

# There's Glass All Over the Floor: The Teaching, Mentorship, and Leadership of Dr. Jacque Deeds

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## Introduction/Need for Research

- Dr. Jacque Deeds is a trailblazer who shattered glass ceilings, as one of the first female professors of agricultural education and the first female officer of the American Association for Agricultural Education (AAAE).
- "Seeing is believing." As young women see female leaders in agricultural education, they are more likely to set their sights on leadership in agricultural education (Morgenroth et al., 2015).
- Research Priority 3, "Sufficient scientific and professional workforce that addresses the challenges of the 21st century especially as it addresses recruiting diverse populations into agriculture and natural resource careers." (Stripling & Ricketts, 2016).

## Conceptual Framework/Methodology

- Historical analysis to document the life story of Dr. Jacque Deeds.
- Life Story Interview Technique was utilized (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004).
- Interview served as framework, supported by documented primary resources.
- Objectives to guide the research:
  1. Explore Dr. Deeds' early life and what led her to pursue a career as an agricultural educator.
  2. Describe Dr. Deeds' experiences as she navigated becoming Oregon's first female agriculture teacher.
  3. Examine Dr. Deeds' career as an agriculture teacher educator and leader in the profession.

## Results and Findings

- Encouraged by the new local agriculture teacher, Dan Dunham, Dr. Deeds became one of the first females enrolled in agricultural education in 1964, before female membership was recognized by the National FFA Organization.
- Dr. Deeds said, "I was in competitive events, but not allowed to compete above the district level."
- Her passion for agriculture led her to Oregon State University. Mr. Dunham encouraged her to consider changing her major to agricultural education and "that's how it all got started."

- Upon graduation from Oregon State, she began a career as an agriculture teacher. She remembers interviewing a few places, "One school district insisted that their women teachers wear dresses..."
- At her first agriculture teachers' conference she was inducted into the *Order of the Yellow Dog*. After a quick rewrite of the ceremony, there was still one part of the ceremony where she was asked to lift her leg like a dog urinating. She said, "Lady dogs don't lift their legs and they got a good laugh."
- In 1983, Dr. Deeds became the first female President of the Oregon Vocational Agricultural Teachers Association (OVATA).

- Dr. Deeds received her doctorate from The Ohio State University
- Dr. Deeds began her career at Mississippi State University, where she earned tenure and full professorship: "I believe that gender never mattered to the students I taught at Mississippi State. I believe they only cared about my experience and valued the experiences I would share from my time in the classroom."
- She became the first female officer of AAAE and was elected as the first female President of AAAE in 2006.
- Now retired, Dr. Deeds says her greatest accomplishment was "being able to do what I wanted to do, even if it hadn't been done before."

## Conclusion/Implications

- Dr. Deeds' contributions show women that glass ceilings are meant to be broken.
- The stories of momentous women in the profession should be preserved to show how far women have come.
- Women faculty membership in AAAE continues to grow (Cline et al., 2019). While there is still a ways to go, progress has been made, due in part to outstanding women in the profession like Dr. Deeds.
- When speaking of her mentor, Dr. Dan Dunham, Dr. Deeds shared "The first female leaders in FFA and agricultural education had male mentors, who saw past their gender, and saw promise in these future teachers."
- To encourage growth in all areas of diversity within the profession, we must encourage all bright minds in agricultural education, regardless of labels.



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