



# Family Science Review

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## **Introduction to the Special Issue: [Family Science Careers Through the Eyes of Theory](#)**

This special issue of Family Science Review is devoted to Family Science Careers through the Eyes of Theory. While family science programs generally prepare students well to understand the role of theory in the research process—shaping the questions we ask and how we design our studies, etc.--, I venture to say that we are less intentional in helping students to imagine how theories influence our professional practice in family science careers. Thus, for this special issue, I requested authors to incorporate scholarly literature in writing about a career path in family science, asking them to select and describe the family theories that most influence the way they approach their work and perform their professional duties. Finally, authors illustrate how these chosen theories afford a useful lens for practice via case studies or specific work scenarios. The authors conclude their papers by outlining strengths and weaknesses of these theoretical lenses in their unique professional contexts.

Family science offers a huge array of possible career paths (Jordan, 2020, 2022; Keim, 1995; Messiah University, n.d.; NCFR, n.d.). This special issue features a few of them including careers in early intervention, special education, family court, child life, and higher education as department chair, university faculty, family life educator, and academic advisor. You will notice that there are three papers devoted to the child life specialist career within this collection. I decided to maintain all three of these papers because while there is some overlap in content and theories selected, these authors demonstrate that professionals filling the same role might use different theories to guide their work. The theoretical framework adopted impacts what family professionals pay attention to, what they notice, how they approach problem-solving, and how they choose to educate or intervene. I think these papers illustrate this well.

I hope this special issue will be invaluable for undergraduate and graduate students alike as they visualize how essential family theories are in the practice of family science. Faculty might also use this collection when introducing family science careers or teaching family theories. Let us continue to consider the critical role human development and family science theories play in influencing professional practice in the family field.

### **Raeann R. Hamon, Ph.D., CFLE**

Guest Editor for Special Issue on Family Science Careers through the Eyes of Theory

Distinguished Professor of Family Science & Gerontology

Messiah University



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