

PERMANENT VALUES OF UNITS IN HIGH SCHOOL  
JUNIOR AND SENIOR HCMEMAKING CLASSES

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the home economics curriculum for high school girls is directed toward more satisfying home and family living. This is true for the girls as members of present families, but even more so as they become responsible homemakers on their own. It is a challenging task to teach today's high school students to cope with the family situations of a somewhat distant tomorrow. To be certain that the homemaking program is adjusted to the present need of our young girls is a constant concern of those responsible for its course content.

In the first place, the home, as indeed the world outside the home, is in a state of transition. It is very difficult for a teen-age girl to project herself into the future and envision herself as a successful homemaker. Yet the home economics curriculum is to meet the need to train tomorrow's women for the kind of world in which they will eventually live. To justify its position in a high school program the homemaking course of study must fulfill its purpose for today and tomorrow. Therefore, those responsible for the content of the course must be ready to do whatever extensive and intensive revision is necessary.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Fleck, Henrietta, "Home Economics for the Future," Forecast for Home Economists 33:10-12, May-June, 1962.



Second, what the material aspect of tomorrow's home will be is today only a conjecture; yet the young married woman of tomorrow must be given the advantage of an educational background which will truly benefit her. Leaders in curriculum study must evaluate the present course to judge if it is giving the students those principles of action and those basic concepts which will be of use tomorrow, no matter what the physical home will be. Hunter has said realistically, "It is hard to teach management proper and much easier to teach a given job performance."<sup>2</sup> However, basic homemaking training should teach those wider principles which will be of use in any situation. The question is, "Are the home economics programs doing this?" Perhaps the most valid method of judging their performance is to check what has been their record in the past: What lasting values has the home economics course of study proven to have for the graduates as they became homemakers? Are the young married women sufficiently prepared for their role as Christian mothers?

#### Purposes of the Study

The writer thought it wise to investigate the value of the basic homemaking program through a study of the units that have proved most profitable to the girls as they

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<sup>2</sup>Hunter, S. M., "Homemakers Name Their Home Problems," Journal of Home Economics 53:425, June, 1961.

married and established homes of their own. It was thought that such an investigation would indicate revisions to be made if the program is to fulfill the larger demands made of it. In summary, it may be said that the objectives in this study were as follows:

1. To determine present thinking on the value of home economics through a study of current literature
2. To evaluate the units in the writer's home economics course of study
3. To gather helpful information on possible revisions of the present program
4. To validate the criticism the girls had offered on the course of study while they were in high school by comparing it with their evaluation of it as homemakers
5. To make recommendations for future curriculum content

#### Procedure of the Study

The study was carried out by sending a questionnaire to the girls the writer had had in junior and senior home economics classes and who had since married. In all 56 forms were sent, and 39 (70%) were completed and returned. The girls surveyed in this study came from three schools in Iowa and one in Wisconsin. The seventeen questions asked covered the evaluations of the units in home economics,

suggestions for revision of these units, analysis of the carry-over of skills vs. principles, general feeling about home economics education in high school, and a summary of their married status, including the number of years that elapsed before they had married, how many children they had, whether they had sought work outside the home, and whether they had found means to bring a monetary return to the household by certain work within the home.

#### Limitations of the Study

It would certainly have been valuable to question many more graduates, for example, from schools other than those of the writer. Also, one could have compared opinions of graduates of one year of high school home economics against those of two, or three, or four years. It would have been interesting, too, to have solicited remarks from young married women who had not had the advantage of high school home economics and compared these with the answers of the graduates of the course. However, the investigator, both because of time limits and immediate interest, considered the following limitations necessary:

1. Only students whom the writer had had in class were included
2. Only those former students who had since married were surveyed

3. Only girls graduating during the years 1953-1961 were contacted

No exceptions were made to the list of married graduates except such as were necessitated by failure to locate addresses.

A review of current literature on the value of home-making education, especially in high school, is contained in Chapter 2.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter is a report on current literature concerning education of women. Therefore, the sources of information have been confined generally to the years since 1960. Because of the relevancy of the material or because of a certain author's piquancy in stating the facts, there has been included some material going back to 1950. In general, it is the thinking of the most recent decade that has been analyzed, and purposely so, for it is the future role of home economics that is the concern of the writer.

Many aspects of the problem of education for the homemaker of tomorrow come to mind: What kind of education is adequate for our young homemakers of tomorrow? How much homemaking education should be offered at the high school level? When should it be started? What is the relationship, if any, between high school and college home economics? How and to what extent should home economics be integrated into the total curriculum?

The present study of current literature concerning education for home and family living is limited to a discussion of the four areas: Woman--her place in society today; the best education for girls; the place of family life education in the total curriculum; the future of family life education.

## Woman--Her Place in Society Today

Carl Sandburg voiced a long-cherished appraisal of women in his own unique way:

I don't care who you are, woman:  
I know sons and daughters looking for you  
And they are next year's wheat or the year after hidden  
in the dark loam.<sup>1</sup>

Woman has come a long way from the medieval picture of Chaucer's Wife of Bath with her red stockings or Beatrice, Dante's ideal.<sup>2</sup> Yet there is unrest in her soul today, for she has won liberation from masculine dominance but has not clearly sighted her future destiny. As Chesterton said, "Woman said I will not be dictated to, and she promptly became a stenographer." But it was from the domination of man that she had rebelled.

"Modern woman," Thomas says, "like modern man, must learn that the search for happiness resolves itself into the search for meaning, and freedom without direction has no meaning."<sup>3</sup> The job of the stenographer did not look so enticing from the boss' office. It was empty of real meaning for life.

<sup>1</sup>Sandburg, Carl, Harvest Poems, 1910-1960, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup>Eurich, Nell, "Querelle Des Femmes," Saturday Review 46:64-65, May 18, 1963.

<sup>3</sup>Thomas, J. L., S. J., "The Role of Woman," Commonweal 64:174, May 18, 1956.

It was during the second World War that the big exodus of women took place--into factory and commercial life, into political and military service--and showed her that the glamor of the job--and its salary!--were strong inducements. Modern industry helped her flight from the home by taking over many of her household chores and giving her time to be free.

But still she was not at ease, for she had not settled within herself her place in society. Instinctively her concern for human rather than for materialistic values governed her views and made her wary of abandoning the home. As Thomas reasoned, "The problem is not so much that modern woman is looking for a career; it is that she is looking for a different career. Somehow her role in the family has come to lack prestige and personal significance."<sup>4</sup>

But from the temper of the literature of the last five years one is led to believe that woman has been finding her true self in ever more meaningful ways. She is beginning to recognize her feminine person for what she knows is right and good, and is losing much of both the masculinized femininity and the excessively utilitarian aspect of her former existence. There are some today who want to commercialize woman's services,<sup>5</sup> and they are answered by those who roundly

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 172.

<sup>5</sup>Sanders, M. K., "Proposition for Women," Harpers 221:41-48, September, 1960.



defend her rights;<sup>6</sup> some who proclaim her emancipation from home and children,<sup>7</sup> and others who respond by explaining that she is the protective guardian of all human beings.<sup>8</sup>

More and more, current literature is disclosing the picture of the modern woman as the eternal "bearer of salvation."<sup>9</sup> Cardinal Suenens, the forward-looking Archbishop of Malines, says that it is women who will make the Christian society, "for it is she who builds, stone by stone, both the earthly city and the city of God."<sup>10</sup> It is she who is the mainstay of families, the teacher of values,<sup>11</sup> and it is hers to realize that "to build a family is to build the church, to work basically, for the salvation of the world."<sup>12</sup>

Family breakdown is described as America's number one social problem, as destructive as any disease. Divorce rates have dropped slightly in the past five years, but they

<sup>6</sup>"The Redundant Housewife," America 104:812-814, March 25, 1961; "Seven Women Write of Women's Role," America 105:218-219, April 29, 1961; "Proposition for Women: a Discussion," Harpers 221:6, November, 1960.

<sup>7</sup>Cassara, B. B., Editor, American Women: The Changing Image, This book includes chapters by various authors. Concerning working women are notable those chapters in Part III, Women at Work.

<sup>8</sup>Hunter, E. G., "Woman, the Teacher of Values," in American Women: The Changing Image, pp. 37-49.

<sup>9</sup>Le Fort, Gertrude voh, The Eternal Woman, p. 13.

<sup>10</sup>Suenens, L. J., Cardinal, The Nun in the World, p. 170.

<sup>11</sup>Crowley, Patricia, "Woman and Family Life," in The Spiritual Woman, M. T. Sheehan, editor, 167 pp.

<sup>12</sup>Suenens, op. cit., p. 170.



disclose that one in four marriages still ends in a broken home. Other signs of society's ills are the tripling of illegitimacy since 1938 and of delinquency since 1940.<sup>13</sup> Mutual love and understanding between mother and child are surely more important than a mother's mere physical presence; however, it is also true that delinquents tend to come from homes where the mother is away.<sup>14</sup> Here, too, current literature is calling for women to come to the rescue of society. "Woman has the awe-ful choice of being Eve or Mary: she is rarely neutral. Either she enobles and raises man up by her presence, by creating a climate of beauty and human nobility, or she drags him down with her in her own fall."<sup>15</sup> She seems to have an innate sense of what is good for the human spirit.<sup>16</sup>

On the other hand, Thomas cautions, "This is not a plea that women return submissively to the home. Rather it is a statement that the two aspects of a woman's role--as a person and as a feminine person--achieve normal integration in the family."<sup>17</sup> It is a call to woman to realize that her

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<sup>13</sup>"Family Breakdown Described as Number One Social Ill," Science Digest 51:28-29, February, 1962.

<sup>14</sup>Grafton, Samuel, "The Tense Generation," Look 27-23, August 27, 1963.

<sup>15</sup>Suenens, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>16</sup>Sheehan, M. T., editor, The Spiritual Woman, 167 pp.

<sup>17</sup>Thomas, op. cit., pp. 173-174.

greatest contribution to the world is as a woman, not as an intellectual.<sup>18</sup> She it is who will protect all that is good for home and family--whether in school, church, or community affairs; in national or international projects, or when she is practicing her "mother's firm conviction that no task is more significant, no opportunity more precious than feeding the bodies and minds of those dearest to her,"<sup>19</sup> her own family.

Pope Pius XII in an address "The Dignity of Woman" given October 14, 1956, said,

Every woman has the strictest obligation to go into action in a manner and way suitable to the conditions of each so that those currents which threaten the home may be held back, so as to oppose those doctrines which undermine its foundations, so as to prepare, organize and achieve the restoration of the home.

That is woman's destiny: to be a mother, in the fullest and richest meaning of the word, to all mankind. Chesterton says it well in "What's Wrong With the World:"

To be Queen Elizabeth within a definite area, deciding sales, banquets, labors, and holidays; to be Whitely within a certain area, providing toys, boots, cakes and books; to be Aristotle within a certain area, teaching morals, manners, theology and hygiene: I can understand how this might exhaust the mind, but I cannot imagine how it could narrow it. How can it be a large

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<sup>18</sup>Sheehan, op. cit., p. 158.

<sup>19</sup>Hopper, Dorothy, "But We Must Cultivate Our Gardens," in American Women: The Changing Image, p. 35.

career to tell other people's children about the Rule of Three and a small career to tell one's own children about the universe? How can it be broad to be the same thing to everyone, and narrow to be everything to someone? No; a woman's function is laborious <sup>but</sup> because it is gigantic, not because it is minute.<sup>20</sup>

The titles of some of the recent books concerning women read like a description of her changing role: Women, Words, and Wisdom by Solange Hertz; American Women: The Changing Image by Beverly Benner Cassara, editor; The Nun in the World by Leon Joseph Cardinal Suenens; The Spiritual Woman by Marion Turner Sheehan, editor; The Eternal Woman by Gertrude von le Fort; Women in Wonderland by Dorothy Dohen. Such titles remind one of this new woman. It is now appropriate to investigate her present education for this emerging role.

#### The Best Education for Girls

Anyone investigating the problem of the education of women may well be over-whelmed by its complexity. All education is held up for scrutiny today, but probably no other area is being examined as thoroughly as women's education, and specifically home economics. Eurich says that "many have examined the nature of women's education to determine whether the [present] unrest stems from mistakes and inadequacies in the schooling process. On this subject Margaret

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<sup>20</sup> Chesterton, G. K., What's Wrong With the World, p. 153.

Mead has some discerning observations suggesting that gender be taken into account in teaching women."<sup>21</sup>

The same conclusion was noted by Eddy who says that "this special concern for the education of women [which has been gaining momentum in this century] did not, however, lead to a specific education for women."<sup>22</sup> And Woodring argues that "equality of intelligence and the demand for equality of opportunity do not require that individuals differing in interest, motivation, and probable future roles be given identical education.... There is little doubt that the liberal education of women should be equal to that of men but should it be identical or different? Should courses in home economics be required or elective? And at what age should they be made available?"<sup>23</sup>

If one would appraise the curriculum for women he should first understand the purpose of education. Wright, speaking at the dedication of Mt. St. Joseph College, a women's college in Cincinnati, on July 21, 1963, said,

The purpose of education is not to produce the more useful worker, nor the mere good citizen, nor the mere thinker, nor the mere mystic. It is to produce the full person--trained to be useful, perhaps,

<sup>21</sup>Eurich, op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>22</sup>Eddy, E. E., Jr., "What's the Use of Educating Women?" Saturday Review 46:66, May 18, 1963.

<sup>23</sup>Woodring, Paul, "Educating Women," Saturday Review 46:61, May 18, 1963.

disciplined, to be loyal and cooperative surely, intellectually stimulated to be thoughtful, we hope, and spiritually awakened and motivated to be prayerful above all, and above all the person, all human powers integrated in the total person, the creature composed of body and soul made to the image and likeness of God. Maritain. . . insists that education has for its real aim, to make a person.<sup>24</sup>

Thus it is that true education will lead to an appreciation and development of the human person--to the desire and capacity to live fully.<sup>25</sup> "My purpose in life," according to Hopper, wife and mother, "is to help make it possible for every living person, myself included, to develop his or her own potentialities [to] the greatest measure, and to live creatively according to his or her own possibilities."<sup>26</sup> Is the young girl's education doing this for her?

Hunter states that he believes that the education of women should start with the "statistically sound premise that most women will spend a major portion of their energies for 15 to 25 years raising a family. For this job they will need the best training available. I do not think that we have any idea yet what this training should be. Right here is a major assignment for educated women."<sup>27</sup> Humorously, but

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<sup>24</sup>"Education's Aim: The Free Person," article on a sermon given by Bishop John J. Wright, Times-Review, Friday, July 26, 1963, sec. 1, p. 12, col. 7.

<sup>25</sup>"A Woman's Place," three letters to the editor by Michele Murray, Patricia Buckley, and Vera Zivney, Commonweal 74:207-209, May 19, 1961.

<sup>26</sup>Hopper, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

<sup>27</sup>Hunter, E. G., op. cit., p. 40.



needling for action, Eddy recounts that "Diane Trilling has observed that as long as women feel inferior to men, they ought to get an education at least as bad, in order that they feel they are not being discriminated against."<sup>28</sup> He then outlines three goals toward which the woman's education should turn: first, preparation for a career immediately after school (most of his remarks refer more directly to college education); and second, preparation for a postponed career. "The third possibility and the one most frequently ignored or ridiculed, is that of educating women who simply want to be intelligent and perceptive wives, mothers, and citizens."<sup>29</sup>

But to leaders in the field the first goal of education is not preparation for a career. Benezet, of Colorado College, summarized it well when speaking before some 6000 members of the Texas State Teachers' Association meeting in San Antonio, March 8, 1963.

The final goal of education should be not merely to fit an individual for some job, or career that satisfies him, important though that is to human society. The final goal is to help each individual find the means to personal integrity which will last him throughout life.<sup>30</sup>

To achieve education of the whole person a foundation

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<sup>28</sup>Eddy, op. cit., p. 66.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>30</sup>"Return to Essentialism," editorial, School and Society 91:185-186, April 20, 1963.

based on the liberal arts curriculum seems logical. And so it is true that more and more emphasis is found in present literature on the liberal arts, principally, it is true, on the college level. Mueller gives an excellent appraisal of the present and future trends in the education of women in her book Educating Women for a Changing World, and she holds that the basis of this education should be set in a liberal arts curriculum. In the framework of liberal arts, woman should be led to appreciate and eventually contribute to her dual role of earner and homemaker. Mueller suggests more courses and broader background in general education, and less in the specialized courses such as Housing, Interior Decoration, Clothing Problems. She concludes that home economics "can serve as a major field and reach into related fields of learning as profitably as any other subject. From its own well-established pivot it can orient a student to a full circle of scholarship. . . . It all depends on the personality of the teacher and the versatility of his training."<sup>31</sup>

In a worthwhile article on "Liberalizing Home Economics" Sister M. Leonita, O. P., analyzes the trend toward liberal arts education in view of the more traditional type of home economics curriculum. To summarize, she offers

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<sup>31</sup>Mueller, K. H., Educating Women for a Changing World, 302 pp.



three possibilities for "liberalizing" home economics. The first alternative is to admit meekly that home economics is an applied field and leave the "liberal" part of education to other disciplines. Secondly, she suggests that the term "liberal" be brought up-to-date and be made to include general education; she questions the practice of evaluating subject matter by the standards of the Academic Club. She cites Benezet's criteria on whether or not subjects are college worthy, and she submits that home economics properly taught meets his criteria. Thirdly, she wonders whether all education must be liberal in the strict sense of the term. She challenges the distinction being made between the speculative and the practical, and asks if both are not important. Moreover, she wants to know just who is to say that the practical goals of home economics are not based on the best educational theory. The pronouncements of Pope Pius XII are her basis for saying that education should include both the theoretical and the practical. She concludes:

But since home economics is devoted to promoting the welfare of families, its role is to apply the conclusions of abstract thought to problems of everyday life. . . . Truth is indeed something to contemplate: it is also something by which to live. Home Economics is concerned with intelligent performance, and not solely with intelligence. An over-emphasis on either will throw it off balance. . . . Our function is to coordinate, not to fragment. . . . College home economics is designed to prevent this approach (of the mere technician), and in doing so becomes not liberal

but liberalized. Services to others are performed in a truly liberal spirit--intelligently, with a sense of freedom of choice in using the best means available to educated and capable women.<sup>32</sup>

Henle, Dean of the St. Louis University Graduate School, in discussing the intellectual elements in home economics education says:

Part of the difficulty we fall into in discussing anything "intellectual" lies in a common misapprehension that to be intellectual means to be abstract and abtruse, far away from the concrete, that you are intellectual if you are talking about the higher reaches of set theory in mathematics or act and potency in metaphysics, for example. Thinking of such things is commonly supposed to constitute the intellectual life. . . . But even when we are thinking in the most concrete way or dealing with the most concrete problems, even when it is a matter of artistic appreciation or prudential judgment, intelligence is at work--and its activity and training are relevant and important.<sup>33</sup>

The quick-witted and liberally-trained Phyllis McGinley, in an article, "Why Educate Women?" in Ladies Home Journal, defends the benefit of a liberal education for women, but she understands that this education is an appreciation for all that makes a home, from the intellectually-stimulating habit of enjoying poetry to the chocolate meringue pie! She objects to "the charge that liberal arts

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<sup>32</sup> Leonita, Sister M., O. P., "Liberalizing Home Economics," National Catholic Council on Home Economics Bulletin 15:7, February, 1963.

<sup>33</sup> Henle, R. J., S. J., "Intellectual Elements in Home Economics Education," Journal of Home Economics 52:9, January, 1960.

education is on a level with technical training--that college women are guilty of misdemeanor when they are employed only in the home."<sup>34</sup> A complete education for the housewife and mother is perfectly justified. She echoes the exclamation of Hunter:

Educated women in the home! What an odd thing to deplore! . . . What more important job is there than sharing the values we are learning to cherish with the next generation of adults? . . . If women are convinced, as a result of their own education, that the care they give their children in the first ten years of each child's life is one of the most important jobs that they will do in their whole lifetime, I think women, their husbands, and their children will profit greatly.<sup>35</sup>

These articles point out the need for a well-rounded education for women, suited to their role and embracing all the disciplines needed to lead the young girl into the complete person she is meant to be.

#### The Place of Family Life Education in the Total Educational Process

This examination of current literature has pointed out two facts: modern woman is coming to recognize her place in society as one of guardian of all that is good and beautiful in and for home and family living; the evolution of a type

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<sup>34</sup>McGinley, Phyllis, "Why Educate Women?" Ladies Home Journal 79: 36, October, 1962.

<sup>35</sup>Hunter, E. G., op. cit., pp. 38, 40.

of education suited to the true nature of woman is being brought about in ever clearer outlines as education based on the liberal arts, but applied to home and family. How this curriculum is to be effected is not agreed upon by educators. "As James Reston observed recently in The New York Times: 'Somebody has to find a way to get around old men and old problems, and since women have been doing precisely that for several thousand years, why not pass the problem on to them?'"<sup>36</sup>

Student participants at the 1961 White House Conference on Youth "formally asked that realistic family life courses be made an 'integral and major' part of all curriculums."<sup>37</sup> Thomas identifies the underlying cause of such a petition in the statement:

Closely related to this devaluation of her domestic career is a serious discontinuity in her training for life. . . . They [our young girls] are prepared for domesticity neither in attitudes, aspirations, nor skills. . . . Since lack of training for their role finds them unprepared, and even unaware of what to do, they tend to feel useless and frustrated.<sup>38</sup>

Although Grumbach does not think that the young girl "needs special home-making courses to prepare her for

<sup>36</sup>Eddy, op. cit., p. 67.

<sup>37</sup>Lobsenz, Norman, "Crises in Family Life Education," Good Housekeeping 154:51, January, 1962.

<sup>38</sup>Thomas, op. cit., pp. 173-174.

home-making, or even for bathing a baby or sewing his clothes,"<sup>39</sup> she does value an education for young women which will prepare them for their roles in society. She agrees that "in the early days of child rearing she [the young mother] may strain at the ties. The reason for this is not that she is over-educated, or too superior for her role, but because she is inadequately prepared for it. She has never been shown that although she is out of the dog-eat-dog world of competitive business or education, more lives, minds, and spirits are solely dependent on her now than would ever be true in the world at large? . . . If what psychology tells us is so, this is a far more complicated and more demanding activity than editing a magazine, selling a dress, or meeting a business executive, doing research for an advertising agency or even writing a book or painting a picture."<sup>40</sup>

Referring to the large number of mothers who work before and after rearing children, Moore, as a sociologist, says that "rather than that these facts point[ing] to less need for education in homemaking, they suggest more is desirable in this area of education for all young women in order that they may carry their dual responsibilities with greater ease and without sacrifice of essential values in

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<sup>39</sup>Grumbach, Doris, "Woman's Place," Commonweal 74:11, April 28, 1961.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 13.



home living with their families. . . . Uncommon sense of scientific research, clinical studies, and technological advances can be adequately communicated and integrated into family life only through systematic and organized educational experience in homemaking in high school and college courses. This is no less true for research and clinical findings for family life than for physical science through courses in chemistry and physics."<sup>41</sup>

Education in personal and family living is being incorporated in more and more areas in the curriculum. Eurich describes the integrated program of general education at Stephens College where there are courses in home and family living, "with emphasis on religion and philosophy, and including extracurricular activities as preparation for volunteer work and community service."<sup>42</sup> Henle points out many avenues by which education in home and family living can be introduced: through the directly relevant courses such as philosophy, theology, and religion; through the study of literature and art, history and cultural anthropology. "All education," he says, "can then help towards this sensitivity of values in the lives of human beings."<sup>43</sup>

In a challenging speech delivered at the meeting of

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<sup>41</sup>Moore, B. M., "A Sociologist Looks at Homemaking Education," Practical Home Economics 5:13, 44, April, 1960.

<sup>42</sup>Eurich, op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>43</sup>Henle, op. cit., p. 11.

the Division of Home Economics of American Association of Land Grant Colleges and State Universities in Washington, D. C., November 15, 1960, Miller, Provost of Michigan State University, questions home economists on many points concerning their place in higher education. He maintains that if home economists put as their goal the building of satisfactory home living, then there are more students who arrive at this goal "through somebody else's means" than through the school of home economics.<sup>44</sup>

Family life education must be built on many disciplines, and it must coordinate them as life itself must do. Again, Eddy emphasizes the fact that it is the "educated woman who becomes a wife and mother [who] has an enormously important job to do. If done well, it cannot help but engage every aspect of her education. If we regard the housewife and mother as simple fools, we only penalize and even jeopardize our own future. It is the mother, almost single-handedly, who will raise a generation of potential peacemakers."<sup>45</sup>

That education for home and family life must be a part of the total educational picture is agreed. Home economics is faced with one of three possibilities in this educational system: first, other curriculums than home

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<sup>44</sup>Miller, P. A., "Higher Education in Home Economics," Skilled Techniques in Guiding Group Action, p. 3.

<sup>45</sup>Eddy, op. cit., p. 67.



economics should carry responsibility; second, home economics should be "liberalized" to include a basic liberal arts training coupled with carefully selected courses from the home economics field; and third, traditional home economics as a pure action science should be kept, with more emphasis on the "economics" than on the "home". The general opinions of the present investigator on the place of home and family education in the total curriculum have been stated in an article published in the Catholic School Journal of June, 1962.<sup>46</sup> In a very far-sighted book Women in Wonderland, Dohen gives wide scope to her treatment of American Catholic women. The book is sobering yet reassuring at the same time for it leaves one with the impression that not all women's problems are easily settled, nor can they be. Concerning education she philosophizes, "College education has not enkindled their curiosity; the most damning thing can be said of it is that it has produced in them no sense of wonder."<sup>47</sup>

Hurt points out yet another reason for including courses in home economics in the high school curriculum when he says that "traditional patterns of family life do not serve as adequate guides for young people in this fast

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<sup>46</sup>Maristelle, Sister M., F.S.P.A., "What Kind of Education for Our Girls?" Catholic School Journal 62:25-26, June, 1962.

<sup>47</sup>Dohen, Dorothy, Women in Wonderland, p. 230.

changing world. They need more guidance than ever if they are to achieve a stable, happy and efficient home life. Probably no other area of secondary school curriculum reflects so clearly the effort to provide this guidance as does home economics."<sup>48</sup>

### The Future of Family Life Education

One of the most noticeable changes one will see on the campuses of schools of home economics is an increasing number of men. Traditionally, women, and in many cases, single women, were the only ones on the faculty. But men are now securing degrees in many phases of home economics: as family life consultants, housing experts, food research specialists, interior decorators, textile chemists, child development advisors. They are appearing in increasing numbers on home economics faculties. Johnson notes that "one finds for example that today's colleges of home economics are staffed by both men and women from the classical and behavioral disciplines as often as from the traditional home economics curriculum."<sup>49</sup> Miller questions just how much the home economics faculty really believes in its family life orientation if the faculty and student body

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<sup>48</sup>Hurt, M. L., "Focus on Family Life," NEA Journal 51:17, February, 1962.

<sup>49</sup>Johnson, Dixon, "Family Growth and Higher Education," School and Society 89:307, September 23, 1961.

are composed entirely of women. "How stylized and rigid may one expect a faculty of women to be," he challenges, "when they are involved in addressing one of the most fluid and dynamic zones of social life from a life style which necessarily involves them disproportionately in one of them--the professional role of the unmarried woman[?]" And he adds another query: "If the family is truly the integrating core of your subject, I would expect more wandering out of science and its application into art, literature, and philosophy."<sup>50</sup>

Besides this tendency toward more masculine influence in the home economics field, there will be, if Miller's challenge is met, a broadening of the background to the home economics course of study by inclusion of more of the liberal arts. Boaman visualizes this type of education thus:

Catholic educators give additional emphasis to an integrated Catholic philosophy of family life in which attitudes and the total outlook would be harmonized with the Christian ideal. As Father McGucken, S.J., wrote: 'Education for home and family must lead to intellectual attitudes and appreciations rather than to manipulative skills. It must give youth a rich culture of mind, a large intellectual horizon, broad sympathies, and well-directed ideas and motives of action. Homemaking education is an intellectual and spiritual process which deals with the enrichment of the mind and the ennobling of the soul.' It is thus essential that adult education should not lose sight of the importance of preparing youth for matrimony

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<sup>50</sup>Miller, op. cit., p. 7.

and its incumbent responsibilities.<sup>51</sup>

The October, 1961, issue of School Life gives a summary of the number of graduates in home economics compared with those of other fields. First, there is noted an increase in the number of graduates from the year 1951 to the year 1960: '51--8,605; '52--8,388; '53--8,172; '54--8,082; '55--8,016; '56--8,661; '57--8,757; '58--8,725; '59--9,206; and '60--9,240. Likewise in the percentage comparison of the number of degrees in the year 1951 compared with those of 1960, "home economics comes out ahead of all subjects taken together, and does so at every level." For example, the percentage of change from 1951 to 1960 in Bachelor's degrees in home economics was 5.7; in all other fields the percentage change was 2.7. In Master's degrees, home economics changed by 22.6%; all other fields by 14.4%. In Doctor's degrees, home economics had the greatest percent of change, 150%; all other fields, 33.9%. Totalling all degrees, home economics changed by 7.4%, all other fields by 4.9%.<sup>52</sup>

According to this article, the future of family life education seems assured. And fortunately so for more

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<sup>51</sup>Boaman, Mrs. Richard, "The Intellectual and Apostolic Responsibility of Catholic College Graduates in Relation to Her Preparation for Family and Parish Life," National Catholic Council in Home Economics Bulletin 15:40, February, 1963.

<sup>52</sup>"Degrees in Home Economics," School Life 44:26, October, 1961.

recruits for the safeguarding of Christian family life are demanded by the temper of the times: increased breakdown of the home; mounting juvenile delinquency; loss of prestige for the role of homemaker; danger of atheistic Communism and the ensuing threat of war. From a purely nationalistic standpoint, Moore asks:

Can the world leader of free nations, the United States of America, afford any less than every opportunity--at home at school at church--for future homemakers to learn the essential attitudes in preparation for rearing their own children. Can this nation through its schools afford to educate for excellence in every area except homemaking, parenthood, family living, personality development and effective interpersonal relations?<sup>53</sup>

It was stated in Chapter 1 that education in home economics must be geared to the present needs of girls, but even more so, it should provide them with timeless truths which will be a source of inspiration and action in any situation. It is the opinion of the writer that in the future there will be more emphasis on principles than on specific skills, because although the teacher "cannot anticipate the exact problems her students will encounter in the complex and difficult process of developing a satisfactory home life, she can help them to learn how to make decisions and choices based on knowledge of facts and understanding of consequences."<sup>54</sup> Lockwood in a thought-provoking article

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<sup>53</sup>Moore, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>54</sup>Hurt, op. cit., p. 16.



that relates to the future position of home economics says, "As I see the curriculum, it is not the teaching of content: so many hours of foods, so many of clothing, child care, management, etc. Rather, it is the development of the self-concept."<sup>55</sup>

In an interview with a college professor<sup>56</sup> in the education field, the writer asked him to summarize what he thought the future trend in home economics should be. He voiced the desire that the home should become more and more the stabilizing force in the family. The home should provide that cultural background and seat of value formation that will furnish a Christian atmosphere conducive to moral training. He suggested, for example, the use of candlelight at dinner as a means of providing a quieting atmosphere which would react psychologically on one's whole being. The writer recalls an article written some ten years ago in which the author deplored the fact that more homes did not build up the memories of a life together which would serve as ideals for right living, and deterrents for all that is ugly and evil.

And finally, this investigator believes that home economics education is leading toward higher ideals for

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<sup>55</sup>Lockwood, K. A., "High School and the College Advise the Future Home Economist," National Catholic Council on Home Economics Bulletin 15:13, February, 1963.

<sup>56</sup>Personal interview with Milford Franks, Ed. D., Montana State College, Bozeman, Montana, July 31, 1963.



all women. Cardinal Suenens notes, "The advancement of women is today a fiat accompli, it has become a part of our customs and is accepted without question."<sup>57</sup> Leaders in home economics should organize to direct this advancement.

Confronted with this report on the current trend in women's education the writer now turns to examine her course of study for junior and senior homemaking. This is done in Chapter 3 by presenting the results of a questionnaire designed by the writer and sent to the graduates who have become homemakers. From the interpretation of their responses recommendations for the future are presented.

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<sup>57</sup>Suenens, op. cit., p. 14.

## CHAPTER III

RESPONSES OF MARRIED GRADUATES CONCERNING CARRY-OVER  
VALUE OF THEIR HOMEMAKING COURSE

In order to evaluate the writer's course of study for junior and senior high school homemaking she determined to contact those graduates of the course who were now married. It is logical to assume that if the home economics program is successful it will result in permanent values for the graduates in their own homes. A questionnaire was therefore devised to give the married graduates the opportunity to appraise their homemaking course. The present chapter presents the results of this investigation.

The questionnaire<sup>1</sup> entitled "A Study of the Value of Your Junior and Senior Homemaking Courses" first asked the girls to state whether they had taken home economics in their 11th or 12th year, or both. Question 2 endeavored to get a rating of the units covered in senior homemaking. In questions 3, 4, and 5 helpful information on revisions of the units was solicited. The subjects of whether skills or principles had proved more beneficial to the girls was covered in numbers 6, 7, 8, and 9. Number 10 asked the girls to state whether they would enroll in more or fewer home economics courses if they had a chance to repeat high school. Question 11 asked

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<sup>1</sup>A copy of the questionnaire is given in Appendix A, page 67.

then if they would go on record as recommending that every high school girl take at least one year of homemaking.

As much to serve as a stimulus to the married graduates as to check on their use of home economics training, question 12 concerned their use of such training outside their homes. In numbers 13, 14, and 15 the young married women recorded their married status: how long they had been out of school before marriage, how long they had been married, and how many children they had. In question 16, a summary of work outside the home was requested, that is, if they worked outside the home, how many hours a week, the type of work, and the chief reasons that had prompted them to seek outside employment. Question 17 was asked to determine if the young married women had found an opportunity to increase the family income by some type of work within the home.

The questionnaire was sent to 56 married graduates of the course. Thirty-nine, or 70%, of them responded. A general picture of the young women covered in the survey will be given first, followed by a brief explanation of the units that had been offered them in their high school course. After this introduction, the responses will be grouped into six categories: (1) evaluation of the units; (2) suggestions for unit revision; (3) discussion of skills versus principles; (4) opinions concerning home economics education in general;

(5) extended use of home economics training; and (6) frequency and nature of the salaried work of the married graduates. Interpretations of the results of the questionnaire will accompany each grouping. Finally, recommendations for course revision will be given.

#### Type of Young Married Women Covered in the Survey

As a first question, the graduates were to indicate if they had taken home economics in their junior or senior year, or both. It had been thought by the writer that some conclusions could be drawn on the relative value of two years of homemaking compared with one year. There was, however, not enough evidence in this study to warrant such generalizations. Thirty-four of the 39 girls had been enrolled in senior homemaking only; four had been in both junior and senior homemaking; and one had taken it only in her junior year. The particular junior class in which this girl had been enrolled had been given over almost exclusively to clothing, so this set of responses was not considered in question 2 on the rating of the units. It was counted, however, in the remainder of the questionnaire.

The young women had been married from a maximum of nine years to a minimum of three months for the most recent bride. The average number of years the respondents had been married was 3.6 years. They had 70 children among them, with

an average of 1.8. Four of the girls had five children each, two had four, and five had three children. There were seven childless homes at the time of the survey.

On an average, the girls had waited 2.2 years after their high school graduation before marriage. This lapse of 2.2 years would put these girls very near the average age at which most girls are married in the United States, that is 20.3 years of age.<sup>2</sup> However, ten of the 39 had married within the first year. Six of these were from the same school, and it was noted in the responses that the average length of time that elapsed before the girls from this school married was 1.3 years, compared with the longer period of 2.2 years for the group as a whole. One of the girls had worked seven years before marriage, and one had worked for five.

#### Nature of Course Offerings

In the writer's teaching experience, the number and variety of units offered in senior homemaking did not always follow the same pattern. Necessity sometimes indicated that more emphasis was called for in one area and so other units had to be curtailed. Then, too, laboratory facilities or community resources did not always make it possible to handle units in the same way. However, it was the writer's practice

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<sup>2</sup>"Marriage Age in U.S. Nears that of Asia," Science Digest 50:19-20, October, 1961.

to cover most of the following units in the senior year:

1. Art in the Home (Color, Design, Furnishings, Arrangement)
2. Child Care
3. Clothing Construction
4. Fabric Study (Characteristics, Purchasing, Care)
5. Foods (Study of Types, Purchasing, Nutritive Value)
6. Good Grooming and Poise
7. Home Care of the Sick
8. Housekeeping (Management, Scheduling, Care of the Home)
9. Marriage Preparation
10. Mental Health and Personality Development
11. Menus and Meals (Planning, Preparation, Serving)
12. Preparation for Leisure Time in the Home

#### Evaluations of the Units

The girls were asked to evaluate each of the twelve preceding units by giving each of them one of the following ratings:

1. Exceptionally helpful in my home life
2. Moderately helpful in my home life
3. Of limited value in my home life
4. Has not been helpful in my home life



By assigning numerical values of 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 in the order listed, the total scores for each of the twelve units were computed. If each of the 38 girls rating the units had given a unit a rating of 1 (Exceptionally helpful in my home life) that unit would have had a total score of 152.

The summary of the scores given the various units by the married graduates is given in Table 1, page 40.

It is notable that those units dealing with Foods and Clothing in some form rated the highest score; 138 was awarded to Foods, the study of Types of food, its Purchasing and Care. Clothing Construction was given the second highest score of 134 points. Third on the list was Menus and Meals, including the Planning, Preparation and Serving of meals, with a score of 131. The writer feels that the girls really had in mind to rate highest the total picture of food in the home, that is, the family meal, rather than "Foods" as such, but since "Foods" came first alphabetically it received more number 1 ratings. It will be noted that most of the favorable comments about Foods in general found throughout the questionnaire referred to the planning, preparation and serving of food in meal situations, rather than to Foods as an isolated subject.

Housekeeping, including Management, Scheduling, and Care of the Home, rated fourth place with a total of 129 points. The Study of Fabrics, and the unit on Good Grooming and Poise tied for fifth place with scores of 121 points each. Again,

TABLE I. TOTAL RATING SCORES OF JUNIOR AND SENIOR HOME MAKING UNITS ACCORDING TO MARRIED GRADUATES

| Name of Unit                                                | Score* | Number of Girls not Marking Rating* |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Foods: Study of Types, Purchasing, Care                  | 138    | 2                                   |
| 2. Clothing Construction                                    | 134    | 1                                   |
| 3. Menus and Meals: Planning, Preparation, Serving          | 131    | 1                                   |
| 4. Housekeeping: Management, Scheduling, Care of Home       | 129    | 0                                   |
| 5. Fabric Study: Characteristics, Purchasing, Care          | 121    | 1                                   |
| 6. Good Grooming and Poise                                  | 121    | 1                                   |
| 7. Art in the Home: Color, Design, Furnishings, Arrangement | 117    | 3                                   |
| 8. Child Care                                               | 113    | 3                                   |
| 9. Marriage Preparation                                     | 110    | 3                                   |
| 10. Mental Health and Personality Development               | 96     | 4                                   |
| 11. Home Care of the Sick                                   | 87     | 5                                   |
| 12. Preparation for Leisure Time in the Home                | 84     | 4                                   |

\*If everyone had rated the Unit as 1, the total would have been 152 points.

\*The absent ratings in the first six Units occurred when the respondent did not understand the question and rated only those she considered as 1 (2 cases). In general, the items following number 7 were not rated because the respondent had not considered them taught as a separate unit.

it was noted that when one considered the scores for both Clothing Construction and Fabric Study, the subject of Clothing in general rated very high with the graduates.

Falling in a group receiving an average number of points were the three units: Art in the Home (Color, Design, Furnishings, Arrangement), Child Care, and Mental Health and Personality Development. As was expected, the lowest scores were given to Home Care of the Sick with 87 points and Preparation for Leisure Time in the Home with 84.

In many cases, if any units had to be curtailed, these last two units received less emphasis than others. However, many of the girls gave suggestions that would lead one to believe they would appreciate more help on ways and means of developing opportunities for stronger family life.

Further analysis of the responses give further clarification as to why some units have lower scores. Some of the questionnaires returned did not have a rating for every unit as is noted in Table 1, page 40, last column. In general the reason was that the girls did not consider they had the unit as an entity in their high school classes. These units generally included Child Care, Marriage Preparation, Mental Health and Personality Development, Home Care of the Sick, and Preparation for Leisure Time in the Home. It is the writer's opinion, also, that these were the aspects which were most often given less attention, especially as

separate and unique units. Sometimes the textbook used in a particular school had not considered that phase as distinct. Then, two of the girls misunderstood the question, and marked only those units they considered meriting a rating of 1, and neglected to indicate ratings for any other units. This would also tend to decrease the total scores for those coming lower in the list.

Table 2, page 43 contains a summary of the percentages of girls giving a particular rating to a particular unit.

Those units rating highest scores also had most of the girls giving that unit a rating of 1. Seventy-seven per cent of the girls rated Foods as 1; 15% of them rated it 2; none gave it a rating of 3 or 4. Similarly, Clothing Construction had 62% of the answers under rating 1, 25% under 2, and 10% under 3. Again, there were no answers under rating 4. Likewise, 62% of the girls gave Menus and Meals a rating of 1, and 51% of them gave Housekeeping a rating of 1. The largest group of graduates also gave a rating of 1 to Art in the Home, Child Care, and Marriage Preparation, but large percentages of girls also assigned lower ratings. One unit, Preparation for Leisure Time in the Home, had 38% of the girls, the greatest percentage in this unit, gave it a rating of 3.

One of the objects of the study had been to determine to what extent the ratings given the unit after the girls had married and established homes of their own would compare

TABLE 2. PERCENTAGES OF MARRIED GRADUATES GIVING EACH OF THE FOUR RATINGS TO THE HOMEMAKING UNITS

| Name of Unit*                                                  | Per cent of Girls |    |    |   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----|----|---|
|                                                                | 1*                | 2  | 3  | 4 |
| 1. Art in the Home<br>(Color, Design, Furnishing, Arrangement) | 38                | 33 | 21 | 4 |
| 2. Child Care                                                  | 46                | 25 | 10 | 7 |
| 3. Clothing Construction                                       | 62                | 25 | 10 | 0 |
| 4. Fabric Study<br>(Characteristics, Purchasing, Care)         | 38                | 44 | 10 | 5 |
| 5. Foods<br>(Study of Types, Purchasing, Nutritive Value)      | 77                | 15 | 0  | 0 |
| 6. Good Grooming and Poise                                     | 41                | 44 | 7  | 0 |
| 7. Home Care of the Sick                                       | 10                | 41 | 25 | 7 |
| 8. Housekeeping<br>(Management, Scheduling, Care of the Home)  | 51                | 35 | 7  | 3 |
| 9. Marriage Preparation                                        | 46                | 18 | 18 | 7 |
| 10. Mental Health and Personality Development                  | 15                | 44 | 25 | 3 |
| 11. Menus and Meals<br>(Planning, Preparation, Serving)        | 62                | 23 | 10 | 0 |
| 12. Preparation for Leisure Time in the Home                   | 7                 | 33 | 38 | 7 |

\*Units are listed alphabetically.

\*Number 1 indicates a rating of 1 and 2 a rating of 2.

to the rating they gave them while in high school. It was discovered that their ratings had changed considerably. In high school, the highest ratings were given to Marriage Preparation, and Good Grooming and Poise, with the study of Foods coming third. The writer feels that the actuality of married life shifted the emphasis to the more realistic business of running a home. The high school student was rightly more interested in the future and her adjustment to it.

#### Suggestions for Unit Revisions

Questions 3, 4 and 5 are interrelated and are here discussed together. The girls were asked to mention possible additions to or subtractions from some phase or phases of the course of study. A summary of the most frequently suggested revisions in the course of study in homemaking is given in Table 3, page 45.

By far the greatest number of suggestions were for more emphasis in the line of child care and development, especially mental and spiritual training, and the knowledge of how to adjust to the child's varying emotions. Fifteen, or 38%, of the young mothers mentioned some phase of child care.

Laboratory work in both cooking and sewing was the second area for which the girls recommended more time.



TABLE 3. SUGGESTIONS FOR REVISIONS IN THE HOME ECONOMICS COURSE OF STUDY

| Units or Phases of Units                                  | Girls Making Suggestions |            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
|                                                           | Number                   | Percentage |
| 1. Child Care and Development                             | 15                       | 38         |
| 2. Increased Time in Laboratory Cooking and Sewing        | 10                       | 25         |
| 3. Further emphasis on Home Management                    | 8                        | 21         |
| 4. Units on Family Finance as such, not just Purchasing   | 7                        | 18         |
| 5. More time on Marriage Preparation                      | 4                        | 10         |
| 6. Unit on Food Preservation                              | 3                        | 7          |
| 7. Development of Spiritual Atmosphere in the Family Life | 2                        | 5          |
| 8. Time on Mending and Remodeling                         | 2                        | 5          |

One-fourth of the girls felt that more actual experience would be profitable. Contrary to this very general feeling, however, were two opinions that less time could be spent in actual cooking and sewing and the time gained could be more profitably devoted to other units.

Twenty-one per cent of the girls wanted more emphasis on Home Management. The only new unit suggested was Family Finance with information on the actual management of money and not merely the purchasing of commodities.

The remarks of the respondents concerning the deletion of certain units were not as definite as were those pertaining to possible additions. Three mothers mentioned curtailing the time spent on Family Leisure, although two others advocated more ideas on Family "Togetherness." Two suggested less time on Art in the Home, since, as one of them said, "Current magazines could supply this need." On the other hand, one asked for more information on Home Furnishings, their selection and purchase. Later it will be noted that many of the young women had been happy to be able to apply information gained in the Home Decoration unit. Concerning the Care of the Sick in the Home, two girls thought that this unit did not contribute a real need since a physician would be called in case of sickness, while one mother wished she had had such a unit in high school.

The analysis just given of the girls' suggestions

would seem to indicate the need for increased curricular emphasis especially in two areas: management of home and family designed to bring about a more satisfying and spiritually uplifting family life; and provisions for more laboratory experience in cooking or sewing so that girls would feel personally secure in the mechanics of running a home.

### Relative Value of Skills versus Principles

One of the subjects of controversy among educators, especially among home economics leaders, is the relative importance of skills in counter-distinction to principles. When asked, "As you look back on your high school training, which do you remember more, the skill or ability to do a specific task, or the principles of management and behavior?" twenty-six of the former students answered that they recalled skills more; 12 said they thought of principles more frequently. Although these 26, or 70% of the girls, recalled skills more, when it came to question 9, "Which do you think should receive more stress, skills or principles?" only 20, or just 53%, thought that skills should receive more emphasis. It is the writer's opinion after analyzing the questionnaire results that the married graduates really were calling for more emphasis on principles than would at first seem evident. For example, in the suggestions just cited for revisions the young mothers wanted more help in child training than in

child care; more on management of the home as far as atmosphere, spiritual life, and family living were concerned than on Housekeeping as such. Such a conclusion is in keeping with the literature cited in Chapter 2 which indicated increasing stress in home economics education in the broader areas of family living than on the specific skills involved. The biggest exception to the general desire for more development of attitudes and principles was the large number who wished for more time in the cooking and sewing laboratory.

In another question the girls were asked to recall the three skills they particularly appreciated, and in the following question the three principles which had been most helpful. There were some overlapping of answers to these two questions. Where some might have listed food purchasing as a skill, others would have considered it a principle. Admittedly, principles are difficult to identify, although the question endeavored to clarify the term "principle" by such descriptive phrases as guides to personality behavior, convictions, attitudes, and management guides. Table 4, page 49, lists the most frequently recalled skills and principles.

Though there was not much uniformity in the answers to these questions on specific skills and principles, the writer considers these answers as important guides in future planning. If particular skills and principles were more frequently remembered than others, then evidently they were

TABLE 4. MOST FREQUENTLY RECALLED SKILLS AND PRINCIPLES  
AS REPORTED BY MARRIED GRADUATES

| Major Home Economics Skills<br>and Principles Recalled | Frequency of Mention |          |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|
|                                                        | Number               | Per cent |
| SKILLS                                                 |                      |          |
| 1. Clothing construction                               | 22                   | 59       |
| 2. Food preparation                                    | 17                   | 44       |
| 3. Meal planning                                       | 10                   | 25       |
| 4. Use of art principles                               | 9                    | 23       |
| 5. Food buying                                         | 8                    | 21       |
| 6. Child care                                          | 8                    | 21       |
| 7. Home management and care                            | 7                    | 18       |
| 8. Fabric selection and purchasing                     | 4                    | 10       |
| 9. Good grooming and poise                             | 4                    | 10       |
| PRINCIPLES                                             |                      |          |
| 1. Organization and management                         | 14                   | 36       |
| 2. Money management                                    | 11                   | 28       |
| 3. Getting along with others                           | 11                   | 28       |
| 4. Patience with a situation                           | 8                    | 21       |
| 5. Patience with others                                | 5                    | 13       |
| 6. Family prayers and living<br>together               | 4                    | 10       |
| 7. Good listening, or ability to<br>learn              | 4                    | 10       |

also more meaningful than others in their married life. The highest number of mothers, almost 60%, named their ability to sew as the most important skill, 44% of the girls valued highest skill in food preparation, and 25% the ability to plan well-balanced and interesting meals. If these last two areas of food study are combined, the ability to plan, prepare and serve meals would represent the most positive votes.

The ability to organize and manage--whether it was her meals, kitchen, home, time or family--was mentioned the most frequently as the most valued principle. Altogether 36% of the girls appreciated the ability to manage. The management of money--the selection and care in purchasing of foods, clothing, fabrics, and household supplies--was given mention by 28% of the girls. The ability to deal with others, patiently and tactfully, and to adjust to situations in life that had proved trying were listed next in frequency as valuable attitudes. The creation of a wholesome family life had been a valued asset in the lives of 10% of the girls.

Table 4 does not include any skills and principles mentioned fewer than four times. Important answers that might serve as guides to further classroom emphasis came, however, from the group of responses mentioned one to three times. Among these worthwhile recollections were the ability to concentrate and think through a problem; satisfaction with one's work, especially with a mother's position; the importance of



a satisfying philosophy of life; desirable qualities in a woman such as voice, cleanliness, goodness and beauty.

Opinions Concerning Home Economics  
Education in General

The following questions dealt with the very interesting and important subject of the attitude of the former students toward home economics education in high school: Would you, if you had a chance to repeat high school, take more or less home economics, that is, of course, supposing there were home economics courses offered in other years? Would you want to be one to recommend that every high school girl be required to take at least one year of home economics?

Thirty-eight, or 97%, of the girls responding said they would take more homemaking courses than they had taken if they had a chance to repeat high school. One girl thought she would take the same amount again namely one year of work. And almost equally unanimous, 36, or 92%, of the girls would go on record as recommending that every girl be required to enroll in at least one year of homemaking. Of the three girls not so inclined, one said she did not agree to the requirement, although she said she personally would take more home economics than her one year if she were to repeat high school. One qualified her "yes" by saying that unless the student had a very thorough home training she would so recommend

a year, and the third girl evidently forgot to turn to the third page of the questionnaire for she had answered the first two pages completely but had no answers on the third page. It was very clear that these responses indicated that the graduates were appreciative of the value of high school home economics.

#### Extended Uses of Home Economics Training

During classwork it had been the writer's policy to encourage the students to use their knowledge as widely as possible. Granted that the respondents to the questionnaire were now young mothers, and quite occupied with their families, still the author was interested in the question: Have you used your home economics training outside your home? Seven of the girls mentioned various ways in which they had helped friends in managing and caring for their homes. Six of the girls felt that the emphasis on good grooming and personal poise had profited them in jobs they had held. Several of the girls (four) told of ways in which they had made use of their home economics education in church and school affairs. Two of the girls said they had done a better job of filling a position working in the homes of other people because of their training. One girl had been courageous to the point of entering a flower show, and one had decorated cakes for other people.

Frequency and Nature of Salaried  
Work of Married Graduates

The writer presumed that her former home economics students would be less inclined to accept employment outside the home once they had married. Several ideas had been presented in class discussion of ideas which the mothers might use to augment the family's bank account without leaving their homes. To discover possible carry-over of this philosophy were the last two questions, 16 and 17: Do you work outside the home? About how many hours a week? What type of work do you do? Can you state the biggest reason which has prompted you to take employment outside the home? Have you done certain types of work in the home itself which has helped to increase the family money income?

Seven of the 39 young married women were working outside the home at the time of the questionnaire, however, five of the seven did not have children. Of the two mothers with children who were working outside the home, one is a registered nurse and one a qualified school teacher. Both expressed the desire to keep up with their professions; the nurse further said that the shortage of nurses had prompted her to remain in service; the elementary school teacher said she was helping the family buy a new home and a car.

Certainly other factors besides their homemaking class discussions had influenced these young mothers to consider

it ill-advised to work outside the home when there were young children to consider. Still, one could conclude that their home economics classes had helped to form such an attitude. Women generally are coming to know that a concern for the home and family is their greatest contribution to society, still they can realize that this dedication is not confined to four walls or a single family.

The reasoning behind many of the answers to the question of bringing in a monetary return to the home while remaining in the home was gratifying. The young mothers maintained that a real contribution was made to the family by such activities as sewing, preserving foods, gardening, home decorating, and that these were real and tangible ways of increasing the family income. Altogether, 19 young women mentioned serving the family financially by some type of regular household occupation. Single answers to other means of monetary income included: babysitting, baking, ironing, outside sewing, laundering, and various types of crafts.

#### Recommendations for Home Economics Course Revision

The various offerings of the high school home economics course of study have been discussed in connection with the responses of the married graduates. These responses would lead to the following revisions in the writer's current course

of study:

1. Added emphasis on the development of children, especially during the unit on Personality Development in the Family and in the unit on Child Care

2. Readjustment of the time provision so that each girl has sufficient laboratory experience in foods and clothing that she can feel somewhat confident of her ability in both

3. Addition to the course of at least a week on Family Finance as such

4. Increased appreciation of Home Management: the attention to the details of daily gracious family living

5. More emphasis on spiritual growth within the family, especially in the units on Child Care, Meals, Mental Health and Personality Development, Home Management, and Marriage Preparation

6. Incorporation of the ideas on Family Leisure with other units, especially those mentioned in number 5 above

## CHAPTER IV

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was carried out to provide a background for a critical analysis of the writer's high school course of study in home economics. Since the purpose of the home-making curriculum is to prepare girls for satisfying home life now and in the future, the course should be frequently subjected to critical study if it is to continue to accomplish the goals intended.

## Summary

A review of current literature was undertaken first in order to determine present thinking on the value of home economics education. This review yielded the following ideas concerning women's education in general and home economics in particular.

1. Woman's place in society has undergone change during this century but especially since World War II. According to information of the last five years, woman seems to be emerging now as neither controlled by masculine-dominated femininity nor by worldly-centered careerism. She is revealed as a person who cherished her place in the home and also her freedom to be a complete person in all her contacts in the home and outside of it.



2. The education for this role is centered in the liberal arts but includes specific training in home and family living. Specialized education is encouraged as preparation for wage-earning, for it is understood that before and/or after child rearing she will be employed outside the home.

3. Most leaders would include family life education as a necessary part of the curriculum for girls and young women. How specialized this training would be is not agreed; the acquiring of a certain amount of aptitude is expected; but, in general, healthy attitudes toward the home and family are considered as the most important goal.

4. Family life education for the future will lay stress on wide liberal training and the acquiring of a cultural background, with emphasis on desirable attitudes and the development of the whole person, rather than on the acquisition of manipulative skills.

The main part of this investigation consisted of sending a questionnaire to the girls whom the writer had in junior and senior homemaking between 1953-1961 and who were now married. Altogether 56 forms were sent and 39 returned. The responses as to what extent the homemaking classes had been of benefit to the married graduates disclosed the following points:

1. The married graduates valued highest the units

on cooking and sewing. Cooking here included some study of foods, but of more importance were the planning, preparation, and serving of meals.

2. The respondents generally wanted (1) more background in child training and development, (2) more laboratory time for meal preparation and sewing, (3) additional information on management principles for the home.

3. Although the young homemakers believed they remembered the skills taught in class more than the principles which had been stressed, they tended to suggest recommendations along the line of principles. Skills they especially valued were clothing construction and the ability to plan, prepare, and serve meals. The most valued principles concerned the ability to manage.

4. The girls were practically unanimous in endorsing high school home economics, at least, for one year. All but one said they would enroll in more homemaking classes if they were to repeat high school.

5. The young wives and mothers, in general, felt they were well-occupied with family duties; only two of those with children were employed outside the home, one as a nurse, the other as a teacher.

### Conclusions

The following conclusions were made as a result of

the findings of the study:

1. Education in personal and family living is a necessary part of a well-balanced curriculum for young girls; this family life orientation is well-adapted to the home economics course if effort is made to make the total curriculum geared to educating the whole person.

2. The writer's conclusion concerning her own course of study for junior and senior homemaking will cause her to lay added emphasis on management of the home, relating it first to child development and inter-personal relationships, and second to the physical aspects of the home. Following the trend in literature and the analysis of the responses to the questionnaire she will endeavor to make classwork stress principles of acting and mature womanly attitudes, without, however, sacrificing the development of worthwhile skills. Both are important and neither principles nor skills may be disregarded.

### Recommendations

Suggested recommendations of the writer would include the following:

1. A shift of emphasis in the writer's homemaking course of study as indicated in number 2, page 58. Then a repeat of the type of survey done in this study should be carried out with the graduates of the revised course some

10 years from now.

2. A questionnaire to be sent to the high school graduates from the same schools covered here but addressed to those girls who had not taken home economics courses. This questionnaire would endeavor to find out to what degree these girls felt prepared for marriage and homemaking.

3. Continual alertness to what is being written and done concerning woman's education, and the constant evaluation of trends in this area.

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## APPENDIX

APPENDIX A  
Questionnaire Sent to Students

A Study of the Value of Your Junior and Senior  
Homemaking Courses

1. Did you take Home Economics in your 11th grade? \_\_\_\_\_  
12th grade? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Would you rate following units in Homemaking according  
to the value you think they have been to you in your  
married life according to the following numbers?
  1. Exceptionally helpful in my home life
  2. Moderately helpful in my home life
  3. Of limited value in my home life
  4. Has not been helpful to me in my home life

For example, if you consider the homemaking unit  
exceptionally helpful to you in your married life, put a 1  
in the space in front.

\_\_\_\_\_ Art in the Home (Color, Design, Furnishings, Arrangement)

\_\_\_\_\_ Child Care

\_\_\_\_\_ Clothing Construction

\_\_\_\_\_ Fabric Study (Characteristics, Purchasing, Care)

\_\_\_\_\_ Foods (Study of Types, Purchasing, Nutritive Value)

\_\_\_\_\_ Good Grooming and Poise

\_\_\_\_\_ Home Care of the Sick

\_\_\_\_\_ Housekeeping (Management, Scheduling, Care of the Home)

\_\_\_\_\_ Marriage Preparation

\_\_\_\_\_ Mental Health and Personality Development

\_\_\_\_\_ Menus and Meals (Planning, Preparation, Serving)

\_\_\_\_\_ Preparation for Leisure Time in the Home

3. Could you suggest any unit, or units, you think should  
have been included? \_\_\_\_\_



4. Would you suggest omitting any of the units, and, if so, which ones? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What recommendations would you give in any of the twelve units listed?
6. As you look back at your high school work, which do you remember more: (Check one)
- the skill or ability to do a certain task \_\_\_\_\_
- or, the principles of management and behavior? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Would you name 3 skills that you have been particularly glad for?
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
8. Would you name 3 principles, rules of behavior, guides in personality adjustment, convictions, attitudes, management guides that have helped you and that you learned from your Home Economics classes?
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
9. Which do you think should receive more stress? (Check one)
- skills \_\_\_\_\_
- or, principles and convictions? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Would you, if you had the chance to repeat high school, take more or less Home Economics, that is, of course, supposing there were other Home Economics courses offered in other years? More \_\_\_\_\_ Less \_\_\_\_\_

11. Would you want to be one to recommend that every high school girl be required to take at least one year of Home Economics? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Have you used your Home Economics training outside your home? \_\_\_\_\_  
In what way(s)? \_\_\_\_\_
13. How long were you graduated from high school before you were married?  
\_\_\_\_\_ years (Correct to the nearest half year)
14. How long have you been married? \_\_\_\_\_ years (Correct to the nearest half year)
15. How many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_
16. Do you work outside the home? \_\_\_\_\_  
About how many hours a week? \_\_\_\_\_  
What type of work do you do? \_\_\_\_\_  
Can you state the biggest reason which has prompted you to take employment outside the home? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
17. Have you done certain types of work in the home itself which has helped to increase the family money income? Explain, please.

God reward you!

**APPENDIX B****Letter Sent to Former Students**

Rosary Convent  
24 South Third  
Bozeman, Montana  
June 19, 1963

Dear

For one of my classes here at Montana State College in Bozeman I have planned to work out a study involving my former students in Home Economics classes. It has taken longer to get started than I had anticipated, so I hope that if you had heard about my contacting you, you have not given up hope! So now I am begging for a few minutes of your busy day to help me evaluate my former class work. You do not need to sign your name if you prefer, but everything in the questionnaire will be held confidential. It is my purpose in this study to determine in some way the value your former Home Economics training has proven to be to you in your married life. Sometimes the subject matter as taught in high school seems pretty far fetched when viewed in the light of actual homemaking. I want to know, for my own benefit, as for the benefit of other Home Economics teachers, just how worthwhile your homemaking education has come to be in your home.

Any personal remarks you would like to add anywhere in the questionnaire will be most welcome. Sometimes it is the little side lights that really give the cue to the whole problem. May I expect your answers back by July 1 at the latest? You may expect a letter from me by fall giving the results of the study.

Although years may have passed since I had you as a student in high school, I recall my former classes with great interest, and this study has given me a chance to review names. I would be happy, too, to hear about yourself and your family. There are so many questions that one might ask! I hope this list of questions doesn't tire you; rather that it acts as a bit of a reminder that there are many things to learn about successful homemaking, and one is never too old to learn!

God bless you, and your family.

Gratefully yours,