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FAMILY CONNECTIONS

BYU SCHOOL OF  
FAMILY LIFE  
ALUMNI MAGAZINE  
SPRING 2011

**THE THAYNE FAMILY ENTERPRISE**

UNDERGRADS NOURISH UNIQUE PROJECT

CO-PLAY: THE LATEST VIDEO GAME RESEARCH

POST-BUCKET-LIST BOOK: DR. WES BURR



# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

RICHARD MILLER  
DIRECTOR  
SCHOOL OF FAMILY LIFE, BYU

I have repeatedly had the following experience. I engage in conversation with people and they ask me where I work. I proudly (but trying not to act too boastful) tell them that I'm a professor at BYU. Their face lights up and they tell me that they graduated from BYU. I ask them what they graduated in, and some of them tell me CDFR, family finance, or family sciences. My face then lights up and I excitedly tell them that I teach in the School of Family Life. They give me a blank stare and ask "What is the School of Family Life?"

After this experience occurred many times, I realized that we have a communication problem. Because the names and configurations of family-related departments and programs at BYU have changed over the years, many of our alumni don't know who we are or what we are doing. This new School of Family Life magazine, *Family Connections*, is our initial attempt to reconnect with our valued alumni.

As Alan Hawkins explains in an article later in the magazine about the genealogy of the School of Family Life, we have had numerous names over the years. Perhaps you were studying at BYU when we were called Child Development and Family Relations (CDFR), Family Sciences, Marriage, Family, and Human Development (MFHD), or Home and Family Living (HFL). For those of you who studied family finance, home economics education, clothing and textiles, interior design, or family and consumer sciences (FACS) education, you may have been affiliated with other programs and departments when you were studying at BYU.

Regardless of what your department or program was called while you were at BYU, the School of Family Life is now your BYU home. It was created on September 10, 1998, when President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles spoke at the reorganizing dinner and dedicated the School of Family Life. As part of his talk, he read the "The Family: A Proclamation to the World" and charged the students, faculty, and administrators to make it the charter of the School of Family Life.

So welcome home! We want to describe to you how the School is organized, as well as some of the important things that we are doing.

In a nutshell, the School is large and diverse. We have 40 full-time faculty, numerous staff, and about 30 part-time instructors. We have about 850 undergraduate students and



60 graduate students. We have faculty who represent five different professional disciplines: family and consumer sciences, family finance, family studies, human development, and marriage and family therapy. We teach courses in child and adolescent development, clothing and textiles, early childhood education, family and consumer science education, family finance, family studies, foods, gerontology, interior design, and marriage and family therapy.

At the undergraduate level, we have two majors: Family Life (with either a human development or family studies emphasis)

and Family and Consumer Science Education (for those who want to teach at the junior high or high school level). We also offer master's and doctoral degrees in two graduate programs: Marriage and Family Therapy and Marriage, Family, and Human Development.

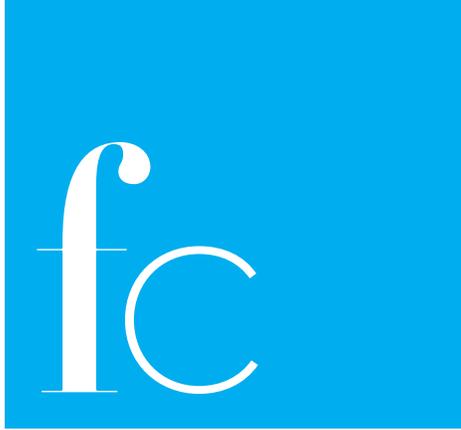
As many of you know, the home for family-related programs at BYU for several decades, the Smith Family Living Center, was torn down in the early 2000s, and a new building, the Joseph F. Smith Building, was constructed on the same plot of land. We occupy the southwest corner of the second floor of the new building. It is beautiful! (See the pictures to the left.) In the basement are state-of-the-art laboratories where we teach our sewing and cooking classes. We also have a new, well-equipped preschool in the new building. (Unfortunately, the marriage and family therapy program is still housed seemingly miles away on the east side of campus in the Taylor Building.)

Over the years, many of our venerable professors, whom many of you loved, have retired. It has been sad to say goodbye to well-known professors such as Al Price, Lynn Scoresby, Brent Barlow, Wes Burr, and Maxine Rowley. However, we have enjoyed welcoming incredibly well-trained and energetic new faculty. In this and future issues of this magazine, we will introduce some of our new faculty to you and catch you up on some of our retired faculty.

Our faculty are engaged in conducting cutting-edge research that is focused on strengthening the family and influencing family policy that is consistent with "Family Proclamation" principles. This issue features the Flourishing Families Project; future issues of *Family Connections* will highlight other important research projects.

So, whether you graduated last year, in 1990 or in 1970 or whatever year, welcome home to the School of Family Life!





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# GENEALOGY OF THE SCHOOL OF FAMILY LIFE

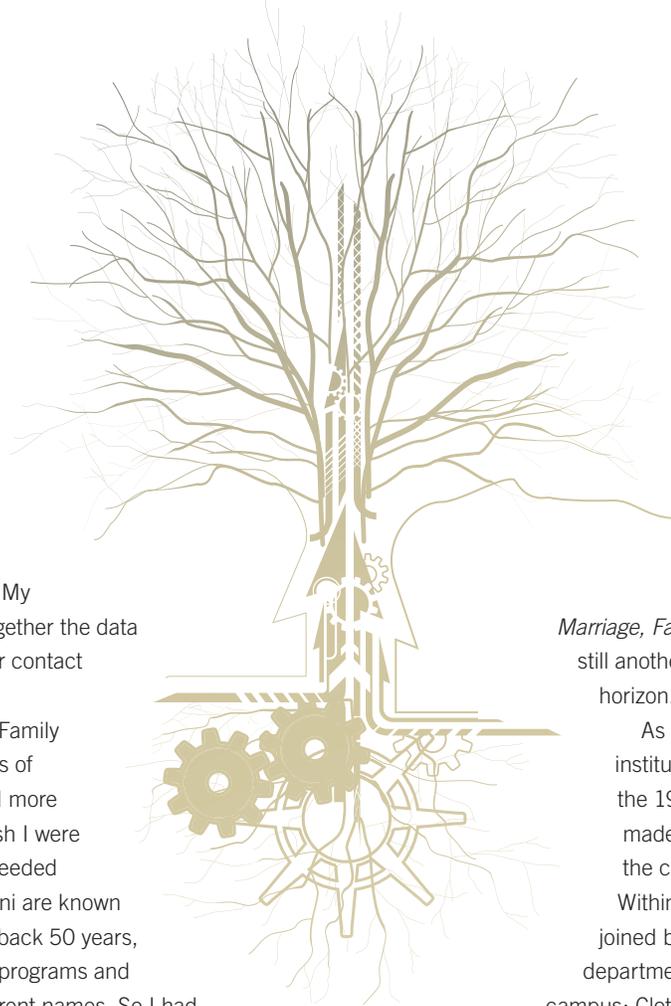
ALAN J. HAWKINS  
PROFESSOR OF FAMILY LIFE, BYU

When I first heard that the School of Family (SFL) was going to begin producing a magazine for its alumni, I immediately volunteered to help. My first assignment was to gather together the data on who our alumni were and their contact information.

Well, finding all the School of Family Life alumni buried in the recesses of BYU computer databases proved more challenging than I expected. I wish I were a better genealogist, because I needed those skills in this task. Our alumni are known by many different names. Going back 50 years, our alumni have graduated from programs and departments with dozens of different names. So I had to help the BYU Alumni Association identify our ancestral names and then put them all together. The final result is a list of more than 15,000 alumni whose “progenitors” are now identified as part of the School of Family Life.

But chances are your diploma doesn't have that label on it. Perhaps your diploma says *Child Development and Family Relations* (CDFR). This department name goes back to the early 1960s and possibly before. (About 150 of our living alumni graduated before 1960; our earliest graduate on the list graduated in 1924!)

The CDFR title lasted until the late 1980s. Then the department was renamed *Family Sciences*. This term had emerged as the label of the discipline that integrated family psychology, marriage and family therapy, family sociology, home economics, and child development. Also at this time, the department of *Home Economics*, which had maintained a separate program, was merged into Family Sciences to create one department. This included several faculty with expertise in *Family Finances*.



In the mid 1990s, however, for various reasons, including the desire to further clarify the diverse content of our department, we renamed ourselves *Marriage, Family, and Human Development*. But still another significant change was just over the horizon.

As a result of a two-year process of institutional introspection and visioning during the 1990s, some significant changes were made and in 1998 the unit was renamed to the current title, the *School of Family Life*. Within a few years of that change, we were joined by a handful of faculty from two other departments that had been discontinued on campus: Clothing and Textiles and Interior Design. The faculty were given the charge by President

Boyd K. Packer at the dedication of the School of Family Life to make the “Family Proclamation” our unit charter. Perhaps the most significant application of this charge is the introductory 3-credit course required of all majors in the School of Family Life (and available to all students). This course is an in-depth study of the proclamation that weaves together sacred truths and secular scholarship to examine, understand, appreciate, apply, share, and defend proclamation principles.

Regardless of the name of the department on your diploma, you belong to a strong lineage of more than 11,000 students who have studied family life and blessed the world with your knowledge and application. And our numbers will grow rapidly, because the School of Family Life is now one of the largest departments on campus with nearly 1,000 undergraduate and graduate majors. I hope you will feel pride, as I do, in being a part of the ongoing work of the School of Family Life.



# UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS NOURISH UNIQUE RESEARCH PROJECT

SEATTLE  
RESEARCH  
TEAM



BYU's Flourishing Families research project is producing more and more fruit in the form of valuable findings and families are benefitting from the bounteous harvest. But who prunes, waters, and nourishes this magnificent tree? In large part, it is undergraduate students in the School of Family Life.

A rising generation of young people from BYU dedicated to improving families has made possible this unique study of family life. These students have overcome the doubts of outsiders about their research abilities with careful preparation and dogged determination. Now numerous research articles based on this project have been published with undergraduate students as co-authors. It seems few tasks are too difficult for these students to master.

The Flourishing Families project is designed to shed light on the inner workings of successful rather than failing families, which are the more common focus of academic studies. But with limited funding, this ambitious project had to find creative and efficient ways to gather the data. The School of Family Life professors who created the project decided early on to use direct student involvement to help with the tasks. More than 550 student researchers have since played a vital role in the project, learning first-hand (not just in the classroom) about the rigors of research.

Though preparations began years before, 2007 saw the first wave of student researchers begin their summer work in Provo and Seattle, Washington. Students interview families,

code data, and help faculty write research articles, giving them valuable experience for future studies and professional works.

Each team of student researchers is responsible for obtaining accurate data from 45 to 50 families out of 500 in Seattle and 180 in Provo. The students enter the home, help family members with a lengthy questionnaire, and then record a family discussion on a point of disagreement within the family. All of the data is then compiled and put into electronic format to prepare for statistical analysis.

Dr. Laura Walker, head of student recruitment and training for the project and co-author of various articles dealing with the project, credits the students working with Flourishing Families for much of the project's productivity.

"Part of why it's so successful is [the families] love having the students come into their homes," Walker said.

Walker said that once families decided to be a part of

*Dr. Laura Walker, one of the Flourishing Families project's principal investigators, credits the students for much of the project's success.*



## PROVO RESEARCH TEAM



the project, a remarkable 95 percent of these families have continued to participate over five years. She credits the student involvement for this.

Placing students in charge of such a vital and delicate part of research was not easily accepted by the academic community.

“When we first started this project, people told us we couldn’t do it with undergraduates,” said Walker. “Most people hire out professional firms or graduate students to go and gather their data.”

But BYU students’ efforts have been fruitful, to say the least. A number of scholarly articles based on the Flourishing Families data have been written with the help of student researchers, and are on their way into academic journals. The studies have been insightful for a wide range of family issues.

One article, written by BYU professors Laura Walker and James Harper and student Alexander Jensen, reveals the power of siblings’ relationships in adolescent outcomes. The study found that greater sibling affection is associated with greater prosocial behavior and self-regulation, as well as less aggression. On the other hand, greater sibling hostility is associated with greater internalizing behavior like depression. Furthermore, the study found that sibling relationships can do things parents do not. Researchers suggested why this may be the case.

“Throughout childhood, sibling interactions (both positive and negative) provide opportunities for children to learn about sharing, emotional control, empathy, and conflict resolution, oftentimes before these skills can be practiced through interaction with peers,” the study said. “This may help set the early groundwork needed to promote positive development.”

When the project began, families were selected that had children ranging from ages 11–14. Currently, the children range from ages 15–19.

The students themselves have plucked some fruit from the very generous Flourishing Family tree. Ashley Kerns, a student field director for the Seattle team, began working with the Flourishing Families project in fall of 2009, when she was 18. The experience thus far has deepened Ashley’s understanding of family relationships.

“You can read in a text book about families who are divorced...or all these different situations, but to actually go into their home and talk with them, to see what their family is actually like, and even to just be in the home and feel what the family is like, it opened my eyes to different situations,” said Kerns.

She, along with every student researcher, was required to take a preparatory course the semester before going out to the field to do research.

Another study based on the Flourishing Families project showed that parents co-playing video games with their daughters actually helped daughters be less aggressive, more prosocial, and better connected with the family. Besides being published in the “*Journal of Adolescent Health*,” this article, written by professors Sarah Coyne and Laura Walker and student Laura Stockdale, made its way into the *New York Times*, ABC News, and other large news sources.

Dr. Walker credits the student researchers—the standards they live and their drive to accomplish their duties—for much of the success of the project. Critics of student involvement were wrong.

*“Part of why it’s so successful is the families love having the students come into their homes.”*

“We should probably have a couple of articles where we talk about how you can do this kind of research with undergraduates,” Walker quipped.

Yet another fruit plucked from a bounteous tree, the Flourishing Families project found that grandparents’ stronger emotional relationship with a grandchild was associated with grandchildren’s greater prosocial development. The same study showed that for single-parent families, grandparents’ greater financial involvement was associated with increased school engagement over time for the grandchild. But this did not hold true for two-parent families.

The School of Family Life professors working directly on the project are Randal Day, Laura Walker, Roy Bean, James Harper, Rick Miller, Jeremy Yorgason, Justin Dyer, and Sarah Coyne. Each professor has a specialty, dividing up the tremendous workload involved in such a project.

The Flourishing Families project is supported by an impressive list of funding sources and endowments at BYU, including the Family Studies Center, the Marjorie Pay Hinckley Endowed Chair, and the Mary Lou Fulton Endowed Chair, as well as several family foundations, including the LB and LW Smith Family Foundation, the Kreutzkamp Family Foundation, the Brent and Cheri Andrus Family Trust, and the James W. and Carolyn O. Ritchie Supporting Organization.

Walker explained that this past year the Flourishing Families project was voluntarily reviewed by an external team of top scholars to decide whether it should continue.

“Basically we were told by the review team that there is not another project like it going on in the United States,” Walker said. So the project will continue.

Student field director Kerns said she thinks the study will help balance all of the negative data regarding the failure of families. The study should provide insight into how families succeed along with how they can improve.

This year will see the addition of a collection of physiological data, like heart rate, to the project, which Walker says is important to increase our understanding of how biological processes, family interactions, and adolescent development are intertwined.

“We really want to help people see families are doing well,” Kerns said.

She said that meeting families with a single parent changed her textbook-given stereotype. She expected more conflict in these homes. Generally, she was surprised at the optimism and love that existed in the majority of homes she visited.

The Flourishing Families project helps shed light on why families are the fundamental unit of society, as the project effectively brings to light ways families can remain strong in the face of trials. At the same time, it is training a new generation of family life researchers. These students are a superb example of the good fruit that is ripening these days in the School of Family Life.

RANDAL DAY,  
ONE OF THE PROJECT'S  
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

STUDENT  
RESEARCHERS

BY MICHAEL RICHARDSON





# LET'S CO-PLAY!

## CAN PLAYING VIDEO GAMES WITH YOUR CHILDREN HAVE POSITIVE EFFECTS?



Parents, professionals, and professors struggling to understand how video games affect children's lives must now consider a new element in the debate, thanks to a finding in a study by BYU School of Family Life professors Sarah Coyne and Laura Walker.

The researchers found that parent and daughter co-play of video games—meaning they play the games together—has surprising benefits, on average, for daughters: they show decreased aggressive behavior, increased prosocial behavior, less depression, and greater connectedness with their families. However, this did not hold true for sons. This finding, published in the *Journal of Adolescent Health*, made its way into the *Wall Street Journal*, *ABC News*, *Time*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *MSNBC*, and the *L.A. Times*.

While parents and children viewing other forms of media together has received some research attention, Professor Coyne and her colleagues found little research on co-playing video games. In this age, when childhoods are often dominated by controllers and gaming systems, a deeper understanding of how parents can influence this electronic part of childhood seems vital.

The study did confirm what many other studies have found, that overall time spent playing video games for youth is associated with a number of negative consequences. But the benefits of parents co-playing with daughters, such as less chance of depression, certainly aren't trivial. Parents may need to re-think some of their video game rules and practices.

Coyne recognizes both the positive and negative sides of video games.

"I don't think that parents ever think, 'video games can be a force of good,' Coyne said. "But they can be, if used in the right way."

However, the study did show that the benefits of co-playing video games decrease when playing age-inappropriate games. The researchers speculated that this may be because these games affect mood and ability to interact.

But what about boys? Coyne said one reason for the lack of effects for boys may be that boys were spending a much smaller fraction of their video game time with parents, com-

pared to girls, making any effects of co-playing comparatively smaller for boys. Boys played video games more often than girls, even though both boys and girls spent the same amount of time co-playing with parents.

Also, sons and daughters tended to co-play different games, which also may explain some of the gender difference. Parents and sons most often played "Call of Duty," "Wii Sports," and "Halo." Girls and their parents most often played "Mario Kart/Mario Brothers," "Wii Sports," and "Rock Band/Guitar Hero."

Coyne gives some advice to parents.

"Don't be afraid to play video games with your kids, especially age-appropriate ones," Coyne said. "You don't need to be playing every single time your daughter plays, but occasionally joining the game can have some great benefits."

In their article, the researchers suggested some reasons why co-playing between daughters and parents seems to yield positive results.

"First, parents may show that they are willing to engage in an activity that is important to daughters," the study said. "Second, playing video games can represent quality time between a daughter and a parent, especially if such play involves conversation between parent and child."

Coyne said this study brings up new questions she wants to study, such as the effect of playing video games alone versus playing with friends.

"The social context of gaming is so important," Coyne said. "I think it really does matter."

*Principal Investigators*  
*Sarah Coyne (top)*  
*& Laura Walker (bottom)*

BY MICHAEL RICHARDSON



## ALUMNI PROFILE: THE THAYNE FAMILY



Tim and Roxanne Thayne call their career path “schizophrenic,” but in reality it has been nothing but exemplary.

Their achievements are not just cumulative but progressive, as each innovative idea stems from the one before it. The couple’s drive is fueled by a deep desire to help families in the most significant way possible.

This desire first surfaced as action when Tim taught senior couples at the Missionary Training Center.

He already had a love for family science, but as senior couples came to this inexperienced young man for advice on how to deal with the drastic changes in relationships that missions cause, he found himself with little more to share than his grandmother’s old advice to “kiss and make up.”

Needing something better than clichés, Tim studied and eventually received his bachelors degree in Family Science and his master’s degree in Marriage and Family Therapy at BYU. After a doctoral MFT program at Virginia Tech, Tim began his unique career path.

But not without the support of Roxanne, whom he met in the Richards Building through BYU ballroom dance. Roxanne said Tim was wearing Vans tennis shoes and a Hawaiian shirt the first time she saw him, neither of which matched or were in style at the time. Nevertheless, she noticed that Tim seemed to be known and liked by everyone, and the two became dance partners. He asked her to dance on the first day and three years later they danced into a happy marriage.

Roxanne has always loved teaching. She used to force her siblings to sit in front of her and she would teach them using a laundry hamper as a podium. Roxanne graduated from BYU with a degree in history and received her secondary education teaching certificate following in the footsteps of her father, a history professor.

Tim and Roxanne feel their debt to BYU can never be fully repaid. They attribute much of their success to the combina-

tion of spiritual and secular learning at BYU and the communication skills they gained while attending. According to the Thaynes, students in the School of Family Life have an advantage in that there is already a direct link between family science and what the Lord has in mind for the family. But regardless of what one studies and what one does after college, the BYU experience is distinctly beneficial.

“Remember how you learned things at BYU,” Roxanne advised.

Tim calls BYU, “unique in all the earth.” He currently serves as a member of the National Advisory Council for the College of Family, Home, and Social Sciences at BYU.

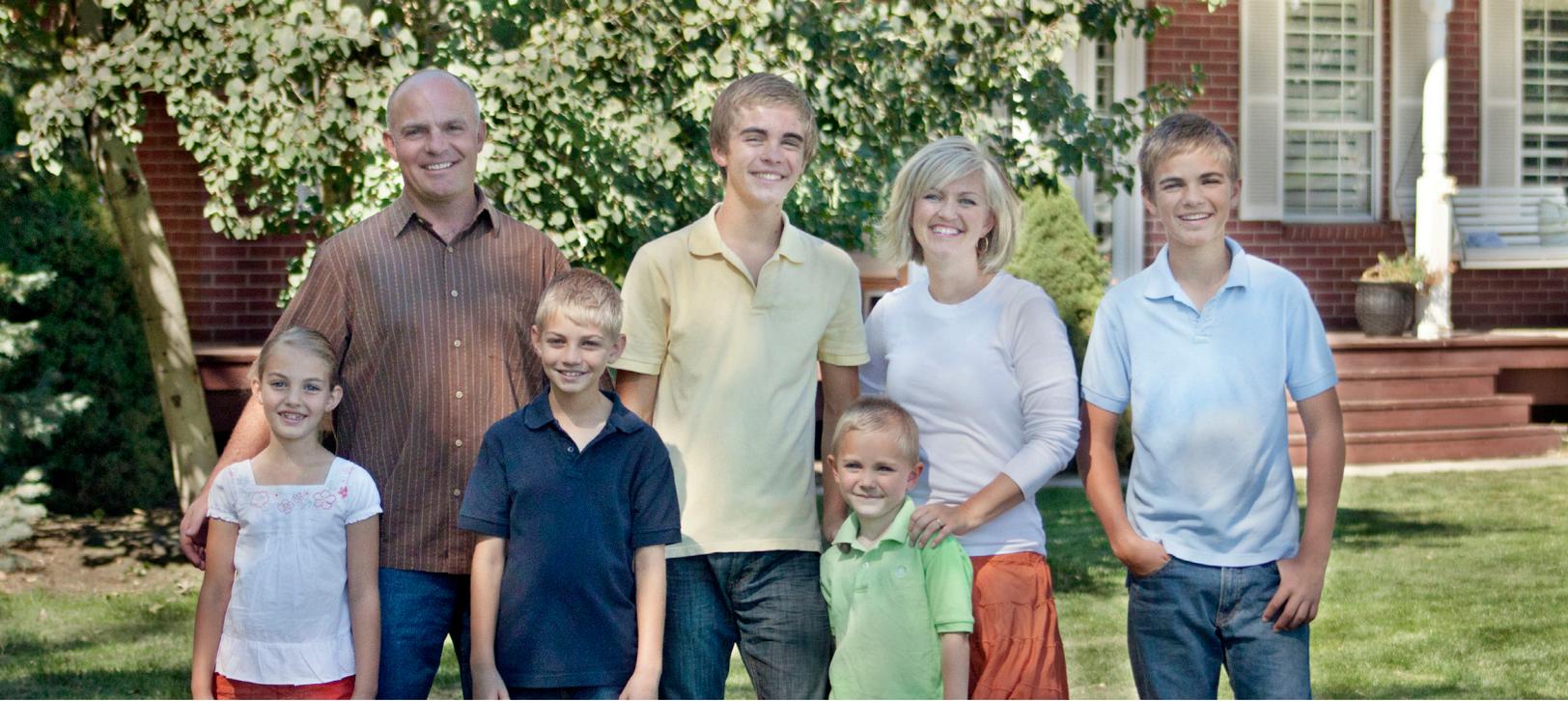
After marriage came life in Virginia. While at Virginia Tech, Tim helped create a program that adapted methods of marriage and family therapy to larger organizational models for healthier work environments. The program also trained executives and managers in effective leadership. Work in the business field led to Thayne Leadership Academy, a corporate consulting firm.

A year later, Tim found himself cleaning out the bottom of a trench in Utah, climbing out of the trench now and again to make coaching calls to a hospital vice president. He and Roxanne had moved to Lehi to be near family and eventually his father and brother asked him to help build a construction company, which he did. Tim recalls this time as being especially “schizophrenic.” Trenches and construction, however, didn’t impede his professional capabilities and goals.

After a couple of years, Tim co-founded a new project, Outback Therapeutic Expeditions, which was born in 2001. The program combined nature and therapy to help troubled teens. The program was highly successful, so much so that Tim appeared on the Dr. Phil show to explain it.

After several years, however, Tim saw a recurring problem. Teenagers would make significant improvements in the wilderness, but the transition home to old pressures often proved so difficult that the things they had learned escaped them and old behavior returned. Tim seems to always have had this habit of looking for flaws and ways to improve them.

Roxanne describes Tim as a “visionary” who always seems to see further ahead than most people. Tim recognizes the



value in this, but also realizes its drawbacks.

“My problem is always wanting to go to the next step,” Tim said. He doesn’t like dealing with day-to-day management. “It is a double-edged sword.”

He describes himself as a little more of a risk-taker than his wife and more of a dreamer. Roxanne provides the reality and list of checkboxes needed to make those dreams come true. This is what makes them such a powerful team.

As Tim saw teens returning home from their expeditions and falling back into old habits, he decided it was time to fix the problem. But the idea was ahead of its time. Aftercare, or the gap following treatment, was essentially non-existent in the professional therapy world.

“We really didn’t have a model to follow,” Tim said.

The couple loaded up on treatment outcome research and went to Arizona, where they locked themselves away for 5 days, mapping out things that would strengthen, educate, and support parents and teens in transition. The result was Homeward Bound.

Homeward Bound, founded in 2006, has helped hundreds of families. It recruited a team of masters- and Ph.D.-level “coaches” who enter homes and see real families’ interactions. These professionals literally coach families on how to communicate better, set expectations, create structure, and unify around the struggling teen. Homeward Bound also provides Earlycare, an intervention to possibly help avoid out-

of-home treatment.

Having professional coaches enter the home is initially intimidating to some families, but eventually the value of a “fly on the wall” perspective pays off. With this perspective, Roxanne said families see the coaches getting to know them better than any other professional ever has. Therefore, guidance is clearer and more applicable.

A revolutionary idea of having a “Home Team” was then added to the program. Home Team is made up of members of the family’s community, be it teachers, church leaders, friends, neighbors, or any trusted individual. This Home Team is organized and educated about the teen’s situation and then given avenues to help. The team can positively affect a teen’s transition home from therapy.

“It keeps it from becoming a shameful thing, making it a celebration when [the teens] come home,” said Roxanne.

The power of the community is harnessed for good. Tim and Roxanne believe it is vital that the community is a part of the improvement process for any child, as the community brings forth a level of creativity and innovation that individual families lack.

In fact, Tim and Roxanne said that the techniques of Homeward Bound are applicable to all families, even their own. Community support, setting expectations, and communicating family standards are a big part of the parenting processes for their five children, four boys and one girl, ages



*Though at times they feel like they are trying to live multiple lifestyles in one lifetime, Tim & Roxanne have felt blessed and directed their entire lives.*

6 to 17.

The positive influence of the community is further captured and dispersed through Family Bridge, an online tool that organizes the Home Team. Tim, the visionary, was frustrated with the predominantly negative effects of the media on the family, especially the Internet. Family Bridge harnesses the power of media. Tim said it changes negative conceptions about media when the Internet actually becomes a tool for building stronger families.

Family Bridge, which can be compared to Facebook with a clinical twist, makes information about a teen's progress and treatment public to varying degrees. Professional therapists like the ones in Homeward Bound see the most information, but every member of a Home Team will have at least a general idea of what is happening with the teen and his or her family. Family Bridge also allows the Home Team to provide online support and provides parents with an online support library.

The progression from the Outback Therapeutic Expeditions to Homeward Bound to Family Bridge shows the true intent of the Thaynes. They are not content with good intentions, but only with good results. Always moving forward, or "crankin'," as Roxanne would say.

Aftercare is no longer a new idea, partially in thanks to Tim and Roxanne. Professionals across the country are borrowing their ideas. Family Bridge has been sold to various teen treatment programs.

But the Thayne determination goes deeper than therapy and programs. In the midst of all her outward efforts, Roxanne overcame breast cancer. Furthermore, she home-schooled her children for many years. In an effort to teach their children the value of hard work, the Thaynes now own land and 60 Berkshire sows along with other farm animals. Tim and Roxanne are humble about teaching their children.

"We can't give you kids anything but average brains, opportunities, and connections in life," they tell them. "However, we can teach you to work. The rest is up to you."

Clearly, their significant contributions to the professional family therapy world did not come at the expense of their own family. Though at times they feel like they are trying to live multiple lifestyles in one lifetime, Tim and Roxanne have felt blessed and directed their entire lives.

Tim and Roxanne Thayne exemplify how to take advantage of opportunities and privileges. They have consistently grasped what is offered, and in a biblical sense have multiplied their talents for the benefit of something greater.

**BY MICHAEL RICHARDSON**



## ALUMNI PROFILE: THE LUSCHIN FAMILY

*“I never knew before how many wonderful, accomplished individuals devote their lives to saving marriages and families in this country.”*



Emily Luschin walked the path that many School of Family Life (SFL) students hope to walk. Her achievements as a student, intern, employee, wife, and mother make evident her profound comprehension that strong marriages and families are the “fundamental unit of society.”

Ever since her early teens, Luschin has wanted to contribute to the field of marriage and family. At BYU, she worked under SFL professor Dr. Alan Hawkins along with nine other students to create credible research summaries of marriage research for the National Healthy Marriage Resource Center ([www.healthymarriageinfo.org](http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org)).

Her distinguished work to strengthen families continued as she interned for the Federal Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Initiative, which in 2006 began receiving \$150 million a year to promote healthy marriages and responsible fatherhood.

The internship opened Luschin’s eyes to the sincere efforts of brilliant professionals directing some of the national programs she was involved with.

“I never knew before how many wonderful, accomplished individuals devote their lives to saving marriages and families in this country,” Luschin said in a letter to Dr. Hawkins.

At the conclusion of her internship, Luschin was offered a full-time position as a Program Analyst in the Office of Regional Operations at the Administration for Children and Families, which she accepted, finishing her BYU course work via independent study.

In this position, Luschin dealt mostly with the African American Healthy Marriage Initiative. She planned conferences, managed the

website, and reviewed grants.

In 2007–08, Luschin studied at Boston University, receiving her master’s degree in Education, graduating with honors. She then became an independent consultant in Boston, writing and researching for marriage and family publications.

In 2009, Luschin completed an internship at the Institute for American Values (IAV), and became an Affiliate Scholar there. IAV is an influential think-tank in New York City whose mission in part is to promote thrift and generosity. Luschin worked primarily in this area, which gave her the privilege of giving a presentation to the Board of the Boy Scouts of America.

Luschin’s work to help families recently took another turn. She and her husband, a Harvard Law School graduate, are currently the proud parents of their first child, Franziska. Luschin’s husband recently accepted a position with a Japanese law firm based in Tokyo.

“My experience in DC, as well as at IAV, prepared me for Japan in many ways,” said Luschin. “First and foremost, to strengthen and cherish my own family.”

Ever seeking to help strengthen marriages and families, Luschin’s next project is to study Japanese marriages while living there for the next one and a half years. Unfortunately, those plans are on hold. At press time, the Luschins had returned to the United States in the wake of the natural disasters in Japan.

BY MICHAEL RICHARDSON



## ALUMNI PROFILE: THE LUNDELL FAMILY

*Life is like a lump of clay for Catherine Lundell and her family. Prodding, pounding, molding, and adjusting are common. And all that shaping has created something strong and beautiful.*

Catherine graduated from BYU with a bachelor's degree in Family Science and master's and doctoral degrees in Marriage and Family Therapy. She practiced with LDS Family Services for 5 years and practiced privately for 10 years. She often did phone therapy with clients during her children's nap time.

The Lundells have three adopted children of Asian, African American, and Samoan descent, respectively. With the help of her husband, Randy, and some cutting-edge medical advancements, Catherine was able to overcome 8 years of infertility and have what she calls her two "miracle babies." She calls the challenge of infertility a "rollercoaster ride to h--- and back," but the family is grateful for and responds to the love that exudes from their "love machines," as Catherine calls her children.

"These babies are the glue that pulls our family together," Catherine said.

Randy has done his share to contribute to the wild ride that is the Lundell family. He made a drastic career change from professional golfer to medical doctor. Randy then entered military service to begin his new career with four years of residency at a military hospital. There was a chance of deployment in these circumstances, which Catherine always feared. Her fears were realized when Randy was deployed to Iraq for 3 months. She said the moment of separation left a mark on her soul.

"There he was in his uniform—and I guess it was a mixture of how proud I was of him,

immense respect for his courage, and what an amazing provider he was, how brave he was, and yet scared and vulnerable at the same time. I don't know, I just know that I have never loved him more than that hour before we bravely but tearfully waved goodbye at the airport. That is a life-long memory and one of the meaningful ones that I keep in a little pocket in my heart where my battle scars are kept, those scars that make me who I am. I'm proud of them, but so glad I don't have to do them again!"

When Randy left for Iraq, the Lundells had a 6-week-old baby and three kids with separation issues from adoption. "I knew it would be super hard and it was actually harder than I even imagined," Catherine remarks.

Catherine remembers many little miracles occurring while her husband was away. One child had pneumonia but was able to stay out of the hospital. A baby had RSV, but was also able to avoid a hospital stay. Catherine remembers friends and family coming to clean, organize, and visit. She remembers her brother stepping in as dad for her son who fell on a skateboard. These memories come from a time she in many ways wanted to forget, which speaks of the power simple service can have.

Even with a father in the home, Catherine said the challenges of parenting are harder than she ever imagined. She said her kids all have unique personalities, each requiring a different approach.

Catherine's therapeutic skills are hardly dor-



mant these days even though she takes on few clients professionally. She has found her training as a family therapist to be valuable with her adopted children.

"I get to practice all my fun [therapeutic] tools!" Catherine said.

Catherine feels a sacred obligation as a parent to an adopted child. "How would their birth mother feel about my interactions with this child if she were here watching?" is a question she often asks herself. Catherine feels a deep responsibility for the trust that was placed in her as a mother to someone else's child.

She also feels responsible in a more eternal sense. "I often think to myself during interactions or after, these kids were my best friends before we came to earth when we were all adult spirit friends together in the premortal-existence. I want to treat them with respect and never take their dignity away," Catherine said.

Infertility, adoption, career changes, and military service have all provided challenges for the Lundell family. Being moldable may be their defining characteristic and also their key to success.

BY MICHAEL RICHARDSON



## WHERE ARE THEY NOW? PROFILES OF RETIRED FACULTY

### A POST-BUCKET-LIST BOOK: DR. WESLEY R. BURR



Wesley Burr saw a great progression in family studies at BYU from the time he began his undergraduate studies to the time he retired as a faculty member in 1999. His mark on the field and BYU remain clear to this day.

Back when he started, Burr said, the university was small and the family life program was even smaller, with only a few students.

Burr, who found teaching and student interaction to be an enjoyable part of his experience, said he saw a progression in family life students over the years.

“The quality of students increased a great deal,” Burr said.

Burr influenced thousands of students. He encouraged graduate students to write a thesis that was

publishable and they did so numerous times, with his help. Then Burr began to team up with undergraduates to write articles and even one book. This kind of work with undergraduate students was ahead of its time at BYU; current faculty are strongly encouraged to involve undergraduate students in their research.

Burr retired in 1999 from the School of Family Life and for ten years worked on checking off a “bucket list” of things he always wanted to do when retired. In Burr’s retirement address to the students and faculty, which was attended by then-university President Merrill Bateman, the last PowerPoint slide was a cowboy riding off into the sunset.

“I was eager to go off and do other things,” Burr said.

Mountains, four-wheelers, a mission to New Zealand with his wife, model railroads, and photography were all included in the bucket list. But when everything was checked off, Burr found himself returning to the field of family life, writing a book about the sacred within the family.

Burr and two co-authors have worked for two-and-a-half

years on the book entitled “Sacred Matters: Religion and Spirituality in Families.” One of the co-authors is Dr. Randal Day, a BYU Family Life professor. The other is Dr. Loren Marks, who received a master’s degree in Marriage, Family, and Human Development from BYU and now holds an endowed chair as a professor of family studies at Louisiana State University.

When work on the book began, Burr was twice the age of Marks. Marks, who spent hours in Burr’s home working on the book, said Burr is exemplary and inspiring, a rare type of person that few measure up to.

“To me, Wes represents where I hope and pray I will be as a person, as a husband, as a father, and as a professional when I reach that age,” Marks said. “He takes family to a whole new level.”

Marks is especially impressed with Burr’s mastery of family history, and his devotion to family. Furthermore, even individuals who see the world differently religiously or ideologically respect and admire Burr, according to Marks.

The book’s main thesis is that “sacred matters matter.” The book introduces “sacred theory,” which differs from previous academic theories on the sacred in the family, as explained in the preface.

“All of the previously existing theories have truth and value, but they also are built on secular assumptions and composed of secular ideas, and this means they do not have important ideas about and from the sacred that ought to be a part of the scholarly study of families,” the preface says.

The preface says the book provides a new conceptual framework as a tool to gain insight on “how, when, and why sacred matters help and harm families.”

With the book, Burr will extend his already far-reaching influence on the field of family studies even further. Marks said this book is the one Burr always wanted to write, but never did.

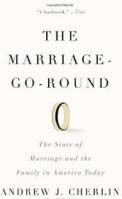
“It’s kind of unfinished business,” Marks said. Check off another item on the Burr bucket list.

BY MICHAEL RICHARDSON

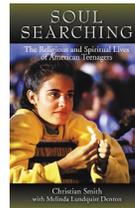


# LIFE-LONG LEARNING

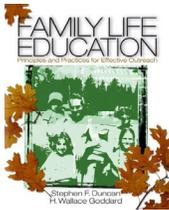
*One of the aims of a BYU education is to promote life-long learning. In that spirit, the School of Family Life faculty have suggested some recent publications to help you stay current in the field.*



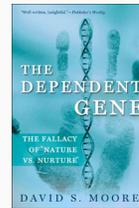
• Andrew J. Cherlin. (2009). *The marriage-go-round: The state of marriage and family in America today.* New York: Knopf.



• Christian Smith & Melinda Lundquist Denton. (2005). *Soul searching: The religious and spiritual lives of American teenagers.* New York: Oxford Press.



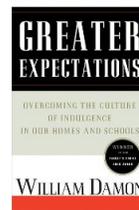
• Steven F. Duncan & Wallace H. Goddard. (2011). *Family life education: Principles and practices for effective outreach* (2nd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.



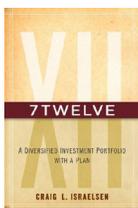
• David Moore. (2003). *The dependent gene: the fallacy of "nature vs. nurture."* New York: Henry Holt.



• *Threads* magazine is a great resource for our sewing students to keep up with new techniques, review basics, get stories about designer techniques, and many other things to keep their enthusiasm for sewing building. Barnes & Noble and Borders both carry the magazine, or subscribe at [Tauntonpress.com](http://Tauntonpress.com).



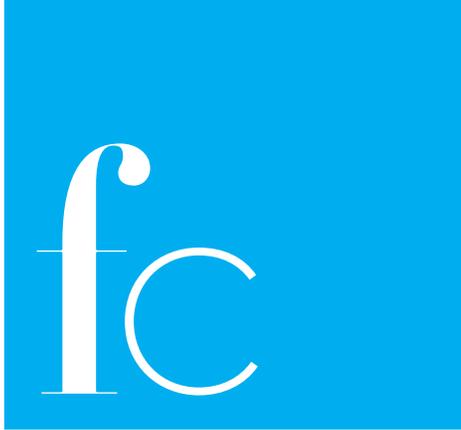
• William Damon. (1995). *Greater expectations: Overcoming the culture of indulgence in our homes and schools.* New York: Free Press.



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FAMILY CONNECTIONS



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