I am today. Dr. Smith always instilled in us this idea of sharing resources and collaborating with other people and also not re-inventing the wheel where it was not necessary, but also, whatever you’re told to do, do it with a good attitude.

I taught my friends [in education classes] how to write lessons and how to develop curriculum because it had been ingrained in me so much by these women, ‘this is how you do it’. I remember, I tried convincing Dr. Smith that, to just scrap all the blocks, that actually teaching us how to teach . . .

So, I would not be, even as far as like being a leader, my administrators feel that I’m a leader because when they say something, I’m like, okay, well, all right, what do we need to do that? To where the other teachers are very, ‘here we go again.’ [So you think Dr. Smith helped prepare you to be that kind of person?] Oh definitely, yeah, Dr. Smith and so did Jane Adams and Tara [high school cooperating teacher]. Tara was a mastermind at . . .I want to say ‘diplomatic.’ Dr. Smith is a genius in being diplomatic and I watch her deal with some people and I’m like, ‘I would rip off their face’ and she’s just very polite and very kind. So, I’ve learned a lot from them. I’m still not as gentle and graceful as they are, but you know, still learning.

Timothy reported that the only discouragement, to majoring in FCS education, was from other students. However, they even seemed to change their attitudes after they realized he was succeeding on his own abilities.

It was actually some of the other students that were not very encouraging. So, they were, after that first semester, they, and they saw that I was up to par, were very encouraging . . .
Doing Gender

Timothy did not feel the FCS education program considered him a “token;” however, he believed some of the initial issues with fellow FCS education students was their perception of his receiving special treatment due to his gender. Although, he stood out in the crowd, he believes all students in the school were treated as special.

Poor Dr. Smith had to change all of her documents because if ever there was an assignment, it would say, you know, when ‘she’ (laughs). She was very gracious and put ‘she/he’ or would, you know, announce “Okay, ladies and Timothy, we need to go this way.” She was very detailed-oriented, and I loved her assignments because there was a bulleted list of what you were expected to do. And, in classes I would, I remember looking like, ‘okay I’ve got that, I did that, I did that, alright I’m good,’ and then I would turn it in and I would get A’s, and I’m like ‘this stuff is easy, can anybody do that?’ But, my classmates were getting B’s and C’s, and they’re like, “Well you’re getting the A because you’re the guy and they don’t want you to . . . they’re being easy on you because they don’t want to discourage you. They want you to stay in.” And then I remember, I went through that for about a year, and then I remember looking at one of their assignments and I’m like, “No, you didn’t even do this part, what are you saying? Follow the directions!” And, and so that’s where I think my mind clicked with Dr. Smith’s and just that she was very, when she gave assignments they were very linear and very systematic. They had tables and it was, I can do this, you know. It was when they got into the really vague stuff that I, at the time, didn’t do well on. So, and I remember telling my friends in the department, like, “Just read her directions. They’re very specific and you’ll be fine.” And so, I remember one girl actually did it and she was used to getting B’s and having to redo things, and, and she was fine. And I’m like ‘directions will never steer you wrong!’ So, . . . after I figured that out . . . that they were just, [thinking] I was going to be a publicity thing. I was going to be in all the pictures or something. . . . I was just following directions and they weren’t, I started to realize like . . . yeah, I can do this.

. . . even being in the lecture halls with some of the faculty with 200 people, I remember in my first child development class, I, there was probably me and like five other guys and 200 women, and the guy, the professor was a man, and I remember one day one of my engineer—my roommate was an engineering major—and he was like, you know, “There are no women here.” I was like, “Yeah they are, they’re in my classes!” So, he came to my class and we sat kind of in the middle of the lecture hall, and the professor was like, “We have a visitor!” And, he worked in preschools and daycares and things like that, and so he made us sing this, like, The Welcome Song, and my friend was freaking out,
but, he’s like, “Your professor knows everybody?” And I said, “Well, I don’t know if he knows everybody, but he knows most of us.” . . . you’re known, you’re important and somebody actually cares if you do well on this or not. So, it was a good experience in most of the classes. Not all of them were that pleasant, but the majority of them were.

Following graduation, Timothy began looking for a FCS teaching position. The largest school district in the state had just cut FCS programs. Jobs were rather scarce and he realized that many of the positions being filled were due to a teacher’s retirement. Thus, the programs had been using more traditionally-based curriculum. He began to doubt what he had been told while in the FCS education program at [State University]; perhaps he was just a token and not particularly marketable. Timothy had been encouraged to look at all the national standards for FCS education and not just focus on the few standards that are most generally recognizable by the public, namely, cooking and sewing. He believes his practice of not focusing in on the traditional aspects of the curriculum alienated him from some fellow teachers and potential employers.

I remember thinking, okay, ‘Dr. Smith and Jane, you guys are lying to me, because you tell me I’m so great and so wonderful, why can’t I get a job? Why does nobody else want me?’ And I cannot figure it out. I think, I did not, I started to doubt them and think, you know, maybe I am just a token, something like that, and this past year I remember talking with Jane Adams and she said, “The problem is, Timothy, you’re too progressive. You’re too ahead of where most people are in their thinking. . . . Those things definitely worked against me. Because on the two jobs that I really wanted, the department heads were in the interviews and if they didn’t like what I was doing, which was basically what they weren’t doing, then I didn’t get either of those positions that I really wanted down here. . . . I was . . . not satisfied with the pillow and thought there was more than a soufflé to nutrition.

There are (pause) people have had concerns, one of the positions, you know, how are you going to feel working in that department with, you know, seven other women? (laughs) And I’m like, well it was pretty much undergraduate so what’s the difference? You know it doesn’t bother me. Does it bother you? And I wonder if there’s some of that you know . . .
During his first year, he realized that he was trying to compensate for being a man in a female gendered field. Some students assumed he was homosexual. He has used these experiences in the interpersonal relationships class to teach that you cannot make assumptions about people based on how they dress. Timothy does not believe people question his motivations for becoming a FCS teacher anymore.

I think my first (pause) my first year I was really nervous about that and I… I’m pretty sure I did overcompensate with trying to be more, you know, (masculine noise), one of the students. I remember my first day . . . being up in front of the class the first time, you know, I thought I was looking nice, everything was great. Told them about who I was and where I came from, and one of the boys in human development introduced himself and said something about like, you know, my name is so-and-so and I’m straight. And I was like (pause) “Great!” . . . Like, jump right in, you know, conversation. There were some assumptions that since I was a guy in an all-female dominated field, and that I could dress nicely, that I was, must be, homosexual.

I’ve kind of addressed some of the gender stereotype things I guess. I’ve never really been expected to do, you know, a lot of maybe more traditional, masculine things, I guess, mainly cause I told them, “I don’t want to do that.” I am the Student Council sponsor and I … do the Homecoming and stuff and I’m always left to order flowers. And so I call the florist and they’re like, “So what do you need?” I’m like, “A rose,” you know, “I need six roses.” And, “What color?” I was like, “Do they have yellow?” you know. “What do you want on it?” I was like, “I don’t know—just make it look pretty.” “I want a girl to look pretty holding her flower. Put a ribbon on it, I don’t care. Tell me how much it is” . . .

When I first started, people wanted to know why I picked it. And I basically said because . . . these things are important to me. Family is important to me. As I started to learn more about finances and realizing the crisis that most people are in, especially my age. . . . I wanted to be more proactive and I thought that teaching was the way to help change things. I remember doing a lot of papers for Dr. Smith about changing the image of what it means to be a man in the family, and I think I’ve been successful. I don’t have hard core data on that, but when I started at [current school district], I had a child development class of 28 students. There were five boys and then the next year I had six, and then the past three years it’s almost been half boys and half girls. . . . I remember I told them [middle school students] that I was going to a conference once and one of them said something assuming that all FACS teachers were men. So, yeah, it was very interesting because I was their only experience with it and they had no idea what it was in the past.
Timothy has been well supported by both school administrators under which he has worked. He believes there were some teachers who thought he received special treatment since he was a man and the first administrator was a man; however, Timothy reports a great relationship with the second administrator as well, who happens to be a woman.

I was basically given free rein [regarding FCS curriculum update]. My administrator at the time was a man, and my co-worker was convinced that he did not like women, so I don’t know if that was why it was easier for me to slip in and just do whatever.

I got a lot of that from her [co-worker] the first two years, you know, you’re the golden child, you’re, and I, I just brushed it off and thought like, no, it’s just because I’m doing my job, and it was along the lines of what Dr. Smith had taught me. . .

Our new administrator is amazing. I mean you could not ask for a more personable, amazing, just great, encouraging boss. And it doesn’t hurt that her husband is an Industrial Tech teacher so she’s very familiar with vocational ed and career-technical ed so, she likes us.

_FCS Ed – A Career that is Gendered_2

When asked if his family was encouraging of his career choice, Timothy does not see the FCS content as being an issue with his parents, but being a _teacher_ was not valued. Time has mellowed his father’s opinion on his career choice. Additionally, he has not received much encouragement from his in-laws; however, his wife is very supportive of his career decision. She is a licensed English teacher and is currently running an in-home daycare.

They [family] were not supportive of me going into Education, mainly because of the money and what I would be making. I, I think, my Dad was real funny because I was, all of my friends who were non-Education majors were already getting jobs the last few months of their senior year and I’m not. Now I did have a job before I graduated which is very rare in Education, in [this State] anyway. And so I was still ahead, you know, I’m thinking at least I’ve got a job. A lot of people still in Elementary, they still won’t find jobs until the fall.
. . . they were always pressuring me like. . . “You need a job” and “Are you sure you still want to do this, cause you know it’s not going to be that much money?” And I was like, “Well, I’m really not doing it for the money, like, it’s enough money. It’s sufficient funds for what I think I need to do.” And my Dad was always asking me like. . . “Well what’s your vacation package look like?” and I was like, I thought he was kidding, I was like, “Are you serious? Like, the summer, you know?” A vacation package. So, you know, again, it was more important and I remember telling my Dad it’s more important for me to, when I’m in a position where I’m going to have a family, it’s more important for me to have this than it is to have money. And they didn’t get it for a while.

My Dad still really doesn’t know what I do, I mean, if you ever watch Saturday Night Live with the old guys who would sit around and talk about da’ Bears and da’ Bulls, that is my Dad. He’s a factory worker. He’s got a moustache with big glasses, dirty hands. He drinks cheap beer and talks about the Bears and complains about his boss and works on his car. That is, you know, my Dad. So when I’m talking about raising babies, he’s like, “What?” Or, you know, feelings?

. . . he’s come around a lot more as he’s accepted more, I guess, that I’m a teacher and I’m also, you know, since I’ve gotten my Master’s degree and I’ve gotten, they’re not really awards, but like students have nominated me for things and he’s kind of like, and I’ve been in the newspaper a few times. They know some people who live in [location of his current school] and the, they clip it out of the paper. I didn’t even know because I don’t get their newspaper, so unless somebody tells me, I don’t know, and so people have sent them. So he’s gotten a little happier about it, or a little more used to me doing it.

[His wife’s opinion on his career choice] Oh yeah, she loves it . . . she’s been great. Her family doesn’t…her family’s worse than mine….the men in her family are kind of like. . .they don’t get it, but. . .I’m usually used to being the outsider on most things…

Timothy has been encouraged to enter administration by “lots of people.”

However, he has resisted because he is not interested in that career. He does not necessarily see it as a step up from teaching.

I don’t see it’s anything for me right now (laughs). I see it as something that I don’t want to do. I’ve thought of school counseling. . . . If I moved up or switched or was still in school and changed my job of what I was doing, I would probably be school counseling rather than administrator.
Timothy is not active in any FCS education professional organization, although participation was encouraged during his undergraduate program. He did attend a state conference once where the men’s restrooms closest to where the sessions were held were turned into women’s rooms. Although that was rather annoying, his lack of interest is from his perception that the organizations are not relevant.

I wonder if that’s a generational thing. I read a lot of things about younger generations just not seeing the point [joining professional organizations].

Timothy has not felt the need to be dishonest with people about being a FCS teacher. He is an advocate of the curriculum “100%” and does not feel uncomfortable about teaching in a curriculum area that historically has been taught primarily by women. He seems to have an appreciation for the history of the profession and does not shy away from the term *home economics*.

I usually, I would start out with the FACS. I tell them I’m a FACS teacher. Depending on my audience, if they’re familiar with education they’ll know FACS. If they’re not I’ll usually say, you know, something about, you know, well before the curriculum reforms, it was called Home Economics and part of me is, on a philosophical level, wondering if I’m a pure Home Economist or a pure FACS-ist or something, you know, I know there’s a lot of drama with what you’re called, but, you know, when I think of some of the crisis that are, you know, the housing crisis and all that other stuff and I think like, ‘maybe Home Economics wasn’t that bad of a term’ you know? I’m not threatened by the Home, when I was an undergrad, I was, you know, we were, it’s ‘FACS’, you know... But now I’m like, you know, well, even, even looking at the wrapping paper thing and understanding what the industry was versus what it is now, at one time when women predominantly were not working outside of the home. . . . So even the things like wrapping a gift, it was presentation and, you know, almost a lost, a completely lost art of etiquette and taking, yeah, just presenting things. And hospitality! . . . But, so I do appreciate the, the history and I think that there, hopefully in the future there’s room for some of those things to come back and maybe not be so threatened by them, so anyway.
Timothy believes his success at building enrollment at his school can be attributed to recruitment efforts as well as his presentation of the FCS content. He does not believe his success has been due to his gender, but rather his initiative.

I started doing some of the light recruitment and, cause my first year there were nine students in the Interpersonal Relationships class. They would have shut that down if I wasn’t new, and my boss said, you know, “Give him a chance,” and now I’ve got, I was teaching two sections of about nine students my first two years, now my fifth year I’ve got three sections a year averaging about 25. I had one section of Child Development and one section of Human Development a year, now I’ve got two of each averaging at about 25 and the Nutritional & Wellness classes, we really push the FACS option for the Health credit, so they can take three FACS classes and get their Health credit, and OLC [Orientation to Life and Careers] is one of them—they all have to take it—and I’m like, “All you got to do is take two more FACS classes.” So I’ve got 75% of the school now doing the FACS option. We’re turning kids away from Nutrition & Wellness ‘cause she’s maxed it at 30—she can’t handle more than 30. And, we’ve got the middle school, all my classes are full. They actually, this year in our course catalog, took off three of the other classes that we had in case there were enough kids who signed up for them we could offer, cause there’s no point in putting them on there. There’s nobody to teach them, your classes are too full. So I was given a lot of free reign to do curriculum and recruit and I did.

I’m basically teaching my child development kids how to take child development careers through college education, medical, whatever. It’s not more, it’s not just birthing and, you know, how to change a diaper. We have that in there, but there’s a big push on the college focus of ‘what are you going to do with this later.’ I think, I made it a lot more rigorous as what they were doing, too, and I was told if you make it too hard they’re not going to take your class, they’re not going to do your class because they want an elective, they want, and I said, “Well, I don’t do blow-off,” and it’s hard. I mean it’s not the hardest class in the school, but I don’t do fluff. . . .
This exploratory case study of two men who are family and consumer sciences teachers identified reasons why they entered a career field where women hold more than 98 percent of the positions. With limited studies published regarding this phenomenon (Dohner, Loyd & Stenberg, 1990; Stenberg & Dohner, 1992; Werhan & Way, 2006); the theoretical framework was developed primarily from research on men in other non-traditional career fields of early childhood education, nursing, and social work (Chusmir, 1990; Bradley, 1993; Willams, 1993; Sargent 2000, 2004, 2005; Dodson & Borders, 2006).

This exploratory study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What personal and societal influences played a role in the decision to enter a gendered occupation?

2. What barriers or scaffolding does the school culture provide for men FCS teachers to be successful and remain in the field?

3. How does being a man in a female gendered occupation affect his everyday life?

4. How do men FCS teachers see themselves in the history and future of FCS?

The chart, Themes for Investigative Analysis (see Figure 1, p. 4) was developed as a theoretical guide for this study based on the review of the literature regarding men in non-traditional careers (see Figures 2-5, pp. 33-36). After using the chart to guide the reporting of the cases and in initial analysis of the data, it became clear that although the
individual components of the theoretical framework were present, the original figure did not visually represent the reality of the two cases. All three strands are not distinct strands for analysis, but rather interwoven with generational differences present.

In this chapter, the answers to the research questions are presented within the context of the individual components rather than the three distinct strands. The data are analyzed based on the theoretical framework and literature for each case. Similarities and differences between cases and the literature are discussed. Recommendations are made for reflection and future study.

**Question 1:** What personal and society influences played a role in the decision to enter a gendered occupation?

This question was answered under three general headings as indicated by the framework: intrinsic motivations focusing on the individual’s values and personality traits which contributed to the decision to be a FCS teacher; extrinsic motivations focusing on how other people or systems played a role in the decision; barriers which the individuals needed to overcome.

**Intrinsic Motivations**

The two themes that surfaced as intrinsic motivations for each case were 1) content, and 2) family-friendly career. The initial personal motivation for Pat to major in the field was the opportunity to teach food preparation. Timothy saw the major as a way to prepare for careers in social services within the program constraints of the university which he was attending. Both Pat and Timothy were motivated by some aspect of the FCS curriculum to major in the field. However, each had a limited understanding of the content. Over time, the content in its totality became its own motivation. Although
interest in working with young people/children was found in the literature to be a motivator to work in a gendered occupation (Gaskell, 1992; DeCorse & Vogtle, 1997; Wiest, Olive & Obenshain, 2003), an appreciation of the content was not specifically noted.

Both men were seeking a career that was compatible with their perception of a family-friendly career, i.e. stable schedule, time to spend with family. These specific intrinsic motivations were not found in the literature regarding men in non-traditional careers, but have been noted in the literature on career choice and generational differences (Family time, 2003). This career consideration fits within the research on the Generation X for Timothy, but is not consistent with the research on Baby Boomers which would include Patrick’s generation. However, seeking a family-friendly career arguably may fall within the category of general intrinsic rewards and relationship-oriented (Galbraith, 1992; DeCorse & Vogtle, 1997; Johnston, McKeown & McEwen, 1999).

Extrinsic Motivations

There were many external or societal influences that played a role in each individual’s career choice. Three key elements are seen in both cases: 1) serendipity; 2) information and awareness of FCS education; and 3) role models.

Krumboltz (1996, 1998) added an element to his career development theory which questioned how chance plays a role in career development. Krumboltz (1998) proposes that career choice(s) are not usually pure chance but rather serendipitous: serendipity is not merely waiting for a fortuitous event to happen. Serendipity requires action on the part of the recipients – action to create favorable
circumstances, action to recognize opportunities when they arise, and action to capitalize on unplanned events in a timely manner. (p 392)

Serendipity was an element in both cases. Unlike the literature on men in gendered careers who went into them due to unplanned life circumstances (Bradley, 1993; McLean, 2003; Lupton, 2006), these men literally went into offices of dynamic advocates for FCS education with no inclination of majoring in the field and left with a new awareness. Although Timothy saw FCS education initially as a second choice for a career, his first choice of social work would also be considered a gendered career, thus the literature indicating that men go into a gendered field as a second choice does not apply to his case.

The role career education and counseling plays in one’s decision to major in a gendered major is well documented in the literature (Bernstein, Reilly & Cote-Bonanno, 1992; Werhan, 2002; Dodson and Borders, 2006) and can been identified as another key element in both cases. Pat’s exposure to FCS education was very limited. He was aware of the curriculum during high school and sought to enroll in a culinary class, but was prohibited due to gender bias. Although Timothy enrolled in a FCS course in high school, he did not have a positive experience. Both men were literally surprised to learn of the opportunities in FCS education and that the career would fit into their career goals.

The contribution of role models in the career decision making process is also well documented in the literature on men in gendered careers (Dohner, Loy, & Stenberg, 1990; Benton, DeCorse & Vogtle, 1997; DeCorse and Vogtle, 1997; Perrone, Zanardelli, Worthington & Chartrand, 2002; Wiest, Olive & Obenchain, 2003). In Pat’s story, family role models played no part in his decision making. Even in Timothy’s story, family played only an indirect role in his choice of careers; he wanted something
different for his future family than what he experienced in a home influenced by a frequently absent parent. His Aunt was influential in his attending college, but did not influence his career choice. The primary role models for these two men were faculty and staff at their respective universities.

It cannot be over-emphasized that faculty role models were a significant influence for both of these men to major in FCS education and thrive in the profession. Both men found support and encouragement from FCS faculty and their cooperating teachers during student teaching, all of whom were women. Although it may be due to his experiences being more recent, Timothy spoke a great deal in regard to the general atmosphere of respect for the individual student in the FCS department and how that supported him during his college career.

Family influences are reported in the literature to be important for men pursuing gendered careers (Dohner, Loy, & Stenberg, 1990; DeCorse & Vogtle, 1997; Wiest, et al., 2003). Although extended family support was not pivotal for either man and neither man had teachers in their families, supportive spouses were mentioned by both men. Pat was married while he was in college and Timothy was not married until after he had graduated, but both men indicated their wives were very supportive of their career decision. In addition, both wives had also majored in an area of teacher preparation.

Neither man knew or was aware of other men who were FCS teachers prior to going into the field. Their assumption was that there were others, but they realized after the fact that they were anomalies. Pat was the only one who specifically mentioned the importance of the knowing other men FCS teachers and expressing a desire to have a professional network of men FCS teachers.
Initial barriers

This is an element that is intertwined with gender bias and is difficult to separate. Based on the research question, this section only addresses barriers prior to their entering professional employment; however, these barriers will be reintroduced when addressing questions number two and three.

Generational differences are noted between the two cases regarding barriers in high school and college. Pat was prohibited from taking a FCS class while in high school due to his gender and Timothy grew up in a time when many FCS classes were well integrated by gender. Gender bias in schools is documented in the literature (Hansot & Tyack, 1988; Acker, 1990), but there is some evidence that it has diminished somewhat over time based on the number of boys enrolled in FCS programs (Werhan & Way, 2006).

Gender bias by individuals and prejudice was experienced by both men while in college (Johnston, McKeown & McEwen, 1999; Williams, 1992). Pat experienced “closed doors” from some faculty and described instances of overt discrimination. He also experienced some resentment from fellow female students. Timothy indicated that after “they knew I was serious” he received great support from faculty and staff. He also experienced some resentment from fellow female students. Both men reported that eventually, they were accepted by their classmates as viable candidates for FCS education.

In summary, the two themes that surfaced as intrinsic motivations for each case were 1) FCS content and 2) family-friendly career. The serendipitous nature of both men entering the field is noted with the key extrinsic themes of 1) career counseling/career...
awareness, 2) positive faculty role models, and 3) supportive spouse. Gender bias and individual prejudice were barriers that were overcome by each to complete the FCS education program. However, Timothy experienced a bias from his father not due to the gendered nature of FCS, but because of his choice of becoming a teacher. This may reflect a societal change in the respect for the teaching profession.

Question #2: What barriers or scaffolding does the school culture provide for men FCS teachers to be successful and remain in the field?

The primary themes in the data indicate that both men experienced barriers due to gender bias, but were able to adapt and overcome those barriers. Neither perceived support due to their uniqueness nor saw teaching as a route to the more gender typical career as administrator.

*Societal perceptions of men “doing women’s work”*

Both men indicated that securing their first job was problematic. Patrick indicated that he experienced gender bias from schools with one teacher FCS departments. His perception was that administrators were not willing to hire a man as the only FCS teacher for a department. Timothy’s perception of his difficulty in finding his first position was not necessarily due to gender bias, but rather his more contemporary concept of how the FCS curriculum could be taught with a de-emphasis on traditional food preparation and sewing skills component. He believes the role of the retiring teacher in the interview process, which was impetus for the faculty opening, was the barrier for getting the job. Although Timothy did not see this as gender bias, the retiring teacher could easily have seen Timothy, not as a proponent of progressive thought on FCS, but rather a man who did not or could not understand her world view of quality FCS
curriculum components. These examples are consistent with the literature on gender bias of school culture and of individuals (Acker, 1990; Hansot & Tyack, 1988; Johnston, McKeown & McEwen, 1999).

Issues of others thinking he was homosexual were present in both cases. This is frequently mentioned in the literature on men in non-traditional careers (Blount, 2000; Budge, 1998; Cooney & Bittner 2001; Cohen, 1992; Cross & Bagilhole, 2002; Hill, 1996; Sargent, 2001). Patrick believed that stereotype was not as prevalent today; however, Timothy experienced a challenge from a student on his first day of being a FCS teacher.

Importing normative masculine expectations

After explaining the concept of “doing gender” to each man, they each confirmed the concept was applicable to his experience. Each confirmed that early in their careers, they overcompensated by intentionally doing and sounding more “masculine,” which is consistent with the literature (Cameron, 2001; Cross & Bagilhole, 2002; Francis & Skelton, 2001; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Each eventually concluded that perceptions of others were not particularly important.

Both men reported that their quality of work, as with any engaged teacher, earned the support of their administrators. Neither believed that his uniqueness as a man in a predominately female career resulted in benefits ascribed to being a “token.” The literature on tokenism is varied and is not conclusive if being a token is positive, negative or has no effect (Budig 2002; Cognard-Black, 2004). The literature indicates that there may be a perception among female teachers that a teacher who is a man will be favored by an administrator who is also a man (Allen, 1996). Timothy experienced this bias from
his co-worker who called him the administrator’s “golden child” because he was allowed to revise curriculum and try out new ideas. However, Timothy was quick to point out that the subsequent administrator, who was a woman, was equally encouraging of his efforts.

Although Patrick has the credentials to become an administrator, neither man saw administration as a career field in which he would be interested. Neither saw administration as a “glass escalator” to get out of the teaching profession or teaching as a stepping stone to the school administrator career which is dominated by men as defined by Williams (1992). These men saw teaching as a unique career separate from school administration and not a career advancement strategy. These sentiments are supported in some of the literature of men teachers (DeCorse & Vogtle, 1997; Sargent, 2001).

In summary, the school culture in the hiring process exhibited gender bias. Once hired, gender bias was present, with each man being questioned as to his sexual orientation and then responding by importing normative masculine expectations. Each man minimized the impact of gender bias on his career satisfaction. This is consistent with the literature that indicates that the men who have gone this far in a gendered career path are not easily dissuadable (Wiest, Olive, & Obenchain, 2003). Neither man perceived he was given any special scaffolding based on his uniqueness as a man teaching FCS.

Question #3: How does being a man in a female gendered occupation affect his everyday life?

The primary themes in the data reflect differences in 1) how one communicates his profession to others; 2) in the respect level for the teaching profession; 3) desire for
support from other men in FCS. These disparities may be due to generational differences.

*FCS Ed – a career that is gendered*

Although being a teacher did not seem problematic for Patrick, his content area was sometimes concealed, which is consistent with the literature on men in non-traditional careers (Cross & Bagilhole, 2002). With Timothy, the choice of becoming a teacher seemed to be a bigger factor with his family than the content area. This is consistent with literature on the lack of status of the profession of teaching (Apple, 1988; Benton, DeCorse & Vogtle, 1997; Cushman, 2005). Although both men reflected upon their uniqueness in FCS education, Patrick seemed more inclined to seek support from other men FCS teachers than Timothy and was able to identify men FCS teachers who were role models.

In summary being a man in a female gendered occupation does have some effect on his everyday life. Both men either feared judgment or were judged negatively for their career decision; however, for different reasons. These differences may be related to societal changes in respect for teaching as a career choice and the increase in gender equity in the secondary school FCS classroom. Only the older participant actively sought out other men FCS teachers for support. This may be attributed to his awareness of other men FCS teachers and his positive experience interacting with other men FCS teachers in a research focus group.
Question #4: How do men FCS teachers see themselves in the history and future of FCS?

Themes that emerged from the data included 1) issues of systemic gender bias within the profession; 2) lack of interest in FCS professional organizations; 3) passion for and importance of the curriculum. Additionally, both participants had respect for the term home economics.

**FCS historic inclusion of men**

Both Patrick and Timothy reported systemic gender bias not only during their years in college, but also in relation to their inclusion in FCS professional organizations. Despite the nearly 25 years difference in their teacher preparation programs, both men recounted stories of forms or syllabi needing to be revised due to their participation in the program. This is consistent with the literature on gender bias of individuals and schools (Acker, 1990; Hansot & Tyack, 1988; Johnston, McKeown & McEwen, 1999).

Both men lacked interest in participating in the two major FCS professional organizations, the Association of Career and Technical Education and the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences. Nor did either seem to be aware of the role men have played in the history of the FCS profession, although both seemed to know the general history of the profession.

Patrick did make an early effort to become involved in various FCS organizations, but perceived his participation was not welcomed by other FCS teachers. He was encouraged to run for office in a professional FCS organization, but he perceived he was wanted as a token rather than for himself. He has chosen to be active in a professional organization that focuses on his content area specialty and appears to be gender integrated. Timothy does not see the relevance in FCS professional organizations. This
is also consistent with the literature on the decline of professional group membership (Putnam, 2000).

Both men assumed the responsibility to encourage boys to take FCS coursework, although neither saw their role as a man FCS teacher as being the draw; it was the importance and delivery of the FCS curriculum, for all students. This identification of the importance of the curriculum for both sexes is consistent with the literature going back to Langworthy in 1913. Both men reflected on their uniqueness as men in FCS education and the necessity of recruiting more men to the profession; however, Patrick has come to the conclusion that increasing numbers of men FCS teachers is not as important as just increasing the number of passionate and qualified FCS teachers.

Both men referred to the former name of family and consumer sciences, home economics. Each expressed positive feelings toward the former name of the profession. This is contrary to the literature that indicated that men did not want to be identified by the term home economics and by changing the name, men would be more interested in the profession (East, 1980; Men, the future, 1977, p. 209).

In summary, although men have played a role in the history of FCS it was not emphasized in either participant’s college curriculum. The profession of FCS and particularly FCS education exhibited gender bias in favor of women. Professional organizations, which typically serve FCS teachers, were either gender biased or perceived as irrelevant to the participants of this study. Both men in this study value the FCS curriculum as relevant and transferable knowledge for both sexes and have respect for the former name of the profession, home economics.
Recommendations for Reflection and Further Research

Two recommendations from the results of this study can be carried out immediately. Inform secondary and college students of their options for a career in FCS education. Secondary counselors, FCS classroom teachers, university recruiters, college of education advisors and content advisors should be aware of these career opportunities and not reinforce gender stereotyping. Additionally, make faculty and staff aware of their important role in student recruitment, retention, and achievement. Neither of these recommendations would require significant funding or social change.

As the literature indicates, the profession of teaching lacks prestige (Cushman, 2005; Johnston, McKeown & McEwen, 1999) in part because of its historical association with women and children (Apple, 1988). One current philosophy that proposes anyone can teach if he/she knows the content may actually be an extension of a sexist view that if something is women’s work, it must not be that difficult to do. Additionally FCS content is devalued due to its historical ties to the sphere of women, earning it the status of gendered. This is reflected in the on-going debate that increased coursework should be required in advanced mathematics and “hard” sciences at the expense of elective coursework such as nutrition, child development, financial management or other “soft” sciences. Even the descriptors indicate a societal devaluation of content that has been historically associated with women. Increased research regarding the status, educational preparation, and classroom effectiveness of teachers as well as the effectiveness of the FCS curriculum is essential to carry out the work and advocacy in public policy.

Providing data that concludes that teachers prepared in a quality teacher preparation programs have greater impact on K-12 student achievement than those who
have not been through such programs will refute the idea that “anyone can teach.”

Additionally, quality data showing the effectiveness of various components of the FCS curriculum will help promote the programs with school districts and policy makers.

Increasing the numbers of competent men in the teaching profession and specifically in the FCS secondary school classroom would be beneficial to all students not only as role models but also to change societal perceptions at an early age. Johnson (2008) suggests that “the debate [why men should be teachers] should shift away from role-modeling and the needs of boys, to a new agenda of gender social justice and egalitarian values” (p. 10). Additional research is recommended to identify and eliminate barriers that keep men from pursuing the career opportunities in FCS education.

As a profession, FCS and FCS education need to continue to self-evaluate their culpability for continued gender bias. Although stated policies may reflect an awareness of that responsibility, does organizational behavior at the national, state, and local levels reflect that the organization(s) are encouraging of men’s participation? Additional professional development based on current research is needed to inform and motivate current FCS professionals to participate in this self-reflection.
REFERENCES


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APPENDICES
APPENDIX A. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL
January 28, 2008

Carol Werhan
627 Aspen Ct.
Saint Peter, MN 56082

Ms. Werhan:

The University of Akron’s Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) completed a review of the protocol entitled “Why Do Men Enter the Gendered Profession of Family and Consumer Science Education: An Exploratory Case Study.” The IRB application number assigned to this project is 20080113.

The protocol was reviewed on January 28, 2008 and qualified for exemption from continuing IRB review. The protocol represents minimal risk to subjects and matches the following federal category for exemption:

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information is recorded in such a manner that subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to subjects; AND (ii) any disclosure of responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of civil or criminal liability or be damaging to subjects’ financial standing, employability or reputation.

Annual continuation applications are not required for exempt projects. If you make any changes or modifications to the study’s design or procedures that either increase the risk to subjects or include activities that do not fall within one of the categories exempted from the regulations, please contact the IRB first, to discuss whether or not a request for change must be submitted. Any such changes or modifications must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to their implementation.

Enclosed is a copy of the informed consent document, which the IRB has approved for your use in this research. In addition, your request for a waiver of documentation of informed consent, as permitted under 45 CFR 46.117(c), is also approved.

Please retain this letter for your files. If the research is being conducted for a master’s thesis or doctoral dissertation, the student must file a copy of this letter with the thesis or dissertation.

Sincerely,

Sharon McNairner
Associate Director

Cc: Susan Olson, Advisor
    Rosalie Hall, IRB Chair

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APPENDIX B. CASE STUDY PROTOCOL
Overview of study

Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) has a rich history dating back to the mid 1800’s. Under various professional names, (i.e. domestic sciences, home economics, human ecology) its evolution has been closely associated with teacher preparation due to historical ties to the education of women. Today, the profession of FCS education seeks to become a viable career alternative for both men and women. A recent study reports that of the 37,500 FCS teachers in the United States, only 252 are men, indicating that the stereotype of FCS education being “women’s work” continues to be prevalent.

Targeted recruitment of men would be appropriate in the effort to meet the demands for FCS teachers, and perhaps more importantly, to help break down stereotypes that serve to limit the impact and respect for an entire profession. Little research has been conducted regarding men as FCS teachers, thus the purpose of this study will be exploring why a man would choose to enter the gendered career field of FCS education and his experiences as a FCS teacher.

Using ethnographic techniques with two case studies, this exploratory study will add to the body of knowledge regarding men in non-traditional careers and contribute to an understanding of the motivations and barriers men face when choosing to follow a non-traditional path. A better understanding of this contemporary phenomenon may facilitate men filling the void in FCS education due to the national shortage as well as provide a basis for the conversation concerning why women’s work is devalued and the steps needed to elevate the status of the profession.

Research questions

The primary questions for this study are:

5. What personal and societal influences played a role in the decision to enter a gendered occupation?

6. What barriers or scaffolding does the school culture provide for men FCS teachers to be successful and remain in the field?

7. How does being a man in a female gendered occupation affect his everyday life?

8. How do men FCS teachers see themselves in the history and future of FCS?
Field procedures

The ethnographic technique used to collect data for this study will be individual face-to-face interviews with men who are currently credentialed and teaching secondary FCS education classes. Two of these men were invited to participate via e-mail and agreed to participate. The researcher will travel to the geographical location of these teachers for the interviews. An informed consent letter explaining the study will be provided to each interviewee with their signature implying consent. The interview will be semi-structured using open-ended questions grounded in the literature and will be audio taped.

After the interviews, the audio tapes will be transcribed noting not only words used but also other verbal cues. Notes made by the researcher during the interview will be integrated into the transcript to augment text with visual cues. Following transcription, each of the interviewees will be provided an electronic copy of his interview and allowed to make editorial comments on its contents.

Interview Guide

Setting: semi-private location determined by interviewees

Interviewer: Carol Werhan

Period: 60-90 minutes

Communication openings (Read to participant)

Thank you for agreeing to meeting with me. You received a copy of the Informed Consent Letter prior to my travel to ______________(site) and provided me with your initial consent to this interview. I will read aloud the Informed Consent Letter as you follow along. [Read letter] Do you have any questions at this point? [Wait for response] If you are still willing to participate in this study, please sign both copies of the letter. You may keep one copy for your records.

As I indicated in the informed consent, I will be audio-taping the interview. Please feel free to ask if at any point you would like for me to turn off the recorder for clarification. As you are aware, everything you share with me is confidential and will only be heard by those working on this project. A copy of the transcription will be provided to you for your comments to insure that the statements accurately reflected your intentions. Shall we begin? [Wait for response]

[Turn on tape recorder and check to make sure it is working properly.]
Research Question #1
What personal and societal influences played a role in the decision to enter a gendered occupation?

Interview Guide

- Let’s start with some basic demographic information:
  Age/Race/marital status/family composition

- Tell me about you’re your career path to teaching at ___________ high school. Why don’t you start with your high school graduation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Themes</th>
<th>Citation in Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information and awareness</td>
<td>Bernstein, Reilly &amp; Cote-Bonanno, 1992; Werhan, 2002; Dodson and Borders, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former teachers/role models</td>
<td>Dohner, Loy, &amp; Stenberg, 1990; Benton, DeCorse &amp; Vogtle, 1997; DeCorse and Vogtle, 1997; Perrone, Zanardelli, Worthington &amp; Chartrand, 2002; Wiest, Olive &amp; Obenchain, 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unplanned life circumstances</td>
<td>Bradley, 1993; McLean, 2003; Lupton, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in/experience working with young people</td>
<td>Gaskell, 1992; DeCorse &amp; Vogtle, 1997; Wiest, Olive &amp; Obenshair, 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Dohner, Loy, &amp; Stenberg, 1990; DeCorse &amp; Vogtle, 1997; Wiest, et al., 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic reward/responsibility/relationship oriented</td>
<td>Galbraith, 1992; DeCorse &amp; Vogtle, 1997; Johnston, McKeown &amp; McEwen, 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>Johnston, McKeown &amp; McEwen, 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimize/ignore concerns</td>
<td>Wiest, Olive, &amp; Obenchain, 2003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Research Question #2**

**What barriers or scaffolding does the school culture provide for men FCS teachers to be successful and remain in the field?**

**Interview Guide**

- How do your colleagues and the administration support you in your role as a FCS teacher?
- Do you feel you are treated differently because you are a man in a stereotypical women’s job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Themes</th>
<th>Citation in Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role Models</td>
<td>Benton, DeCorse &amp; Vogtle, 1997; Perrone, Zanardelli, Worthington &amp; Chartrand, 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary/status (positive or negative)</td>
<td>Johnston, McKeown &amp; McEwen, 1999; Cushman, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tokenism</em> (positive, negative, no affect)</td>
<td>Budig 2002; Cognard-Black, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of <em>glass escalator</em></td>
<td>Williams, 1992; DeCorse &amp; Vogtle, 1997; Cameron, 2001; Sargent, 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Bias of school culture</td>
<td>Hansot &amp; Tyack, 1988; Acker, 1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender bias of Individuals</td>
<td>Johnston, McKeown &amp; McEwen, 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Import normative male expectations – exaggerated <em>doing gender</em></td>
<td>West &amp; Zimmerman, 1987 ; Cameron, 2001; Cross &amp; Bagilhole, 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assigned discipline problems or manual labor</td>
<td>Sargent, 2000; Wiest, et al., 2003; Cushman, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexuality questions</td>
<td>Cohen, 1992; Hill, 1996; Budge, 1998; Blount, 2000; Cooney &amp; Bittner 2001; Sargent, 2001; Cross &amp; Bagilhole, 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding meaning of FCS</td>
<td>Vincenti,1997</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Research Question #3

How does being a man in a female gendered occupation affect his everyday life?

**Interview Guide**

- How do friends outside of school and your family react to your unique occupation?
- Do you see yourself as a ground-breaker?
- Would you encourage other men to become a FCS teacher?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Themes</th>
<th>Citation in Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exaggerated <em>doing gender</em></td>
<td>West &amp; Zimmerman, 1987; Francis &amp; Skelton, 2001; Cross &amp; Bagilhole, 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty being a role model</td>
<td>Allen, 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prejudice</td>
<td>Williams, 1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender role conflict/identity bruising</td>
<td>Luhaorg &amp; Zivian, 1995; Foster &amp; Newman, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerned about perceptions (masculinity,</td>
<td>Cohen, 1992; Hill, 1996; Budge, 1998; Blount, 2000; Cooney &amp; Bittner 2001; Cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to something “better”)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceal occupation</td>
<td>Cross &amp; Bagilhole, 2002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Research Question #4

How do men FCS teachers see themselves in the history and future of FCS?

**Interview Guide**

- Did your teacher preparation program include the history of FCS?
- How relevant do you see FCS curriculum to today’s student?
- Have you participated in AAFCS or ACTE activities?
- How can the profession better serve its constituents?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Themes</th>
<th>Citation in Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part of historic inclusion of men</td>
<td>Stage, 1997; Vincenti,1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject appropriate to both sexes</td>
<td>C.F. Langworthy, 1913; Werhan, 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenger of stereotypes</td>
<td>Men, the future, 1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discouraged by numbers</td>
<td>Sturzl, 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived reluctance to embrace change by</td>
<td>Sturzl, 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the profession</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C. INFORMED CONSENT LETTER
APPENDIX C
Informed Consent Letter

Date

Dear <participant>

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study regarding men as family and consumer sciences teachers. I am a student at the University of Akron in Akron, Ohio working on my doctoral degree in secondary curricular and instructional studies. For the past eight years, I have been involved in teacher education, six of which were specifically in FCS teacher education. During this time period, I had the opportunity to have five men students enrolled in the FCS teacher education program at the University of Akron. Conversations with these students coupled with the knowledge that far too few students (both men and women) choose to enter the field of FCS education, caused me to become interested in why men choose to become FCS teachers. Some research has been conducted regarding men in non-traditional occupations i.e. elementary education, nursing and social work, but little research has been conducted about men as FCS teachers.

Recently I conducted a national survey with a colleague which reports that 252 men in the United States are teaching FCS education. As a follow-up to that study, I am requesting that you share your story as a man who is working in a profession that is stereotypically gender-biased. You were selected based on your teaching credentials, current employment status, geographic availability and relative time you have been a FCS teacher.

The following would be the general guidelines:
1. I would travel to a site of your choosing where a 1.5 hour conversation/interview would take place.
2. This interview would be audio taped and transcribed.
3. Following transcription, I would e-mail you the transcript of the interview asking for you to review the material for accuracy of the transcription of your answers as well as your intent.
4. After I have reviewed the transcripts, I will contact you again via e-mail or telephone to further clarify your responses or ask additional questions that would enhance the study.
5. After analyzing the data, I will send you a copy of the dissertation.

Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw from this study at any time. All data collected for this study will become the property of the researcher. Although all possible safeguards will be used to protect your anonymity, the uniqueness of your roll as a man FCS teacher and the methodology of this study may prevent complete anonymity.

Please contact me, Carol Werhan, at work (507-389-1123) or via my cell phone (507-341-0120) if you have any question at any time during this study.

This research project has been reviewed and approved by The University of Akron Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects. Questions about your rights as a research participant can be directed to Ms. Sharon McWhorter, Associate Director, Research Services, at 1-330-972-7666 or 1-888-232-8790.

Your signature below indicates you have read this form and are willing to participate in this study.

Signature

Date

APPROVED

Date __/2/99

The University of Akron

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