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IN THE HOUSEWORK CONTEXT

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KATHLEEN SLAUGH

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Beatrice Paolucci
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FAMILY INTERACTION AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE HOUSEWORK CONTEXT

by

Kathleen Slaugh

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ABSTRACT

FAMILY INTERACTION AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
IN THE HOUSEWORK CONTEXT

By

Kathleen Slaugh

Using a family ecological approach, family interaction in the housework context was examined in this research. Ethnographic methodology was utilized in order to develop grounded theory regarding the relationship between participation in housework processes and the development of human resources.

Historically housework has been neglected as a subject of serious study. Research and study related to housework have increased in recent years, yet the research has relied almost exclusively on existing theoretical frameworks, and the frameworks used have had a predominantly economic emphasis. Housework has been examined as the labor of women and as means for maintenance of the household through the production of goods and services. Little research or theory has evolved that examines housework processes in the context of family life or that considers the implications of housework processes for the development of human resources of all family members.

The methodology outlined by Glaser and Strauss (1967) provided a guide for the development of grounded theory related to housework processes. Data were gathered through participant-observation and

ethnographic interviewing of family members in two households. Both were intact families with pre-school and school-age children. Family interaction was recorded using shorthand notetaking. Families were observed for a total of 77-1/2 hours.

No pre-set hypotheses were used for the research. Rather the observation data were examined for core categories and basic social processes that appeared to be integral to housework processes. This methodological procedure resulted in the following generalizations relative to family interaction in the housework context: (1) Perceptions of housework affect the way the household is organized for the performance of housework; (2) The way the household is organized for the performance of housework affects the quantity and quality of family interaction; and (3) Family interaction behaviors in the housework context affect human resource development of family members. Further research is needed to test and refine these generalizations.

Recommendations for future research include identification of propositions from which hypotheses can be generated for examining social relations that take shape as the family does housework. Implications for practical application are suggested.

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Each member of my dissertation committee also provided valuable assistance, both in their review of the dissertation draft and in the instruction and ideas they shared in courses and informal conversations. I would like to express special thanks to Dr. Linda Nelson and Dr. Barrie Thorne who reviewed earlier drafts of the dissertation and provided invaluable assistance in developing the research methodology and analyzing the findings.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to the two families who graciously permitted me to observe them, and who provided insights and encouragement as they shared their ideas regarding interaction among the family members in their households.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents and brothers and sisters who have encouraged me in innumerable ways. The many hours

spent working together in our home when we were children, talking, singing, laughing, quarreling, and coping with conflicting goals and ideas, helped me learn first hand the richness of family life that can take place in the context of housework.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Historically the subject of housework has been ignored by most academic disciplines as a topic of serious study. However, since the 1970's there has been a growing interest in understanding the nature of housework and its relationship to the well-being of individuals and families. This interest has been precipitated by recent historical events, including the increasing number of women entering the paid labor force and the questions raised by the women's movement concerning traditional assumptions about the roles of men and women, which have threatened the traditional provision of housework. Little research is available, however, which can be used to explain or predict the impact housework processes may have on individuals, families, and on society as a whole. Existing theories for the analysis of housework do not adequately encompass the daily experiences of housework. In particular, there is little theoretical work available that can contribute to an understanding of family interaction in the housework context. The purpose of this research is to help remedy this deficit.

While housework has traditionally been a subject of interest in the field of home economics, until recently research relating to housework has been limited primarily to methods for doing housework in

order to lighten the load of women, and to attitudes about housework. During the 1970's, however, the emphasis among family economists in housework-related research has shifted to the measurement of household production. The disciplines of economics and sociology also have made contributions to the measurement of household production. The measurement of household production is considered necessary in order to arrive at a measure of economic value which may be used for various purposes, among them: to raise the status of those who do household work, to derive a more accurate picture of the gross national product, to form a basis for public policy decisions related to families and individuals, and to provide a basis for family and individual decisions regarding participation in paid work and family roles.

There is, however, a lack of agreement as to what activities and/or products should be included in a measure of household production, as well as a lack of agreement as to how that product should be valued (Berch, 1978; Manning, 1979). Measures of household production currently in use focus on the more easily quantifiable components of household work, primarily time allocated to maintenance tasks which include housework and the physical care of children. The economic value of this maintenance product is generally determined by comparison with market-equivalent forms of production, or what it would cost to buy an equivalent service or good in the market place. However, these quantifiable measurements and comparisons can be very misleading. Emphasis on the measurement of maintenance tasks and the subsequent assignment of monetary value based on market equivalents have at least three limitations.

In the first place, the measures ignore the qualitative dimensions of household production, thus giving an incomplete picture of production that takes place in the household (Berk, 1980, Brownlee, 1979, Brown, 1982, Boulding, 1977, and Paolucci, 1977). Boulding (1977), for example, has stated that "a great deal that is produced in the household is not measured, particularly in the areas of nurturance and creative/recreative activity" (p. 3). Time use measures generally regard these nurturing activities as "secondary," while it may be that these functions provide one of the principal reasons for the existence of families. Paolucci (1979) has stressed that household production is more than a quantifiable product produced in a given time frame; it is "a process that encompasses many tasks complementing and/or essential one to another, embedded one into the other relative to time and labor used. The whole process, rather than its separate parts, is the critical product" (p. 1).

A second limitation of present household production measures is the almost exclusive focus on the time investments made by women, or on the contributions of other family members as reported by housewives (see Walker and Woods, 1976, for an example). Boulding (1977) and Paolucci (1977) have called attention to the need to identify more precisely the contributions of all family members to the household production processes. Berk and Berheide (1978) have demonstrated a potential inaccuracy in using the report of one family member, e.g. the wife, for a measure of the contribution of other family members. In comparing husband and wife reports of participation in household work, Berk and Berheide found that couples were more likely to agree on the contribution of each to their respective sex-stereotyped tasks.

However, there was a tendency on the part of both spouses to underestimate the contribution of men to "women's" tasks and of women to "men's" tasks.

A third limitation of current household production research is the determination of value by equating the worth of goods and services produced in the home with the market-equivalent products. Equating household production with its market equivalents is a serious limitation because it has led many to the conclusion that the market equivalents are sufficient substitutes for the work done in the home (See Galbraith, 1973, and Ferber and Birnbaum, 1977, for examples.) Brown (1982) stated that a consideration of nothing more than the timing of housework would indicate that the supposed market equivalents are not sufficient substitutes for home produced goods and services. She noted, "The full-time homemaker's provision of round-the-clock care of family members' needs makes it impossible to equate the value of her time with her replacement cost" (p. 155). According to Brown, the market-equivalents are inadequate not only because "the household could not contract to buy these services in the small amounts of time and at the random hours that the housewife actually performs these duties," but also because "the home economy specializes in producing mothering and the nurturing of family members along with personalized care in providing food, clothing, and shelter" (p. 155).

Efforts to measure qualitative dimensions of household production have emphasized the quantity of family interaction in household activities (e.g. Davey, 1971), the types of family activities and the participants' feelings about time spent in those activities (Goldsmith, 1977), and reciprocity in family activities (Boulding,

1977). Although there is some variation in the research instruments used in each of these studies, all have depended primarily on self-report data. Self report measures have limited value in assessing family interaction, however, since much of family interaction may be taken for granted by the family and therefore not be reported.

Piotrkowski (1979a) noted limitations in research on family interaction based on observations in laboratory settings or settings outside the everyday family environment, as well as in research on housework that emphasizes the amount of time spent at tasks while giving little, if any, attention to the interaction that takes place in the context of the work activities. According to Piotrkowski, there is a need for research on family interaction in the family environment which would include observation of the interrelatedness of family work activities and family interaction.

As has already been indicated, present theory is inadequate for understanding the dimensions of housework relating to social processes that may be occurring as part of housework in the family setting. This lack of theory has resulted in what Berk (1980) described as a "disturbing tendency" in existing research on women and household labor to overlook or define away "the most compelling and distinctive qualities of women's domestic work lives...because they do not 'fit' the existing models and social scientific frameworks which seem to serve so well in explanations of other social phenomena" (p. 18). This tendency is illustrated by D. Smith (1977) in her description of the problem in applying rational economic models to the analysis of social phenomena. Smith noted that in the case of housework, this has resulted in "'reducing' women's characteristic work and social

relations in the household and family to concepts that analyze them in terms of their relation to capitalist economic processes" (p. 154). According to Smith,

> Applications of time-budget methods to comparisons between the amount of work women do in the home and the amount of work men do outside and inside the home have simply adapted the distinction between work and leisure in such a way that the kinds of responsibilities women take in relation to the home and to the children simply do not appear. The work-leisure organization applies to employment. The sociological concepts are borrowed directly from it. If we started with housework as a basis, the categories of "work" and "leisure" would never emerge. And indeed, it is hard to imagine how making use of this conceptual framework it would be possible to make "work" and "leisure" observable. The social organization of the role of housewife, mother and wife does not conform to the divisions between being at work and not being at work. Even the concept of housework as work leaves what we do as mothers without a conceptual home. (p. 154)

Elaborating on the inadequacy of present theory for the study of housework, Berk (1980) stated that "those who embark on investigations of the household's 'invisible' labor are faced with the perplexing problem of having few conceptual resources on which to draw which adequately deal with the social relations under study" (p. 18).

There is a need to develop theory that will lead to an understanding of the nature and meaning of housework for families. Housework is a routine and daily activity which occurs in family settings, and many family interactions take place around the doing of housework. Theory is needed that will explain the relationships between the doing of housework, the social relationships that develop within the family, and the development of human attributes. The primary purpose of the present research is to contribute to the generation of grounded theory related to the family interaction processes in the housework context. Qualitative data, obtained

through naturalistic observation, will be used to provide a basis for identifying the contribution of all family members to interaction activities in the household context. The data will also be analyzed to identify the way housework is regarded, or the perception family members have of the meaning and purpose of housework and work process. This approach to the study of family activities is ecological, and will include observing family interaction in the context of the household environment.

Research Objectives

1. To delineate the process used to develop grounded theory from observational data.

2. To review the literature relative to household production. The review of literature is organized by disciplines since identification of the paradigms guiding the thinking in each field of study is critical to an understanding of the concepts and theoretical orientations emanating from a particular discipline or field of study

3. To identify the social structure and interaction processes that are an integral part of doing housework. This will be based on the analysis of ethnographic data.

4. To draw generalizations for theory development.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

The methodology for this research follows the procedure outlined by Glaser and Strauss (1967) for the development of grounded theory. Grounded theory is the development of theory from data, systematically obtained and analyzed using a general method of comparative analysis. Glaser and Strauss stated that "generating a theory from data means that most hypotheses and concepts not only come from the data, but are systematically worked out in relation to the data during the course of the research" (p. 6). In other words, generating grounded theory involves a process of research in which the product is the generation rather than the testing of propositions of hypotheses. According to Glaser and Strauss, the process of developing grounded theory assures that the resulting theory will fit the empirical situations it is intended to describe.

The pattern outlined by Glaser and Strauss (1967) for developing grounded theory provided a guide for the methodology used in this research. The research procedure included the following steps:

1. Collection of observation data, accompanied by a simultaneous process of coding and analysis of the data.
    a. Generating categories as suggested by the data.
    b. Comparing incidents applicable to each category, and the context of each incident, to identify properties of categories.

c. Integrating categories and their properties.

2. Identification of generalizations about relationships between variables leading to the generation of theory.

The research design utilizes an ecosystem approach to the study of the family. A basic assumption of an ecosystem perspective is that family processes cannot be understood without a consideration of the environmental context. Naturalistic observation, or the observation of the family in the household setting, was considered the preferred method for gathering data because it lends itself to first-hand identification of possible interrelationships between family interaction processes and environmental context. Observation, including participant observation where appropriate, as well as ethnographic interviewing were used as data sources. Pre-set interview questions and self-report methods of gathering data were ruled out as possible data sources because these methods require some a priori knowledge of the nature of family interaction. Using naturalistic observation, one tries to assume as little as possible about the nature of the interrelationships between family processes and environmental context, leaving the researcher more open to chance discoveries and to the revisions of initial interests and working ideas. However, the researcher does begin the study with some notions of what will be observed.

Selection of Families

Observation data for this research were gathered from two families. Data from the first family were used as the primary data

source, with the data from the second family providing information for revising and checking indications of the first.

Since the research design involved working directly with the families, the research proposal was submitted to the University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects at Michigan State University for their approval. The proposal was approved (see Appendix), and the appropriate guidelines were followed in the research process to assure respect for the privacy of the family members. Following the guidelines of that Committee, all family names used in this report have been changed to protect the privacy of family members.

Three primary criteria were employed in the selection of the two families:

1. Each family was to be an intact family that was considered secure in their relationships with each other. This was an important consideration since the presence of an observer can create strain on a family.

2. Each family was to have at least two children, one pre-school and one school age. This configuration was used to make it possible to observe sibling/sibling interaction as well as to observe the participation of children in housework.

3. Employment status of parents was also considered. One family was to represent the role patterns of husband with work for pay outside the home and wife as homemaker with no work for pay outside the home. The other family was to represent the household where both parents worked outside the home for pay. The basis for this decision was the idea that the similarities and differences in interaction

patterns in the two households could help sensitize the observer to nuances in family interaction that might otherwise go unnoticed.

The process of locating the first family included contacting elementary school teachers, ecclesiastical leaders and colleagues of the researcher. With each contact, the purpose of the research and the criteria for family selection were explained. When a family was identified that fit the established criteria, the contact person was asked to talk with the family to obtain permission for the researcher to contact them. The Allen family, selected for the first case study, was identified through a personal friend who talked with the family, provided a preliminary explanation of the purpose of the study and obtained permission for the researcher to contact the family.

Operating under the assumption that a two-worker family with a preschool child would possibly have the child in a child-care facility, contacts were made with child-care institutions to locate the second family. However, using this procedure the researcher was unable to identify a family that met the other criteria for the selection of subjects, e.g. two-parent family, a school-age as well as a pre-school child, both parents working for pay outside the home, and secure family relationships. The Brice family, used for the second case study, was identified through the help of a personal friend and, as with the first family, the friend first obtained permission of the family for the researcher to make contact with them.

The same basic procedure was used in making the initial contact with each family. First the family was contacted by telephone and an appointment was made to meet with both the husband and wife to discuss the purpose of the research. During the initial home visit, the

researcher explained that the purpose of the research would be to observe family interaction during work and other activities. It was explained there were no pre-set hypotheses for the study, that the investigator was not attempting to identify what they were doing "right" or "wrong" but to add to an understanding of the nature of family interaction during a variety of family activities. The family was told they would have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, and that all visits would be scheduled in advance so they could control the presence or absence of the researcher. The family was also informed that fictitious names would be used in the research report to assure the anonymity of the family. Written consent to do the research was obtained from each family.

The nature of participant-observation methodology was also explained. The family was told the researcher's primary purpose would be to observe family interaction, but that the researcher could also take part in family activities if it seemed appropriate. For example, the researcher offered to stay with the children if the parents wanted to spend some time away from home. As it worked out, two observation periods were spent with the Allen children while the parents were away from home making it possible to observe differences in the interaction of the children when the parents were and were not present.

Description of Families

As has been indicated, two families were selected for the study. The family of Gary and Diane Allen was selected as the primary subjects. Mr. and Mrs. Allen represented the role patterns of husband as provider and wife as homemaker. In the second family, that of Lynn

and Susan Brice, both spouses were employed outside the home. Each family had seven living children. In the Allen family, all children were living at home at the time of the observation. The ages of the children ranged from 5 months to 10 years. Six of the Brice children were living at home; the oldest child was living away from home, and the second child had been killed in an accident a year prior to the time of the observation study. The ages of children in the Brice family ranged from 3-1/2 to 19 years.

Both families were members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (the L.D.S. Church, or Mormons). Although membership in the L.D.S. Church was not a criteria for selection of subjects, the geographic location of the research was in a predominantly L.D.S. community which increased the likelihood the subjects selected would be L.D.S. L.D.S. Church teachings place high priority on family life and on a work ethic. While the ideas of the importance of family life and the work ethic are not unique to L.D.S. families, the prominence of these values in LDS teachings may be an important factor in understanding how work and family activities in general are regarded in the families under study.

The L.D.S. Church does not stand alone in its emphasis on the importance of work, or of family participation in work. For example, White and Brinkerhoff (1981) interviewed parents and children in 790 Nebraska homes in an exploratory study of the meaning which children's work has for their families. The findings of the survey indicated that 82 percent of the boys and 78 percent of the girls in those homes were regularly required to do chores. Over 70 percent of parents indicated they assigned household tasks to children primarily for

developmental reasons, i.e. to build responsibility, develop character, and to provide for greater family integration. The frequency of responses associating participation in housework with development of attributes prompted White and Brinkerhoff to suggest the presence of a cultural norm supporting the idea that participation in housework is good for children and for families. It should be noted, however, there are other cultural norms and values regarding housework. As may be noted in the Review of Literature, for many people housework is generally regarded as drudgery.

Allen Family Description

Gary and Diane Allen are the parents of seven children: Brian, age 10; Nancy, age 9; Cristine, age 7; Nathan, age 4; Mark, age 3; Greg, age 1-1/2; and Allson, 5 months. They lived in a small university community, population 74,000. They were buying their home which was located in a low-cost housing area.

Both Gary and Diane Allen are university graduates. At the time of the observation study, Gary Allen was completing a master's degree while working part-time at the university. Diane Allen was a full-time homemaker, although she also sewed clothing items which she retailed through local stores.

While Gary Allen was in school, the family income consisted of $500/month from his G.I. bill plus approximately $400 each month from part-time work. The income from retailing the clothing items was used to pay tuition and other irregular or seasonal expenses. Mr. and Mrs. Allen described their financial situation as "tight", but they indicated they were able to manage comfortably. Their situation was

similar to many young families in their neighborhood; according to Diane Allen, "We're all poverty stricken, but we make do."

Diane Allen had varied commitments outside the family, including leadership in the PTA, directing a drama production in their church, and teaching crafts in the church women's auxiliary. She once described herself as a "selfish" person because she was committed to spending time on personal as well as family goals. She was critical of women she described as "martyrs" who spent all their time doing housework and waiting on their families, then complained they never had time for themselves.

Gary Allen took an active part in the everyday process of family living and assumed the responsibility for many household work activities including such tasks as bread making, gardening and food preservation and other housework. Gary and Diane occasionally teased each other about having their "genes mixed up" since he enjoyed doing housework and she enjoyed doing carpentry and similar traditionally male tasks. Gary enjoyed spending time with the family, and according to Diane, he became frustrated when he was working at full-time employment that kept him away from the family more than he liked.

The three oldest Allen children, Brian, Nancy and Cristine, attended an elementary school located within a block of their home. Three afternoons each week, Nathan, Mark and Greg attended a neighborhood "nursery," a cooperative exchange in which the Allens and three other families participated. The mothers took turns each week entertaining the children. Brian, Nancy and Cristine each made a significant contribution to household work activities, completing housework tasks before school in the morning, helping with meal

preparation and clean-up in the evenings, and helping with Saturday cleaning.

Diane Allen described their family as a "normal, healthy family with the usual kinds of problems." She said they considered themselves a healthy family in the sense that they had developed mechanisms for resolving most of the problems that arose. Diane observed, "Problems are normal, but they don't dominate our lives. They are just part of the growing up process" (August, 1981).

Brice Family Description

Lynn and Susan Brice are the parents of eight children, six of whom were living at home at the time of the observation study. Children living at home at the time of the study included Peter, age 17; Beth, 15-1/2; Rachael, 14-1/2; Ted, 13; James, 10; and Steve, 3-1/2. The Brices lived in a small urban community, population 54,000. They were buying their home which was located in a subdivision of low to medium-priced houses.

Lynn Brice held a B.S. degree from a university, and Susan Brice had graduated from a music conservatory. Susan Brice had worked in paid employment for much of their married life, sometimes because of financial need but also because she enjoyed it. At the time of the observation study she was employed 20 to 30 hours a week as an accountant for an accounting firm and also taught 32 piano students each week in the home. Lynn Brice was employed full time as a salesman for a local retail business. In addition, the older children worked at paid jobs, Peter as a custodian for a sports club, and Beth, Rachael and Ted as babysitters for families in the neighborhood. Mr.

and Mrs. Brice considered their financial situation "tight." Lynn's job paid minimum wage plus commission, which during a depressed economy (as was the case during the time of the observation study) was inadequate for meeting basic living expenses.

The family took an active part in church and community activities. Susan Brice often provided piano accompaniment for local musical productions. The older boys played on soccer teams; some of the children played musical instruments and performed in church and school functions.

Lynn Brice participated in many household work activities, including meal preparation and cleanup, and the supervision of children in their work. Lynn remarked that "it took Susan a long time to get me to do this. I didn't grow up doing it. And there are still times when I just leave it all to Susan." Susan said that early in their marriage they talked about role responsibilities, "that if I was helping bring in the income, then he should help in the home. And Lynn comes by it naturally, too." Susan observed that Lynn placed more priority on family activities than he did on paid work activities. Lynn agreed, saying he believed in the motto, "family first."

The Brice children assumed considerable responsibility for household work activities. Peter's regular housework assignment was the laundry, and the other children (except Steve) rotated housework tasks on a monthly basis. Susan Brice stated she would like to have the rotated assignments last a little longer because of the time it took to establish new routines, "but the kids like to change every month--they get tired of the same job."

Susan Brice recalled that the children had not always assumed this amount of responsibility for household work. "When the children were young, those were difficult years." Often she would stay up late at nights to clean the house following a day of work away from home, and at times felt she was "drowning" because of the pressure. Susan added, "but now, the thing I see is we really do enjoy each other."

Data Collection

The Allen family was contacted by phone in April, 1980, and an appointment was made to meet with both Mr. and Mrs. Allen on Sunday evening, April 27. At that time, the purposes of the study were explained as noted previously. The parents extended an invitation to the researcher to return the next evening for Family Home Evening, a weekly family activity where family business was conducted, where the purposes of the research were explained to the children and their cooperation and consent was obtained.

The Allen family was observed for a total of 52 hours, 30 minutes. All observation dates were scheduled in advance, with the appointment for the next visit usually being made at the conclusion of an observation visit. The observations were made from May 5 to June 1, 1980. The researcher also met with Mr. and Mrs. Allen in August, 1981, to obtain their response to a preliminary draft of the analysis. The duration of the observation visits ranged from 1 hour to 22 hours, the latter including an overnight stay with the family. (The seven hours sleeping time were not included in the total observation time.) Overall, observation visits covered all days of the week except Sunday, and all hours of the day, with the majority of the observation

time concentrated during the hours from wake-up until children left for school, and early afternoon until bedtime for the children.

Mr. and Mrs. Allen invited the researcher to follow them or the children wherever she chose in order to record the family interaction. Their home included three levels, a basement, main floor and upstairs. Most observations were made on the main living level, in the living, dining and kitchen areas; also observations were made of family interaction in the basement family room and in an upstairs work room. The researcher did not consider it appropriate to follow family members into more private living spaces, such as the bedrooms and bathrooms. In addition to the observations within the home, there were observations recorded in the yard outside the home, on a family walk to the school and church, both of which were located within a two block radius from the Allen home, on a shopping trip with Mrs. Allen, a shopping trip with all the Allen family, and an outing with Mrs. Allen and a group of neighborhood pre-school children.

The first contact with the Brice family was made by telephone in early March, 1981. An appointment was made to talk with Mrs. Brice in their home, March 6 at 9:00 a.m. and to meet later that morning with Mr. Brice at his place of work to explain the purposes of the research and request permission to observe the family. Both Mr. and Mrs. Brice expressed interest in the research and agreed to participate in the study. The Brices invited the researcher to return to meet the entire family Monday evening, March 9 at 6:30 p.m., to have dinner and participate in Family Home Evening. During Family Home Evening the purposes of the research as well as their rights as participants (as

delineated earlier) were presented to all the family and their cooperation and consent was obtained.

The Brice family was observed for a total of 25 hours, with observation times ranging from 6:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. in the morning, and from 2:30 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. in the afternoon and evenings. Visits were made on weekdays and Saturdays; no visits were made on Sunday. The first observation visit was on March 9, 1981, and the last on April 18, 1981.

All observations of the Brice family took place either in their home or in the yard in front of the home. Most of the observations were recorded from the following locations: outside front of home, living room, kitchen-dining room, basement family room, as well as the hall to the bedrooms while family members were engaged in "spring cleaning" of the bathroom. Mr. and Mrs. Brice invited the researcher to have free access to any areas in the home, to go wherever it seemed necessary for the observations. However, the researcher felt it was more appropriate to limit observations to the more central, less private areas of the home.

In both the Allen and Brice families, permission was requested and obtained to use both note taking and tape recording as means of recording family interaction. Shorthand notes were taken as the interaction was taking place, and the notes were later transcribed in typed form. Occasionally the children were distracted from their activities by the note taking, and would ask the researcher what she was writing as well as how she could read what she was writing. The researcher would usually read a few lines of notes to the children which they seemed to find quite entertaining. Because the observation

notes were recorded in shorthand it was possible to record much of the dialogue verbatim, as well as record other dimensions of the interaction. Tape recording was also used on occasion, and the recordings transcribed. However, this method of recording information proved to be less effective than the shorthand notetaking since it was often difficult to separate out the variety of noises when interaction was particularly concentrated. When transcribing tapes it was also difficult to identify the context or the physical activity which was integral to the interaction. Although the parents in each family granted permission for taping family interactions, in each case they expressed the idea that they might feel more reluctance to speak as freely when the tape recorder was running. On one occasion while taping, Mrs. Brice observed, laughing yet serious, "I hate recorders." They apparently did not consider the note taking to be as "final" a record of their interaction as the taping, and felt the interaction would be more "natural" if not being taped.

Both families cooperated to maintain as accurate a presentation of their family life as possible. Examples of this included supplying the researcher with details of interaction that took place when the researcher was not present. The Allen family offered to use their own recorder to tape the first visit with their family when they learned the researcher had neglected to bring that equipment. The Brice family taped several hours of family interaction when the researcher was not present, explaining they wanted her to see how they were when she was not around. Unfortunately, the volume of the interaction on these recordings was too low in most cases for these data to be

useful; however, the willingness of the family to support the research in this manner was very much appreciated.

In spite of the families' efforts to maintain normal patterns of interaction, the presence of an observer in the home undoubtedly created some distortions. The problem of reactivity is a commonly recognized limitation of observation research. It should be noted, however, that the problem is not unique to observation research. Piotrkowski (1979b) has suggested that "whether we are observing, interviewing, or studying people in laboratories, the act of research affects, to some extent, the phenomenon being studied" (p. 305). Nevertheless, reactivity is a significant variable that must be considered in the analysis of the observation data.

In the present study, the most common distortion in behavior attributable to observer presence appeared to be restraining behaviors that would reflect the presence of strain or conflict. At various times the parents in each family called the researcher's attention to what they perceived as changes in family behavior which were due to observer presence, and in each case the change was in the direction of restraining "negative" behaviors.

For example, Mrs. Allen mentioned one morning she was feeling very busy and tense and that normally she would have yelled at the children when they upset her, "just let it all out." However, because she was being observed, she "just went downstairs and stared at the wall" for a few minutes.

Mrs. Brice called the researcher's attention to an example of restraining behavior during the first visit with the family. Mrs. Brice indicated that after the researcher left their home that

evening, Rachael began to cry and was impatient. While the researcher had been there, Mrs. Brice had been helping Rachael pin a hem in a skirt, and Rachael appeared cheerful and patient. Mrs. Brice reported that after the researcher left, Rachael became upset because she felt her mother should hem the skirt, and Mrs. Brice felt Rachael should do it. Mrs. Brice stated she felt Rachael's later behavior was more typical, especially when her daughter was tired and under pressure.

Piotrkowski (1979b) has stated that just as there are forces that impel individuals to want to put their best foot forward, so there are forces that "pull systems into their private, habitual manner of operating" (p. 305). She included among those forces the fact that work must be accomplished, so individuals tend to resort to their normal modes of operation to accomplish those tasks, and the presence of children, who "exert pressures toward habitual behaviors because their needs are not controlled" (p. 305). Piotrkowski also stated there will be less changing of behavior as more people are present, "since family members have interlocking mode of interacting, (and) a major change in any one member would reverberate through the social system" (p. 306). Thus the habitual behaviors of the family will tend to move the system towards normalcy.

It is, nevertheless, necessary for an observer to take precautions to minimize observer effects. In the present research, the fact that the families were large and included pre-school age children helped minimize changes in family behavior due to researcher presence. In addition, the researcher tried to remain in one place as much as possible while recording observations so as to minimize calling attention to her presence. Also the observation visits were

scheduled in as close a sequence as seemed feasible so the family would remain more accustomed to the researcher's presence.

Coding and Analysis of Data

During the observation shorthand notes were made recording as much of the family interaction as was possible, including notations of the activity in which subjects were participating, location of the activity, time of day, and verbal as well as nonverbal behaviors including tone of voice and body gestures. Following each observation session the notes were transcribed and typed.

The procedure recommended by Glaser and Strauss (1967) for categorizing and analyzing observation data provided a guide for the analysis of the data. The observation data were first categorized by noting the types of activities, topics of conversation, and types of interaction behaviors, e.g. support, helping, affection, put-downs, teasing, punishment. In addition, notations were added to locate these processes in their context, e.g. spatial location, time of day, type of activity, and whether participants were alone or with others.

The categories were then examined to identify patterns in the data. The initial effort in looking for patterns in the data was to identify indications of the development of "social products," e.g. development of human attributes. However, this did not prove to be a fruitful endeavor since it was soon apparent that the "social product" in the family does not exist in a finished or final state. In other words, a person cannot point to a "product" of self esteem, for example, in the same sense one can identify a washed dish or a bathed child. Rather, the development of attributes is an on-going process.

Therefore, the analysis was revised to pay particular attention to the social relationships that were observable in the housework context.

To identify patterns in social relationships, the categories were examined to identify how housework was structured, paying particular attention to who participated in housework and when. The data were then examined to identify possible relationships between structure and interaction. Criteria that guided this part of the analysis were (1) whether the behavior was repeated in two or more instances and observable in both families, (2) whether the behavior appeared to be unique because it was seen in the household context, and (3) whether there was an identifiable relationship between interaction patterns and the context of the interaction, or between the interaction patterns and the way in which housework was structured. The data were also analyzed to identify patterns in interaction behaviors that might contribute to or constrain the development of attributes, and the context of these interaction behaviors was noted. This was done through a process of examination and re-examination of the data to determine if certain types of interaction tended to appear in some contexts more than others. For example, were parental behaviors labeled as "support," "helping," "commanding," or "disapproval" more frequent in one context than in another, and if so, why? Representative samples of interaction patterns were selected for inclusion in the analysis. Because of the complexity of family interaction, it was not uncommon for an interaction sequence to be assigned to more than one category. In the analysis of the data, where an interaction segment provided clear illustration of more than one category the example has been used more than once.

As part of the analysis process, researcher observations were checked against findings in the literature to increase sensitivty to possible implications of the interaction behaviors. Glaser and Strauss (1967) stated this comparison process makes it possible not only to generate the properties of categories and identify patterns in the data, but also provides for continual correction of the data as the analyst discovers underlying causes of variation.

Through this process of comparing categories, and identifying patterns of interaction in relationship with the context of interaction, the following generalizations were formulated:

1. Perceptions of housework affect the way the household is organized for the performance of housework.
2. The way the household is organized for the performance of housework affects the quantity and quality of family interaction.
3. Family interaction behaviors in the housework context affect human resource development of family members.

CHAPTER 3

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Review of Literature provides an overview of research and theory related to household work in the fields of home economics, mainstream economics and the new home economics, sociology, and Marxist-Feminism. The following questions are considered for each perspective: (1) What is the basis of their interest in household work; (2) How is housework conceptualized? What is the nature of household work? (3) How is housework valued, or what meaning or importance is attached to housework, and (4) What are the conceptual frameworks and research methods used in the study of household work activities?

Home Economics

Concerns associated with women's family roles and household work activities provided a major stimulus for the formation of the home economics profession. Industrialization and factory work, migration from the farms to the cities, and compulsory education for children all contributed to changing life styles and created new housework burdens for women who were accustomed to hired help or assistance from extended family and/or immediate family members. Poor sanitation and

difficult working conditions provided additional problems for farm families as well as families living in urban tenements.

These changing life styles also meant that many women were not adequately trained for doing work in the home. The scope of the problem was described by Clark (1909) in one of the first issues of the Journal of Home Economics, in her article titled, "A Campaign for Home Making."

> Home making for wage-earners' families in congested city districts is one of the most difficult problems in modern social life. First, the standards and knowledge among women responsible for the homes are deficient; second, the conditions of home making are extremely hard.
>
> A large number of women marry and set up housekeeping at about the age of twenty, after, on the average, five years' work at shop or factory. Work for them began as soon as the compulsory term of education was ended, so that, even if the home life was exemplary, opportunity to gain training from it was small. Often the standard is already lowered by the struggle against the difficult conditions of tenement life. Moreover, the mind has not been trained enough to profit by books and by experience. (p. 167)

Early issues of the Journal of Home Economics contain a predominance of articles with curriculum suggestions for the education of women in areas that were considered important for a well-functioning home: health and sanitation, nutrition, clothing construction, consumer buying, housework methods and child care. Although some professionals recommended educating the family as a whole (Burrows, 1913), the education of women in improved standards and methods was generally considered the more efficient and, apparently, the preferred way of bringing about the desired changes.

The content of these early education programs and the focus of early research (Clark, 1909; Williams, 1926) suggest that for many

home economics professionals the work of the household was conceptualized primarily as the physical maintenance of the family, with efficiency in the performance of these maintenance functions a primary goal. However, there were some in the early part of the century who recognized important social interaction dimensions of household work activities.

One example is found in the writings of Hunt (1909) who was a proponent of "cooperative housekeeping" as a method for "lessen(ing) the amount of work necessary for housekeeping" (p. 219). The advocates of cooperative housekeeping hoped to promote more effective methods of housekeeping, higher standards in housekeeping, and "an equitable distribution of benefits" (p. 220).

There were two variations of cooperative housekeeping. One was a system of delegating household activities to specialists, e.g. relegating the tasks of food preparation, clothing construction, heating and lighting houses and supplying fuel for cooking to municipal boards and private business corporations and firms. The other consisted of the "pooling" of household tasks by groups of families. Hunt pointed out that, even though "delegation" and "pooling" appeared to accomplish similar ends, the one was not a sufficient substitute for the other. Municipalities and businesses might provide goods and services of similar or even superior standards of quality to those provided through home production, but home production required the cooperation of family members and was, therefore, "productive of valuable traits of character" (p. 220). The

goal of the advocates of cooperative housekeeping was to extend this dimension of home production beyond the narrow confines of the home.

> They hoped that it would create an environment wider than the individual home within which a premium would be placed, as it is in family life, upon those characteristics which draw men together and enable them to work harmoniously for the common good, upon trustfulness, unselfishness and forbearance.
>
> They hoped to develop in themselves some of the best and most desirable of human qualities; adaptability, tolerance, generosity and helpfulness. They hoped that their cooperative enterprises would be a school in which they could learn and develop the gentle art of mutual aid. (p. 220)

The ventures in cooperative housekeeping were not successful, however, one of the reasons being, according to Hunt (1909), that "we are prone to confuse equitable with equable distribution of benefits and to adopt the latter which though easy is thoroughly unfair, except it should be added, where little children are concerned" (p. 221).

In this context, Hunt called attention to the need for methods to measure qualitative outputs of housework processes, and at the same time lamented their inability to do so:

> We all, it may be conceded, have come to believe that all children should be given equally good starts in life, equally pure air, equal access to the sunlight, equally nourishing and pure food, and equally thorough education and training. But after people are grown and have developed different degrees of industry, ability and talent, their rewards must, in some measure, be apportioned to their contributions to the common life. The more a person puts into a cooperative enterprise, the more of thought or of labor, the more he should in fairness get out of it and it is doubtful if we are yet wise enough to measure either what he contributes or what he should receive in return. (p. 221)

There were some who considered participation in work in the home as essential for instilling in children the attributes needed to live successfully in a social world as were preparation for vocational training and courses in traditional school subjects. McKeever (1913)

expressed concern that some might construe the intent of the child labor movement to mean that childhood should be relieved of all industrial practices. In this context he advocated increased participation of children in housework:

> The child that is allowed to grow to maturity without being required to perform home tasks and duties..., that child is destined more and more to find himself poorly adjusted to the coming social order. (p. 137)

McKeever recommended that schools might cooperate in the effort to involve children in work activities in the home:

> The school must teach and explain and exalt common work and ordinary industry. Pupils are now to be taught early in life, for example, how to do plain housework (and) ordinary home chores...as the status of their years and strength may warrant. (p. 138)

McKeever suggested schools could give credit for home tasks in the same manner as they gave credit for school tasks:

> The ten-year-old boy goes home at the end of the month with a grade card from his teacher showing his rank in arithmetic, reading, language and the like, and the next day he returns with a similar card from his parent showing his grade in tending chickens, horses or cows; in helping with the housework, in carrying wood and kindling, in delivering milk and running other errands, and the like. The girl pupil carries home a similar score-card from her teacher and returns with a like report from her parent. Perhaps she has a grade in dishwashing, caring for the baby, doing the bedroom work, darning her own stockings, mending her own clothes, and the like. The school grades and the home grades are averaged and the pupil's standing is thus made out and recorded. (p. 138)

Carver (1913) stressed the importance of the interaction dimension of housework in an address given at the Sixth Annual Meeting of the American Home Economics Association. Carver cautioned home economics professionals against too much emphasis on efficiency by referring to an example of an efficiency engineer who saw a father amusing his child by tossing it with his own arms.

> It occurred to the engineer that there was a considerable waste of energy in his crude and primitive manner, and that he could invent a simple machine by which a father could toss the child twice as high and many times as fast with less expenditure of energy. (p. 292)

Carver cautioned, "The only reason why we should want to economize energy is in order to have more energy left for some other purpose which we consider more important" (p. 293).

Carver expressed concern with recommendations for turning child care and the care of household over to "experts," in order to economize energy, while ignoring the values of "pleasure or culture" which might accrue in these activities:

> What is the important thing? What do we want to economize in? Do we want to economize in these things that are essential to family building, turn them over to experts and to institutions in order that we may pursue culture or politics, or any of these other things? Or wouldn't it really be less suicidal even too turn politics or culture over to a few experts so that we could have more time to look after our families? (p. 300)

Warner (1915) also expressed the importance of looking beyond the mere mechanics or quantity of living in our conceptualization of the work that takes place in the home, and the need to view the work of the household as more than efficiency in the provision of food, clothing, and shelter.

> Among poor, well-to-do and wealthy there are those who feed, some who eat, only a few who dine; there are many who are barely sheltered, some who are comfortably and even luxuriously housed, but comparatively few who really live in homes; there are many whose clothes serve chiefly as covering, many who are amply clothed for all purposes of warmth and many of display, a few only whose dress is the outward expression of an inner harmony. The difference between feeding and dining, between shelter and a home, between clothing and costume is not one of quantity, of outlay or even of degree but a subtle and important quality which lifts them from the realm of mere physical necessity into one where the spirit also is refreshed. (p. 8)

White (1913) argued that the conceptualization of the work of the home be given "the broadest possible interpretation" (p. 123). "Homemaking," stated White, "has to do not only with the physical management of the home but with those spiritual phases which make home" (p. 126). She advocated the need for a more complete and holistic view of family work activities:

> Clearly, it is not enough for the person who is interested in homemaking to know merely the technical processes of the home. The management of the home, on its material side, is only one branch of homemaking. There is the element which has to do with the involved problems of the housewife as a producer and consumer. Then there is the element which has to do with the moral factors of the home. Thirdly, the home cannot be detached from the community but must be interpreted in the light of its relation to its neighborhood, city, state. Have we carefully thought out the interdependence of the home and the community? Do we see clearly the wide influence of the home, the power of the housekeeper? (p. 126)

In spite of this recognition by home economics professionals of the critical output in terms of human development that accompanied housework processes, home economics curriculum and research continued to emphasize the mechanical or instrumental dimensions of housework. Housework related research sought to identify means for accomplishing the tasks of homemaking with greater economy of time and motion, and of identifying work methods and attitudes that would increase satisfaction in doing housework. F. Gilbreth (1912) was an early proponent of applying the techniques of time and motion study which were proving successful in industry to work in the home. And his wife, L. Gilbreth, was among the early home economics professionals who researched means for applying these work simplification techniques in the home (see Gilbreth, Thomas and Clymer, 1954, for examples of

this research). Home economics research on the methods of doing housework will not be detailed here since it does not relate directly to the present research. The reader is referred to the text, Work in the Home, by Steidle and Bratton (1968) for an excellent overview of the methodology and research findings emanating from this extensive body of research.

Kyrk (1933) and her student, Reid (1934) were among the first home economics professionals to give scholarly attention to the measurement of the production that took place in households in order to determine its economic value. Kyrk's interest in the economic value of housework was grounded in her concern over the low status accorded women, which she attributed at least in part to the economic position of women in society. Her ideas were first presented in her book, Economic Problems of the Family, published in 1933, and then expanded in a later work, The Family in the American Economy, published in 1953. Kyrk (1953) explored from a historical perspective reasons "for the persistent and marked difference in social attitude toward women's work and men's work" (p. 273). She noted,

> In every age and every group the activites rated as most important have been mainly in the hands of men. In the hunting and fishing stage women are agriculturalists; in the agricultural stage they carry on the industrial arts; in the industrial age they cease to manufacture. (p. 273)

Kyrk (1953) raised the question of "Why?" "Why should arts carried on by women for generations, perhaps even initiated by them, be developed and become important souces of livelihood only when they are taken over by men?" (p. 273). And why, in any time and place, should the work assigned to women be considered drudgery, a concept,

she noted, that includes "all those things which in this group at this time one wins no acclaim for doing" (p. 273).

Kyrk (1953) discounted the popular concept that the subordinate position of women and the low status attached to household work evolved as a result of psychophysical differences between the sexes, the notion that men are by nature more assertive and aggressive as well as stouter, and therefore, more suited to "exploitive" work, or "those things that are worthy, honorable, the most important" (p. 273). Kyrk suggested the more reasonable explanation lay in the one task that was always delegated to women: care of children. "Women could not undertake an enterprise that would keep them too long from the home center or to which they could not carry their children" (p. 274)." They became, of necessity, "Jills-of-all-trades," devising ways and means of improving their foods, clothing, shelter, and carrying on stationary activites: basketry, pottery, spinning and weaving. "They cannot concentrate upon some one line of production and subordinate all others to it. Instead, all others are subordinated to the children and the three meals a day" (p. 275). The result, according to Kyrk, was that women remained "eternal amateurs;" whenever they might choose to pursue an art, they have of necessity subordinated it to the "exigencies of their preoccupation with children and housework" (p. 275).

Kyrk (1933) suggested housework had also been accorded low status because it had traditionally, been the work of "menials." For women who had been accustomed to the services of a hired housekeeper, now to be required to perform the "menial" tasks of housework themselves was

considered "inappropriate for their position" (p. 85). Kyrk referred to the following illustration:

> In recent discussions of the inadequacy of the income of the teaching profession it appeared that men in the lower ranks could afford to hire very little or no household assistance. As a result their wives were forced either to earn or to cook, to clean, to care for children, to carry on all the tasks of a household. To this group of women and their husbands this situation seemed far from satisfactory. (p. 85)

Reid (1934) shared Kyrk's interest in the economic status of women and the household. Reid observed that while the household was an integral part of the economic system and "our most important economic institution" (p. v), it had been generally neglected by economists because it was not organized on a price basis as was the market sector of the economy. Gaining recognition for the contribution of housework to the economic well-being of the family was considered essential to increasing the status of the women who did housework. And achieving the goal of recognition of the economic contribution would, in turn, require devising a means for measuring that part of household output that had economic value.

In addition to the benefit of increased status which was associated with recognition of the economic value of housework, Reid suggested measures of household production would also provide a basis for family decision-making with respect to employment outside the home, increase understanding of "home problems," and make it possible to formulate educational curricula more suited for home and family life. She felt such measures could also provide understanding of the effect of household production on the position of women and the social life of the family.

At the time Kyrk and Reid began their research, the only available measure of household output was the United States Census, which for the first time in 1930 called for the enumeration of "homemakers," i.e. the woman member of the family responsible for the care of the home and family. Although this statistic gave an indication of the numbers of women who were engaged in full-time homemaking, Kyrk (1933) considered it an inadequate measure because it did not account for the contributions to household production of the many persons who were engaged in gainful employment. She suggested time-use studies as a research method for measuring production. A first step in the measurement process was to clarify the concept of household production so that production activities might be distinguished from consumption. While the production/consumption distinction was clear in the market sphere (production was the creation of utilities and consumption was their utilization), in the home, the border between the two was vague:

> The home...is a center for family life. There the members of the family receive the companionship, sympathy, affection and counsel which are the desired by-products of their association. But how distinguish between these activites which make home life in the material sense possible and comfortable and those which result in the other group of values? The fact is that in the household the economic are so intertwined with other relationships, the problems and responsibilities of the members as unpaid productive agents so intertwined with their problems and responsibilities as individuals, as husband or wife, as parent or child, that it is difficult to separate them. (Kyrk, 1933, pp. 43-44)

However, Kyrk (1933) considered it necessary to attempt to make the distinction reasoning that "without this differentiation great confusion results in discussions of household production and of the life of home-keeping women" (p. 44). Kyrk recommended household production be defined as "all unpaid productive activities that are

carried on by individuals for themselves or for their families" (p. 43). Reid (1934) later refined Kyrk's the definition of household production to include:

> those unpaid activities which are carried on, by and for members, which activities might be replaced by market goods, or paid services, if circumstances such as income, market conditions, and personal inclinations permit the service being delegated to someone outside the household group. (p. 11)

Household production, then, was conceptualized as including only those activities which had direct economic utility. Reid purposefully excluded from this conceptualization activities which might be classed as production in the sense they had utility, but which had only social utility such as purposeful effort to build relationships or any social interaction which was carried on by individuals to meet their own needs. These she classified as consumption activities.

Reid (1934) listed the following common household activities which, according to her definition, resulted in household production:

A. Management:
   1. Choice-making.
   2. Income apportionment, or budgeting.
   3. Task, time, and energy apportionment.
   4. Planning ways and means of carrying on tasks.
   5. Actual direction of the tasks including supervision.

B. Performance:
   1. Clerical work in connection with management.
   2. Purchasing of goods required by the household or by individual members of the household group.
   3. "Housework":
      a. Preparation, serving, care and preservation of food, and clearing away of meals.
      b. Construction and repair of clothing and furnishings, including such tasks as sewing, mending, darning, and "fancy work."
      c. Cleaning and care of the house, furnishings, clothing, and equipment, including laundering, daily, weekly, and special cleaning, care of the

fires, disposal of waste, repair work of various kinds, care of pets.

4. Work outside the house, e.g., care of the house surroundings, gardening, dairy and poultry work, operation and care of car.
5. Care of the members of the family not included in the above:
   a. Physcial care of children and the sick.
   b. Child training and education, including supervision of play.
6. Going and coming on household business, answering the telephone, the door, receiving packages, being on call or present in case of need, e.g., remaining in the house because of a sleeping child. (pp. 75-76)

It was apparently clear in the minds of both Kyrk and Reid that there was a distinction between the economic and social dimensions of production in the home, and that however difficult it might be to distinguish between the two for measurement purposes, there was a need to measure the economic contribution as something separate and apart from the social contribution. Kyrk (1933), referring to Reid's definition and the limitation she placed on household production (activities that could be delegated to someone outside the family), stated,

> This limitation is suggested in order to rule out of household production the creation of those utilities due to the association of husband and wife, or parent and child. It is obvious that these utilities although not costless in time and energy are not economic in character or origin. Household production provides the family group with the means of living together as a consumption group, supplies their common and individual needs in such form, time and place that life as a family group is possible. The associations that result from that family life are the valued products, the ends sought, that hold the group together. But the mother's joy in the child does not make the child a producer or give rise to an economic problem, nor do the companionship, counsel, sympathy and pleasure that any members of the family may receive from another make of that other a productive worker. (p. 46)

To clarify the distinction further, Kyrk stated:

> If (activities) could be performed only by wife or mother, if they are the products of that status and that status alone, they are not to be classified as production in the economic sense. (p. 47)

Reid's (1934) examples of activities of this type included the wife serving as hostess or as entertaining companion to husband and children.

Beutler and Owen (1980) raised questions about the adequacy of Reid's (1934) concept of household production for use in home economics research. Building on the work of Reid, Beutler and Owen developed a home production activity model which integrates "social, psychological and economic theory in a single theoretical construct" (p. 16). According to Beutler and Owen, the model takes into account the idea that household production, in addition to providing goods and services for the physical maintenance of the family, may also satisfy higher level social and psychological needs. Beutler and Owen have suggested that while some goods and services produced in the household may be satisfactorily replaced by market counterparts, others may not because they contribute to the satisfaction of these higher level needs. They used the terms "separable" and "inseparable" home production to distinguish these two types of production. They defined separable home production as that which "is market replaceable in the sense that it could conceivably be delegated to a paid worker" (p. 18). Inseparable home production, on the other hand, includes activities that cannot be delegated effectively to a paid worker "because of the unique human attributes and relationships involved in

the activity" (p. 18). Home economics research measuring household production has not taken this distinction into account.

As previously mentioned, time-use studies were considered the most feasible method for the measurement of household production. Several time-use studies were conducted during the early 1900's, some with the goal of improving measures of household production, but most as a means to determine more efficient work methods and standards for work in the home in order to help relieve the burden of housework. The studies varied in design and complexity, from one person observing her own dishwashing methods (Carruth, 1915) to surveys of large numbers of urban and/or rural households. (For a bibliography of this research, see Walker and Woods, 1976, Appendix C.) Warren, in the late 1930's was "the first (of these researchers) to take practical steps to develop a measurement of household production, to devise a means of testing such a measure, and to demonstrate that household production could be measured" (Walker and Woods, 1976, p. 5). Warren developed the work unit, a time measure which showed the average time cost of doing a certain quantity of work, which she used as a unit to measure household production. Walker and Woods (1976) utilized Warren's concept of the work unit in a study of New York households conducted in 1955, and in the more extensive time-use study of New York families conducted in 1967-68.

The goal of the Walker and Woods (1976) research was to measure "(1) the amount of time spent to keep a household running and (2) the amounts of goods and services resulting from the time spent" (p. 1). Data were collected from wives in 1,296 American households. The

women were asked to keep a time-use diary for one day and were interviewed and asked to recall time-use by other household members for the day previous to the interview. Data were collected only from wives since "the wife was considered to be the person most informed about the household work of all workers in the family" (p. 11).

In the Walker and Woods (1976) study, household production is defined as "purposeful activities performed in individual households to create the goods and services that make it possible for a family to function as a family" (p. xx). As can be noted, the definition does not distinguish between production that has social utility and that which has economic utility, although one might assume that "the goods and services that make it possible for a family to function as a family" would include both those activities which have social as well as economic utility. In operationalizing the definition, however, Walker and Woods stated they included only activites that met Reid's 1934 definition of household production, referred to earlier, with the exception of the "unpaid activities" dimension.

Those activities included:

All food preparation	Regular meal preparation After-meal cleanup Special food preparation
All house care	Regular house care Special house care Yard and car care
All family care	Physical care Nonphysical care
All clothing care	Washing Ironing Special clothing care

Marketing and management	Marketing or shopping Management and record keeping

(Walker and Woods, 1976, p. 38)

A clarifying concept used in the operationalization of household production in the Walker and Woods study was the distinction between primary and secondary time use. Primary time use was defined as time during which the activity engaged the worker's full attention, and secondary time as time when some work on an activity was done while work on another activity received primary attention. An example used by Walker (1963) to clarify this distinction was of one family member peeling potatoes while listening to a child report a school experience. Peeling the potato was considered a primary activity, and listening a secondary activity. This example illustrates the nature of many of the activities that were categorized as "secondary." Walker and Woods (1976) stated that, "Much of the time of parents that went into being present in case of need or for interaction was recorded as secondary time" (p. 106).

In the compilation of the Walker and Woods (1976) data, no attempt was made to combine primary and secondary time "because such double reporting of time spent would produce data suggesting days of more than 24 hours" (p. 106). Only primary time-use activities were used in determining total time use, and these activities consisted almost entirely of household maintenance tasks.

The foregoing example of time-use research illustrates one of the limitations of quantitative time-use measures as a measure of household production. Both by their failure to distinguish adequately between social and economic components of production, and by the

practice of assigning secondary time-use status to all family interaction, time-use measures contribute to the "invisibility" of outputs related to the growth and development of individuals and families. In this regard, Paolucci (1979) expressed concern that the current emphasis in time-use research on household maintenance activities, and particularly as seen from a female perspective, "may obscure critical sociological as well as economic factors that are critical to society" (p. 1).

Home Economics research related to housework has included examination of the managerial dimensions of work in the home in order to increase understanding of process and style in management to help the home manager mediate family values and achieve goals. An example of research examining work activities in the home from a management framework is that of Nichols (1964) who investigated the relationship between organizational style of employed homemakers and the amount of help they received from family members.

Nichols (1964) identified three levels of organization used by homemakers: (1) one person arranging the parts of one task which the person is to perform into a sequence or pattern, as exemplified in work simplification studies; (2) one person arranging efforts for the completion of several tasks to be performed into a sequence or pattern; and (3) one person, the manager, arranging the efforts of other persons into a pattern for the completion of one or more tasks. Nichol's research is noted for being the first to investigate this third level of organization in the family context.

The methodology used by Nichols (1964) consisted of collecting homemakers' responses to open-ended questions regarding various components or operations of organization, and then categorizing the responses on two polar dimensions of organization style: person-centered style and task-centered style. Nichols elaborated on the distinction between these styles as follows: In task-centered organization, "the emphasis is on the visible outcome without consideration for the affective qualities of the task for the performer." In person-centered organization, "the organizer is concerned with the task as a means for the growth and development of the performer" (p. 7). The concern for the individual, however, need not exclude concern also for the quality of the performance; rather, the task is seen as an instrument for development of the individual" (p. 7).

Nichol's (1964) research served to identify personal and family characteristics associated with each style, and added to the understanding of the managerial dimension of household work activities, as well as contributing to an understanding of the meaning that household work may hold for different people.

Smith (1968) examined interaction patterns in the context of a specified housework task. She observed mothers with their preschool children in the home setting while they participated in various activities such as cookie making, bed making, meal preparation and feeding pets. The purpose of Smith's research was to identify verbal communication patterns of mothers while they shared these activities with their children, and to examine the relationship between the interaction patterns and the characteristics of the home environment,

including the amount of time spent by mothers in household duties, e.g. meal preparation, dishwashing, bedmaking, and "tidying up," and the amount of help with household duties.

Nelson (1963) also utilized a management framework to study activity patterns, a qualitative dimension of time use, for a sample of Costa Rican women. She noted a limitation of many time-use studies is they do not provide insight into the flow of activities as carried out in sequence, or the activity patterns. Nelson observed, "The activity pattern concept unites time with the people who live within it by indicating activities in the order in which they are performed rather than by aggregate clock time allocated out of the context of performance" (p. 3).

Nelson's research distinguished between behavioristic activity patterns, or what people do, and ideational activity patterns, or what people say they or others have done, do, or will do. The methodology for comparing the two activity patterns consisted of three steps: (a) homemakers were asked what they planned to do the following day; (b) they were observed for the following one-day period, and (c) on the third day the homemakers were asked to recall the sequence of activities of the previous day. The findings indicated the three methods do not yield equivalent data; the homemakers ideational activity patterns differ from the behavioral. Nelson suggested the differences provide clues as to the meaning activities may have for individuals.

A study by Davey (1971) is unique in the sense that it utilized data from a quantitative time-use study to measure a qualitative

variable, family interaction. A major purpose of the Davey study was to identify shared household activities which could provide opportunities for socialization and role modeling, as well as to identify times in the sequence of a day when families interact, where they interact, and the time spans for the interaction. In her analysis, Davey distinguished two dimensions of family interaction as they relate to family work activities: cooperation, referring to help given by family members in the performance of work, but not necessarily requiring the sharing of time and space; and participation which requires the sharing of time and space.

An assumption of Davey's research was that family members need to be together to interact, and that interaction time is necessary for the socialization and nurture of family members to develop human resources. Davey utilized data from the 1967-68 Walker-Telling time-use survey to measure family interaction. She derived a family interaction score using time spans where family members were involved in the same activity for the same unit of time. Activity categories used were social, eating, household maintenance and care of family members.

Baker (1970) investigated the relationship between family resource patterns for educability and family status and structure characteristics for a sample of Costa Rican families. Two of the assumptions guiding her research were "(1) Families...may organize available resources in ways that promote or interfere with the goal of the development of potential capacities of their members, and (2) These organizational activities and resources present possibilities of observation and measurement" (p. 5). One of the purposes of Baker's

research was to provide increased understanding of how resources are organized at the family level to facilitate achievement of family goals. Four dimensions of family resources were considered: quantity, quality, availability and use. Quantity of resources was measured using an inventory of nine resource categories: space, movement, care and appearance, play, task and work, child's learning, family learning, child's social contacts and family social contacts. The quality dimension was determined from the subject's response to drawings of resource-related activities in the nine resource categories. Baker's research provides an example of the measurement of human resources that has potential as a qualitative measure of household production.

Paolucci (1977) proposed using a human resource development framework for measuring the qualitative dimension of household production. She indicated that "the education of family members to assume productive and supportive roles within the family and in the larger society is a critical and, at specific points in the life span, a unique output of household production" (p. 1). Education of family members, as used in this context, refers to the processes of socialization and development that result in the development of human resources or human capital. Referring to this dimension of household production, Paolucci (1977) stated,

> The family organizes and uses a complex of resources--a mix of materials, "things," time, labor, talents, skills and space--to achieve its particularistic set of goals. In most families, some of these resources are invested in building the human resource of each family member; i.e. the capabilities of members so they can become productive and self-fulfilled persons. From this stance it is appropriate to view the development of the human resource as an investment in human capital and the

> role of the family and its members as one of production. Hence, a major kind of household production becomes that of enhancing the productive capabilities of family members. (p. 2)

Home economics professionals today recognize a number of reasons for measuring household production including the need to raise the status of those who do household work, to derive a more accurate picture of the gross national product, to form a basis for the formulation of public policy and legislation relating to families and individuals, and to provide a basis for family and individual decisions regarding employment and family roles. Considering the broad social as well as economic implications of these issues, it seems critical that these measures of household production consider the social relations that are integral to housework processes, as well as the implications for development of human skills and attributes and family integration.

Mainstream Economics and the New Home Economics

There are many references in the literature to the historical neglect by economists of household production. For example, Walker and Woods (1976) stated that "for many years, economists interested in the measurement of national income have included in their estimates an apology for the omission of household production" (p. 1). Glazer-Malbin (1976) noted that economists have considered measurement of the economic value of housework an "insoluble problem." According to Glazer-Malbin, "there is no (theoretical) justification for the exclusion of an estimated monetary value of housework by neoclassical or institutional economists for whom housework has economic utility" (p. 909).

In recent years the interest of economists in measuring household production has increased, apparently motivated by a variety of social as well as political and economical forces. Issues related to the women's movement, the need for guidelines in formulating family policy, legal disputes over the loss of wives' services (Glazer-Malbin, 1976), increasing participation of women in the paid labor force (Becker, 1976, and Schultz, 1972), studies of marital fertility (Brownlee, 1978), studies of the cost of living for various groups of the population (Berch, 1978), and the need for more accurate measures of the gross national product (Peterson, 1978, and Gauger 1973) are among the concerns that have brought this need to the forefront.

It is generally assumed when economists refer to the value of household production they are referring to economic value, although there are some exceptions, particularly in the New Home Economics. As a general rule, economists tend not to examine or question values, per se; rather they provide economic analyses which they assume others will use to make decisions based on their individual value preferences. This position was iterated by Ferber and Birnbaum (1977) in their analysis of economic models of household production:

> We do not advocate that economists impose their value judgments on others--even if they could. We do advocate that economists provide information which will enable people who choose to use it to make more realistic decisions, based on their individual values and interests. (p. 19)

Following the pattern established by Reid (1934), the economic models of household production utilized by economists generally consider the primary household output to be the performance of household maintenance tasks, including child care. The economic

values for household production are computed based on time spent at these tasks. Although the stated data base for household production analyses is the time use of the household unit, in reality the data usually reflect only the time use of the housewife.

Kahne (1975) identified four alternative methods that are used to compute economic values of household production:

1. Valuing the housewives' contribution as equivalent to foregone earnings in the market (opportunity costs).
2. Summing the results of application of prevailing wage rates to each of the "jobs" performed by housewives.
3. Estimating replacement costs of a substitute mother.
4. Considering the comparative advantage of work in the home and market and hence estimating the value of housewives' time relative to that of wage-earning women. (p. 1263)

Various economists have noted that these models for computing the value of household production fall short of optimum. Kahne (1975) stated that "the absence of data on inputs, the heterogeneity in the quality of services produced, and the absence of a pricing mechanism" (p. 1263) all make it difficult to give precision to the calculations. Peterson (1978) noted that "there is a difference between (1) studies that estimate the total value of household services performed by all members of the household, and (2) studies that estimate only the value of the wife's contribution to providing household services" (p. 146), so calculations that consider only the contributions of wives give an inadequate measure.

Brownlee (1978) referred to similar shortcomings in the work of economic historians. He stated that "very little research has treated the diverse economic activities which married women have performed within the household and, more generally, the entire range of trans-

actions that occurred within households, outside the marketplace" (p. 339).

Brownlee (1978) also identified a need for a "clearer understanding of the effect of market and nonmarket forces on the function of the household and the contribution of family life to economic development" (p. 208). In support of that idea, he stated:

> It is clear enough that historically the family has played an important role not only in reproducing the species but in inculcating cultural norms, in training in the division of labor, in educating both in altruism as well as competitive virtues, in providing for the intergenerational transfer of wealth, and in providing for the continuity of social order. All of these functions have obvious economic dimensions. (pp. 208-209)

As a means to remedying these shortcomings, Brownlee (1978) identified the need for "more rigorous measurement of time allocation within the household" which would help resolve the various interpretations of household production and "assist in estimating the contribution of household work to social product" (p. 199). He stressed that, considering the uses to which the economic measures of household production are applied, measures that consider only production that has market equivalents are inadequate:

> All of the various interpretations of women's work within the home are imprecise with regard to the way in which families in general and mothers, in particular, spend their time at home. Yet the assumptions made on this point are central to their content. (p. 205)

Brownlee recommended that economic historians refer to the "old" home economists for the specification of particularly those work activities that lack market equivalents.

The New Home Economics, a branch of economics that emerged in the 1960's, represents a new application of economic theory to an

understanding of the nature of household production, specifically to household investments in the development of human capital. Becker (1974), one of the primary contributors to the development of theory in the New Home Economics, has applied the tools of economic theory to an analysis of family interaction and the allocation of time by households.

Becker (1974) justified his entrance as an economist into the analysis of the interaction dimension of household production with a reference to prominent nineteenth-century economists, whom, he stated, considered these interactions the cornerstone of behavior. Becker credited these early economists with the idea which forms the basic assumption of his theory, that families behave rationally so as to maximize family income. Becker noted that these early economists gave more prominence to the interactions among individuals which they considered to be the basic determinants of wants, especially to variables like distinction, a good name, and benevolence. But "as greater rigor permeated the theory of consumer demand," these variables lost prominance; until today "each individual or family generally is assumed to have a utility function that depends directly on the goods and services it consumes" (p. 1065).

According to Becker (1976), economics need not be limited to the traditional study of material goods and the market sector, a view currently held by many economists, because its definition as the allocation of scarce means to satisfy competing ends gives economics a broad scope, and the economic approach to the study of such behavior has broad applicability. Becker noted that the economic approach to

the study of behavior is what sets economics apart from other disciplines that also study human behavior. The economic approach assumes maximizing behavior, market equilibrium, and stable preferences, the latter having reference to "underlying objects of choice that are produced by each household using market goods and services, their own time, and other inputs" (p. 5). This approach, according to Becker, is a comprehensive one that is applicable to all human behavior, including the behavior of men and women, adults or children, and households:

> All human behavior can be viewed as involving participants who maximize their utility from a stable set of preferences and accumulate an optimal amount of information and other inputs in a variety of markets. (p. 14)

Becker (1976) stated that his theory on the allocation of time in households

> reformulates the theory of the household so that households are no longer simply passive consumers of goods and services purchased in the market sector, but active producers of nonmarketable commodities, such as health or prestige. These commodities are produced by combining market goods and services, the own time of household members, education, ability, and other "environmental" variables. (p. 87)

Basic to Becker's (1976) theory is an analysis of choice that places the cost of time on the same footing as the cost of market goods, and the integration of the concepts of production and consumption to what Becker referred to as "productive" consumption. The model assumes that "households combine time and market goods to produce more basic commodities that directly enter their utility functions" (p. 91). In Becker's model,

> Households are both producing units and utility maximisers. They combine time and market goods via the "productive functions" to produce the basic commodities, and they choose the

> best combination of these commodities in the conventional way by maximising a utility function subject to a budget constraint. (pp. 91-92)

Becker (1976) noted that,

> (This) integration of production and consumption is at odds with the tendency for economists to separate them sharply, production occurring in firms and consumption in households. It should be pointed out, however, that in recent years economists increasingly recognise that a household is truly a "small factory": it combines capital goods, raw materials, and labour to clean, feed, procreate and otherwise produce useful commodities. Undoubtedly the fundamental reason for the traditional separation is that firms are usually given control over working time in exchange for market goods, while "discretionary" control of market goods and consumption time is retained by households as they create their own utility. If (presumably different) firms were also given control over market goods and consumption time in exchange for providing utility the separation would quickly fade away in analysis as well as in fact. (p. 92)

Becker (1976) stated that the assumption that households are producers as well as consumers is basic to the theory of the allocation of time by households.

> They produce commodities by combining inputs of goods and time according to the cost minimisation rules of the traditional theory of the firm. Commodities are produced in quantities determined by maximising a utility function of the commodity set subject to prices and a constraint on resources. Resources are measured by what is called full income, which is the sum of money income and that foregone or "lost" by the use of time and goods to obtain utility, while commodity prices are measured by the sum of the costs of their goods and time inputs. (pp. 112-113)

The purpose of Becker's theory of time allocation is to explain the basis of family decisions related to the distribution of labor between household work and the labor market. Becker (1976) noted, however, that aside from some empirical work that "has come to my attention, little systematic testing of the theory has been attempted" (pp. 90-91).

Two of the predictions based on the theory are of particular interest for this research review:

(A) Members (of households) who are relatively more efficient at market activites would use less of their time at consumption activities than would other members. Moreover, an increase in the relative market efficiency of any member would effect a reallocation of the time of all other members towards consumption activities in order to permit the former to spend more time at market activities. In short, the allocation of the time of any member is greatly influenced by the opportunities open to other members. (p. 108)

(B) A rise in earnings compensated by a decline in other income so that full income would be unchanged, would induce a decline in the amount of time used at consumption activities, because time would become more expensive. Partly goods would be substituted for the more expensive time in the production of each commodity, and partly goods-intensive commodities would be substituted for the more expensive time-intensive ones. Both substitutions require less time to be used at consumption, and permit more to be used at work. Since the reallocation of time involves simultaneously a reallocation of goods and commodities, all three decisions become intimately related. (p. 113)

Ferber and Birnbaum (1977), while lauding the "important new insights" gained from the "considerable originality" of Becker and others of the New Home Economics in applying the economic approach to an analysis of family behavior, expressed concern that "we are shown glimpses of the complex reality of the world only to find that they are totally ignored in the simple, elegant models the authors proceed to construct" (p. 19). Ferber and Birnbaum acknowledged that the models have "an honorable place" in the development of theory, but "for purposes of decision making, they do not reflect reality" (p. 19).

Ferber and Birnbaum began by questioning the basic assumption of the economic model: that people always behave rationally to maximize income. Ferber and Birnbaum argued that family decisions are based

more on tradition than on rationality, and that the family does not behave as "one unit, single-minded, and indivisible" (p. 21).

Referring to prediction (A) of the Becker model, that households would allocate participation in market activities to the individual who would be most efficient in that area, Ferber and Birnbaum stated that tradition and custom determine whether or not a person is trained for homework or market work, and it is that, not rationality or efficiency that determines the allocation of time. Women specialize in homework, according to Ferber and Birnbaum, because of tradition and custom; they have less opportunity to specialize in market work and therefore earn less in the labor market. The result is a circular relationship: "women specialize in housework because they earn less in the labor market, and they earn less in the labor market because they specialize in housework" (p. 20).

With regard to the second part of prediction (A), that as one member increases in relative market efficiency there would be a re-allocation of the time of other members towards consumption activities (housework), Ferber and Birnbaum (1977) referred to the time-use studies that show that even when wives are working outside the home, husbands spend very little more time on housework. Here again, according to Ferber and Birnbaum, it is tradition and custom rather than efficiency that is the determining factor.

Ferber and Birnbaum (1977) did not take issue with the second pre-diction (B), that as time becomes more expensive, goods would be substituted for time, and goods-intensive commodities would be substituted for time-intensive ones, making it possible to spend more

time at work and less at consumption (housework). Rather, they argued in favor of the substitution of market goods and services for home production. Ferber and Birnbaum stated that "all housework can be performed by a hired housekeeper" (p. 25) and taking into consideration the relative value of market work and housework, suggested that individuals who would still choose to do the latter would be "squander(ing) their time and (would) get little to show for it" (p. 27).

Although Ferber and Birnbaum did not specify what they included as housework in the above reference, it seems apparent from the subsequent discussion they were referring to child care as well as household maintenance tasks. In considering the issue of whether services performed by the housewife herself would be more valuable than comparable ones performed by a hired worker, they referred to two dimensions of value beyond the economic dimension: (a) the quality of the services, and (b) the satisfaction of enjoyment derived from providing them. Neither was considered a rational basis for time-allocations between housework and market work. To support their assertion, they sited observations from history:

> Throughout history, and throughout the world, all household tasks have been relegated to hired help by truly wealthy families. This is true not only of housecleaning, laundering, gardening, and cooking, but is equally true of child care. (p. 26)

Ferber and Birnbaum also discredited the arguments that the housewife would be better suited to do the work because of better education and more experience. They did make an exception for child care, but added,

> Lest we be tempted to assume that mothers accumulate a great deal of valuable experience in this field, we need to remember that in the typical modern family with one, two, or at most three children, a parent is somewhat in the position of a teacher who has to move on to the higher class with the children each year. A practical nurse used to caring for infants, a nanny moving from one family with young children to another, and governness always in charge of young teen-agers would be far more likely to have gained useful experience. (p. 26)

Ferber and Birnbaum suggested that, "if a mother's presence for young children is considered especially important, it is possible to add a higher percentage (in the decision model) when there are young children in the house" (p. 26). They added that "while such estimates involve subjective judgment they have the considerable advantage of making these judgments clearly and explicitly" (p. 26).

Brown (1979a) took the position that household work activities performed by family members and the market substitutes are non-comparable and cannot be satisfactorily substituted one for the other. She asserted that attempts of economists to "force analysis of the family's behavior into a rational decision-making model during a period when noneconomic forces have become more powerful have severely limited the economist's ability to analyze in a meaningful way the changes occurring in the economic activities of families" (p. 3).

According to Brown (1979a), "economic forces are most powerful when people live close to a subsistence standard of living and cannot afford to ignore the economic constraints they face because they cannot afford to make economic mistakes" (p. 3). In times of relative affluence, however, when people have more discretionary power over their work and consumption activities, economic constraints are less powerful. Brown stated,

> Indulging in one's own preferences is a modern-day luxury, and it allows irrationalities or noneconomic forces to play a larger role in decision-making. Economic forces remain important, but economists must broaden their analysis of family behavior by looking at the social and political forces that simultaneously shape people's preferences and affect the price structure and income distribution. (p. 4)

Brown (1979a) defined housework as a "necessity" in that it is (a) readily available under normal circumstances, and (b) taken for granted until the process of obtaining it is disrupted. The purpose of her analysis was to examine "how current changes in the family and in women's work have actually affected the provision of (these) essential housework services" (p. 2), and what influence changes in the provision of housework services may have on families.

Brown divided housework according to its noneconomic components: providing security, sex, love, support, and nurturing; and its economic components: providing food and clothing, keeping house, and child care. Brown suggested that, although these work activities may have decreased in <u>relative</u> importance over the past fifty years as a proportion of the total consumption activities of family members, they have not diminished in <u>absolute</u> importance.

Brown (1979a) identified four characteristics of housework and market work that act as constraints on women's time allocation decisions: (1) timing--provision of goods and services must be provided at times dictated by human needs; (2) a minimal amount of housework is required in order for the family to function; (3) market work must be done in blocks of time at specified hours, and (4) most services provided within the home cannot be substituted with goods and

services bought in the marketplace. Brown stressed it is this latter point that has been "less obvious" to economists.

Utilizing data from the 1972-73 Consumer Expenditure Survey, Brown (1979b) showed there has been very little substitution of market goods for homemaker's time; both employed wives and full-time homemakers have similar expenditure patterns. Using a comparision measure that takes into account a family's assets, number and ages of children, the life-cycle stage of the family head and the work status of the wife, and the family's after-tax income, Brown illustrated that "for some categories of expenditures--house furnishings, furniture and appliances, and health care--the wife's working status made no significant difference" (p. 182). There was, however, a difference in expenditures between the two groups in those areas where additional expenses are incurred when a wife takes a job--working wives spent more for transportation, Social Security, and clothing.

Strober and Weinberg (1980) found similar results in their study of strategies used by employed and nonemployed wives to relieve time pressures.

> Holding income and life-cycle stage constant, neither wives' employment nor recent entry into the labor force are significant determinants of the purchase or ownership of labor-saving durables such as microwave ovens and dishwashers. ....working wives and nonworking wives are generally similar with respect to method of meal preparation and shopping behavior. (p. 338)

Similar patterns have been found when comparing the substitution of services in families. Walker and Woods (1976) found that very little work was done by anyone outside the family or by commercial services; and whether the wife was employed or nonemployed made very little difference in the amount of commercial services used.

Brown (1982) suggested this lack of substitution of time and market goods in housework activities is due in part to the personalized nature of home production. "The home specializes in producing mothering and the nurturing of family members along with personalized care in providing food, clothing and shelter" (p.155). Brown also noted that "the round-the-clock care of family members' needs makes it impossible to value her time with her replacement cost" (p. 155).

> The personalized and on-call nature of her work prevents us from evaluating the services of the housewife as a combination of so many hours of chauffer, cook, babysitter, and laundress per day. In the real world, the household could not contract to buy these services in the small amounts of time and at the random hours that the housewife actually performs these duties. Even in those instances where the contracting of some services occurs, the service is more impersonalized and must be directed by someone (usually the housewife). The purchased services usually do not reflect the kind of service the housewife provides because she intimately knows the members she is serving and she takes responsibility for organizing and providing the care as it is needed. (p. 155)

Brown concluded that the goal of economic efficiency does not provide the basis for family time-allocation decisions. She stated that if it did, we would see more families resorting to economies of scale: families banding together with other families to share housework activities and capital equipment. Brown noted what we do see are families investing large amounts of resources in order to buy privacy and independence.

Brown (1982) noted that it is the noneconomic component of household work activities, the provision of security, love, support and nurturing, which represents the real cost in the changing distribution of time between housework and market work. Referring to the Walker

and Woods (1976) study, Brown (1979b) indicated the major difference between the employed and nonemployed wife's housework activities occurred in the category of secondary, nonphysical family care, with employed wives spending less time in these activities. Brown suggested this may be because much of the housework is done at a time children are most likely to be doing homework, watching television, or sleeping. Brown (1982) added,

> As we experience the personal cost of our economic gains, then perhaps we will be willing to rethink the relative importance of the economic gains versus our noneconomic needs for love, self-development, and satisfying relationships that come with a good home and community life. (p. 166)

Berch (1978), also an economist, proposed a model for examining housework that considers both the social and economic components of housework. Berch noted there is a lack of agreement as to how housework should be valued due to the lack of conceptual clarity as to what housework is, whether production or consumption, and of goods and services or both, and to the lack of agreement among housewives as to whether housework is work or leisure. Berch used the distinction between task-oriented labor and time-oriented labor as a model to explain why, with the availability of technology, all goods production in the household has not been transferred to the market leaving the household as a consumption sphere only. Berch noted that over time there has been little or no decrease either in the amount of time spent on housework or with the problems of fatigue and dissatisfaction associated with housework.

Berch described the household production process as "a combination of inputs to produce outputs under a given set of tastes, a set

of budget constraints and a technological framework" (p. 337). Inputs include both labor and goods. Outputs include tangible goods and services, both having quality and quantity dimensions, as well as intangibles such as "atmosphere," or "a good environment." She noted that the intangibles are not only important ouptuts, but "are very sensitive to changes in the production process, and thus cannot be set aside after initial consideration" (p. 341).

According to Berch's analysis, women are the primary suppliers of labor inputs. She stated that labor inputs from others have declined due to compulsory education of children, the lack of availability of household help, fewer live-in relatives such as the maiden aunt, and very little help from husbands.

Berch identified four characteristics which she suggested are critical elements of housework. The first dimension is timing: some tasks are periodic, some continual, and some must be accomplished in a given sequence. A second characteristic, which Berch referred to as an "unusual" dimension, is that the work is supposed to satisfy the creative needs of the doer and provide self-fulfillment. A third characteristic is that it involves many tasks, most of which are performed by the same worker. The fourth characteristic referred to by Berch is the criteria for evaluation of efficiency:

> The whole cost efficiency calculus for the household production process is unique, since the quality of the output is possibly more important than the quantity. Furthermore, the housewife may value her labor as a "free input" once she has incurred the fixed cost, the "overhead" of having decided not to work in the market but to stay at home. Normally, a firm with a large overhead would spread the costs by expanding scale of production--an option not always available to the housewife. True, she can decide to increase the ratio of home-produced to market-produced goods in her expenditures (as long

> as she's home all day, bake bread, make her clothes....) but she will not, normally, decide to double her family size, or merge households with the family next door. (p. 342)

Berch added that the ultimate evaluation of her efficiency is "not only on the basis of cost efficiency, but on the quality of the products, on the intangibles of the 'atmosphere' produced, and on how completely she is satisfied or 'fulfilled' in doing it" (p. 342).

Berch recommended a distinction between task-oriented labor and time-oriented labor as the basis for a model to explain the development of housework. Housework in pre-industrial times was task-oriented labor where "work" and "life" were intertwined and the goal was to accomplish a set of activities rather than the efficient use of time. Berch indicated the time-oriented mode is a product of industrialization; here work is typically regulated by the clock or performed with respect to a time efficient dimension.

> Although time-oriented housework may involve performing similar activities as task-oriented housework, it is done with a different motivation and set of constraints. Time oriented housework is based more on a cost-efficiency model; as in industry, the work should be performed so as to use new technological devices to save time, effort, and, if possible, expense. (p. 345)

Berch stated that the model explains why even though task-oriented workers may buy labor-saving technology, it has not reduced the time required for housework: "they buy the machinery to improve the quality of their output, or the quality of their work experience" (p. 346).

Berch suggested the task- and time-orientation model helps explain "many curious phenomenon about housework" (p. 346):

> It explains why housewives, when asked to report specifically leisure activities, still respond with work categories. It

> explains why one segment of housewives (the task-oriented) complain of their lack of status. It explains why loneliness is a major problem for them, since task-oriented work is traditionally sociable, and why they shop so frequently to escape loneliness. (p. 346)

Berch stated the model also helps explain the status problem of houseworkers, suggesting the feeling they are performing useless or unproductive work "has its roots in the denigration of housework by those accustomed to time-oriented labor" (p. 344).

Sociology

The appearance of housework as a topic of research among sociologists is relatively recent. Noting the historical lack of research related to housework, Oakley (1980) stated,

> It is simply amazing that an activity which consumes a large proportion of the daily energy of 85% of the adult female population as housewives and of a majority of the total population in one form or another should have been ignored so completely for so long. (p. 9)

During the decade of the 1970's, housework began to receive the serious consideration of a number of social scientists. According to Berk (1980), this growing interest was a reflection of the need to gain greater understanding of "the changing realities of work and family life for women," which, she added, "cannot be fully understood or even adequately described without attention to this 'invisible' labor and the social relations that surround it" (p. 15). However, very little sociological research and theory related to housework has considered the social relations that surround housework; rather, the emphasis has been on analyses of housework as labor and on housework as a component of the role of housewife.

Sociologists have variously conceptualized housework as "any productive household activities associated with either home 'maintenance' or family 'maintenance'" (Berheide, Berk, and Berk, 1976, p. 494), or as something greater than the sum of the individual maintenance tasks. The latter conceptualization emphasizes primarily two components of the "larger" dimension of housework, attitudes about housework and the satisfactions and tensions of the housewife role (Berch, 1978).

The various conceptualizations of housework indicate some ambiguity among social scientists as to the nature of housework, what it is and how it should be valued. For example, Olson (1979) noted a lack of conceptual clarity in sociological literature, specifically between housework and child care, i.e. some social studies include child care as housework while others dichotomize them. Olson asked, "Since it is impossible to care for children without cooking, cleaning, and so on--all activities which are commonly labeled housework--is it appropriate to differentiate between the two activities at all?" (p. 443). Olson suggested an alternative would be to distinguish between direct and indirect child care. Direct care, according to Olson, would include any care that requires the parents attending to the child in a physically proximate way, such as showing affection, supervision, verbal interaction, and physical care. Indirect care would be that which provides for the needs of the child but does not involve direct personal contact between parent and child.

Sociological studies on housework tend to take one of two basic approaches. One is an institutional perspective that includes studies of social stratification and of the relations and contradictions

between paid work and family work activities. In this approach, housework is conceptualized as labor, or as an occupation in the same sense as other occupations in the paid labor force. The other perspective is that of role theory, which examines the various dimensions of family roles, including the variables of role norms, sanctions to enforce the norms, role enactment, role strain, and role identification. In this approach housework is regarded as a primary component of the homemaker's role.

The review of literature will first consider research from the institutional perspective, specifically research on social stratification. Traditionally, stratification research has assumed women derive status from the occupation of their husbands, and any status that might be accorded women and household labor independent of their husband's occupation has been ignored. For example, Treiman and Terrell (1975) have noted that, until recently, "women were routinely excluded from stratification studies on the ground that their experiences were too complicated for analysis" (p. 174). In their study, Treiman and Terrell examined the process of status attainment for men and women. However, they gave consideration only to the work of women in the paid labor force; no mention was made of household work. There is a similar deficiency in the work of Oppenheimer (1977). She referred to a "rapidly blossoming interest among stratification researchers in measuring the socioeconomic status and social mobility of women," and stated that her interest was in "the causal relationship between the wife's socioeconomic contribution to the family and her husband's socioeconomic characteristics" (p. 389). However her

analysis considered only paid work as being part of the socioeconomic contribution of women.

The work of Treiman and Terrell (1975) and of Oppenheimer (1977) illustrates an assumption common in early stratification literature that housework is not work and is a non-status occupation. Some recent stratification research, however, has attempted to compare housework as an occupation with other occupations in the market place as it contributes to the status of women as homemakers. One such study was done by Bose (1980), who explored the place of the occupational role of housewife in social mobility research. According to Bose, part of the difficulty in measuring status of the housewife is due to the lack of agreement on "the components of the homemaker job and the function this job has in the larger stratification system" (p. 69). The practice of defining the occupation of housewife in terms of labor force equivalents (cooking, cleaning, caring for children, nursing, and administrative skills) is inadequate, according to Bose, because there are aspects of the job that have no labor market equivalents, such as straightening up or nurturing. "Thus the housewife role is greater than the sum of its market-defined parts" (Bose, 1980, p. 76).

Bose's method for resolving the problem was to find an approximate labor market equivalent of the role and average the prestige scores of those occupations. Bose (1980) asked survey respondents to rank the occupations of housewife and househusband by sorting 110 vignette cards each representing separate occupations. Based on the results of the survey, Bose assigned housewifery a prestige score of

51 of a possible 100 points. Bose offered the following explanation of the various prestige rankings assigned by men and women to the job of housewife:

> Exactly how a women views this role depends on her other job options and need for income, such that the status of housewife is higher than most working-class women's jobs, but lower than most middle-class women's jobs. So the former are likely to be satisfied with the role and latter to be dissatisfied. Further, those who have been in the paid labor force are likely to be so dissatisfied as to lower their ratings of housewife.... Exactly how men view the role depends primarily on their age. (p. 84)

In response to the question as to why so many women choose paid jobs that have lower status than housewife, Bose suggested several possibilities including what she said was "the most obvious, that status is not the major motivation in making decisions" (p. 80).

Acker (1980) has argued that the role of housewife cannot accurately be compared with other occupations in social stratification research because it is "an occupation with no income and with incumbents whose education spans the whole range of possible levels" (p. 28). Acker suggested that if the prestige accorded the housewife is attained using non-economic criteria, the score cannot represent her true socioeconomic position. According to Acker, what the score does represent is "the generalized perception that the role of housewife is an honorable one for women" (p. 29). Acker added that it may also indicate "that women, as women, are given a middling sort of respect in our society" (p. 29).

In a review of recent stratification research, Acker (1980) emphasized that a primary criteria for evaluating the usefulness of any stratification theory is whether it can help understand or explain

the disadvantaged and subordinate position of women in society. Acker stated that housework, or the role of housewife, would enter into stratification theory not as an occupation to be rated against other occupations but as a variable that must be considered in order to understand the subordinated position of women in the paid labor force and in society.

Oakley (1980) emphasized the need for additional research that would examine many of the assumptions responsible for the disadvantaged position of women and the low status attached to the labor of women, both in the home and in paid labor occupations. Oakley noted among the assumptions that should be questioned those that assume housework requires less skill and is less demanding than other occupations, and that because it is not economically compensated it makes only a marginal contribution to the national economy. Oakley added that the most fundamental assumption that must be questioned was the belief that "since only those who are economically productive do 'real' work, housework is not real work at all: In its unreality it is either not work or an intrinsically trivial work activity" (p. 8). With regard to the latter assumption Oakley stated, "Any academic study of household labor must challenge at least the last of these assumptions by saying that housework is important enough to be studied" (p. 8). Noting that "many who have researched and discussed household labor in recent years have challenged much more of the stereotype than this and have exposed other important dimensions of what could be termed the 'official morality' of housework," Oakley

made a plea to go beyond these stereotypes "to research and make accessible the process of household labor" (p. 9).

Glazer-Malbin (1976) has indicated the interest of role theorists in the study of housework and the homemaker role began in the mid 1950's with the Blood and Wolfe studies on the division of labor in the family. According to Glazer-Malbin, their interest was motivated by "a concern with the effects of a wife's working outside the home, with the availability of kinship networks, and with the marital division of labor" (p. 907). The research studies of Lopata (1971) and Oakley (1974) were among the first to consider the influence of housework on the roles of women, both within the family and in relation to the larger social structure.

Nye (1976) identified the following family roles: provider, housekeeper, socialization, child care, kinship, sexual, recreational, and therapeutic roles. According to Slocum and Nye (1976), the housekeeper role includes all of the instrumental tasks in food processing, cooking and serving, cleaning, laundering, repair of clothing and household equipment, marketing, and keeping the financial records relevant to these tasks. Slocum and Nye made a distinction between housekeeper and housewife roles, noting that housewife "seems to include everything that wives usually do within the confines of the home..., everything except provider" (p. 90).

Gecas (1976) defined the socialization role to include activities concerned primarily with the social and psychological development of the child, with child care including the physical and psychological maintenance of the child. Gecas noted that in actual family life

there is considerable overlap between the socialization and child care roles in that socialization takes place while the child is being cared for.

The therapeutic role was defined by Nye (1976) to include listening to problems, sympathizing, giving reassurance and affection, and offering help in problem solving. Nye treated the therapeutic role as a hypothesis since it has received little attention in studies of family role theory. According to Nye, the criteria for determining whether the role exists includes "the beliefs of respondents that spouses have a duty to perform the role and evidence that some type of sanction is provided for nonperformance of the prescriptions and against behavior violating the proscriptions" (p. 118). Data for testing the hypothesis were gathered using parallel questionnaires for husbands and wives in 210 couples. Based on the responses, Nye concluded:

> The normative, sanction and behavioral data confirm the hypothesis of a therapeutic role--one not confined to the middle class or any other narrow segment of families. However, an appreciable minority of spouses do not view it as a duty or enact it in any positive way. Thus, the role does not appear to be as fully crystallized as some of the traditional family roles. Initial data suggest appreciable sex differences--not only that more women enact the role well, but also that they value it highly. (p. 129)

Research based on role theory has included survey research comparing satisfaction with paid work and full-time housework. For example, Ferree (1976) conducted a survey comparing housework and paid work as sources of satisfaction. Respondents were predominantly working class women, living in the Boston area, and all were living with their husbands, had no preschool children and at least one child

in the first or second grade. Ferree concluded that for this sample, "full-time housewives were more likely to be dissatisfied with the way they are spending their lives, to feel that they have not had a fair opportunity in life, and to want their daughters to be 'mostly different' from themselves" (p. 434).

Ferree (1976) reported that working women generally had higher levels of competence and self-esteem, greater opportunities for independence and self-determination, and "despite the strains of carrying a double role, the woman with a fulltime outside job is happier and feels herself to be better off than the fulltime housewife" (p. 434).

Wright (1978) called attention to a "curious imbalance" between reports of job satisfaction for men and for women:

> When the focus is on working men, the most commonly encountered themes are that work is degrading, demeaning, alienating, and unsatisfying. In contrast, when the focus is on working women, the positive, liberating, self-enriching aspects of the work are emphasized, this despite the fact that women tend to be excluded from the presumably more satisfying professional and managerial careers. (p. 302)

Noting that about three-quarters of the "outside" work that women do is semi-skilled work, low-level clerical work and service occupations such as waitressing and cleaning, Wright stated,

> In order to sustain a generally positive imagery of women's labor-force participation in light of these facts, contrast is sometimes drawn with the only obvious alternative for most women: fulltime housewifery. The implication, often stated quite explicitly, is that nearly anything is preferable to that. (p. 302)

Wright suggested the possibility that some reports of the dissatisfation felt by housewives were overemphasized or exaggerated. He noted, for example, that the actual statistical differences reported by Ferree (1976) in reported happiness and satisfaction between

working women and housewives were not very sharp. Wright attempted to replicate Ferree's major findings using data from the "Quality of American Life" survey conducted by Campbell, Converse, and Rogers in 1971, and also data from five General Social Surveys conducted by the National Opinion Research Center between 1972 and 1976. The findings from this analysis were that there were "no consistent, substantial, or statistically significant differences in the reported happiness of working women and housewives" (p. 306). Wright stated,

> The inescapable conclusion is that for large proportions of housewives, fulltime housewifery is preferred to outside work, and moreover, that housework is a genuine source of satisfaction to them, something they say they like to do. Even for women currently working outside the home, there is very little indication that their household chores are a source of dissatisfaction for them or that their housework is less important to them personally. (p. 307)

However, Wright's research (1978), as well as Ferree's (1976), indicated that at least some women are not satisfied with the role of homemaker. Some sociological research has explored possible sources of dissatisfaction with the homemaker role or with role strain. Oakley (1974), for example, has suggested that one source of role strain is that child care and housework are often contradictory roles, not in the sense that children "untidy the tidy house," but that:

> The two roles are, in principle, more fundamentally opposed. The servicing function is basic to housework; children are people. Child-care is 'productive'; housework is not. Housework has short-term and repetitive goals; the house is cleaned today and again tomorrow, and so on.... Motherhood has a single long-term goal, which can be described as the mother's own eventual unemployment. A 'successful' mother brings up her children to do without her. (pp. 166-67)

Olson (1979) also suggested that the housekeeper role and the child care role may be incompatible. She noted that the assumption in

our society has been that the two roles naturally fit well together, with the tasks of both roles being typically assigned to the same person. Olson stated that in fact, however, there were conflicts between the roles that have implications for the mother as well as for family interaction. To evaluate the impact of these potential conflicts on family interaction, Olson interviewed 27 mothers of preschool children and made field notes of the mother-child interaction during the course of the interview. The incompatibility of the two roles was considered at both the social-psychological level and the structural level.

At the social-psychological level, Olson (1979) identified the following factors that influence role incompatability: (a) the tasks cannot always be performed simultaneously, with the result that one may be neglected at the expense of the other; (b) allocating time and energy to tasks requires an assessment of the relative importance of tasks; (c) the tasks mutually interrupt and intersect each other, e.g. children interrupt mothers while they do housework, and children's activities create the need for additional housework; (d) conflicting goals for each role, e.g. wanting children to have freedom to explore and manipulate their environment may conflict with the goal of an orderly house; (e) the belief that the tasks of housework and child care are compatible may cause frustrations and feelings of personal inadequacy when an individual finds it difficult to combine the two; and (f) criteria for task evaluation are sometimes ambiguous; and in the case of child rearing it is difficult to foresee the impact of a given child rearing practice.

At the structural level, Olson (1979) suggested:

> The incompatibilities between housework and child care stem from the allocation of the two tasks to the same individual within a privatized household setting. The elaborate definitions regarding appropriate child care, the high level of importance assigned to it, the relative absence of productive activities of which children can be a part, and the absence of multiple adult caretakers to share in the child-rearing task all make their contribution to the potential role conflict between housework and child care. (p. 452)

Olson (1979) found that a number of specific variables served to increase or decrease the experience of housework-child care conflict, including "ages and number of children, children's health and temperament, the size and layout of the dwelling, household equipment, husband's participation and evaluation of housework, weather, and housework standards" (p. 452).

In a subsequent analysis of the same data, Olson (1981) examined the links between housekeeping role performance and home care given to children, considering four broad categories of child care: "positive" interaction between caretaker and child; "negative" interaction; responsiveness; and restrictiveness. According to Olson,

> The variable of housework importance was related to three child care variables: the frequency of positive interaction between mother and child, maternal responsiveness, and the degree of parental restrictiveness. The division of household labor, however, was not related to these child care variables. Negative interaction between mother and child, by contrast, was related to the division of household labor, but not to housework importance. (p. 80)

To explain these findings, Olson (1981) suggested,

> The key factor in predicting positive interaction between mother and child, the immediacy of her responsiveness when in the midst of household chores, and the degree of her restrictiveness is the defined importance of the child care role relative to the housekeeping role. Although virtually all of these respondents would agree that children are ultimately more important than housework, they varied in the relative

> importance assigned to housework, child care and other activities. (p. 80)

Piotrkowski (1979) also investigated the relationship between housework and family interaction, with a special emphasis on the emotional dynamics of family life. She used a case study approach, collecting 70 hours of interview and observational data for an intact family with three preschool children. Piotrkowski stated the overlap or interface between the roles of housework and care of children not only results in conceptual confusion for those who study family dynamics, but also is a cause of role ambiguity for women. Piotrkowski suggested the notion that disliking one's work (housework) implies inadequate loving of one's children is an example of the influence of overlapping roles on emotional life. She identified additional causes of role strain, including the feeling of being tied to the work both by obligations to young children and by dependence on the wages earned by the husband-father; experiencing boredom with the work as an assault on one's ideal self; feeling the work goes unvalued (no pay or benefits) and unappreciated, internal concflicts between valuing the role and wanting to dissociate one's self from it, and the additional frustration of feeling alone in these feelings, convinced that others do not experience the same doubts and anxieties.

Based on the case study analysis, Piotrkowski (1979) postulated that the role strain experienced by the wife-mother influences her relationship with other family members, both in the content of the interaction and in her emotional and interpersonal availability, so that as strain from household work increases, emotional availability

and interpersonal availability decreases, and the conflicts between mothers and children increase.

With respect to interaction content, Piotrkowski suggested that when household work activities are primarily the responsibility of the mother, a substantial percentage of her interactions with her family members will be domestic and instrumental rather than social interaction. She noted this was in contrast to Parson's commonly accepted theory that the mother-wife is the expressive leader in the family while the father is the instrumental leader. Piotrkowski observed that "such a view neglected the household work peformed in the home by the wife-mother" (p. 215).

Sociological studies on the division of labor within households have added important insights to understanding the nature of household work and the dynamics of family interaction. Berheide, Berk and Berk (1976) collected interview and observation data, as well as 24-hour time use diaries, to assess (a) what household work consists of, (b) the division of labor, and (c) women's attitudes about household work. Data were gathered from women in 43 households. The sample included single-parent families, women without children, and two-parent nuclear families. Household work was defined as "any productive household activities associated with either home 'maintenance' or family 'maintenance'" (p. 494). Findings indicated that husbands and children contributed only minimally to household work, and women were found to have a "high rate of participation in many of the tasks stereotyped as the husband's job" (p. 502), including emptying the garbage and household repairs.

Berheide, et al, observed that,

> When women <u>were</u> assisted in the household chores, what they received was "help." Responsibility remained with the women, implying not only direct supervision of the household work process undertaken by others, and "quality control" over the product, but also a more general managerial role carrying burdens of its own. (pp. 503-504)

They also found, however, that this division of labor did not seem to be troublesome for the women. Berheide, et al, stated that "they do not feel especially pressured and rarely challenge the household division of labor" (p. 514). In fact, attitudes about household work in general seemed to be generally neutral. However, Berheide, et al, noted that "a nontrivial number" (p. 510), about ten percent, felt some tension about their conflicting roles. They suggested the reason so few felt that tension was that women may have developed strategies to enable them to deal "with a potentially unhappy situation" (p. 511). Also, some may have accepted the boring and tedious nature of the work because "the broader roles of wife, mother, and homemaker were satisfying" (p. 511). Berheide, et al, noted that most of their respondents felt a "strong emotional attachment to the household members for whom they labored" (p. 511), and made a tentative suggestion that altruism may be a factor "that should not be neglected" (p. 511) as a possible explanation for the overall satisfaction with household work.

Referring to inequities in the division of household labor, Berheide, et al, (1976), recommended that since "it seems unlikely that children and husbands will readily volunteer to undertake a larger proportion of household tasks, some form of persuasion and/or coercion may well be required if a more equitable division of labor is

going to materialize" (p. 514). They acknowledged that "should conflict over the division of household labor become really heated" it would be the women who would shoulder the burden of costs since "more than men, their aspirations, self-image, and esteem may be linked to the smooth functioning of a happy household" (p. 514).

Thrall (1978) also studied the division of labor in households, utilizing data gathered from interviews with both husbands and wives in 99 urban, middle class families with school-age children, and examined the structural characteristics of role stereotypy and housework done by children. Role stereotypy, as defined by Thrall, is the normative expectation that one person is supposed to do a task, and that another is then expected not to do it. The study identified division of labor among 25 household tasks, nearly all of which were tasks which serve the family as a whole rather than individual family members. Findings were that even though there was variation from task to task in the number of family members expected to do or not to do a particular task, there was a "typical" pattern of division of labor that corresponded to common ideas of men's work and women's work:

> Wives do things inside the house, taking care of meals, groceries, laundry, and cleaning. The only three tasks wives are expected not to do are taking trash to the dump, mowing the lawn, and fixing things around the house. For husbands, there is a more even balance in the number of tasks they are expected to do and not to do. They are expected to do all the outdoor chores and also such indoor tasks as fixing things and changing light bulbs. Husbands are expected not to do cleaning or laundry or help with meals. (p. 256)

Evidence was also found of sex-role stereotyping in the assignment of tasks to children. Thrall stated that parent responses

on reasons for assigning tasks to children "made it clear...that the sex of the child is a very important criterion" (p. 259).

With respect to the overall participation of children in household work, Thrall reported that older children took part in more of the tasks than did younger children, but did not take over these tasks completely; parents still retained primary responsibility for the work. Chores typically assigned to children were "things like making their beds or picking up their rooms which are specific to the child and which were not part of the family task performance records" (p. 258). Not all families assigned chores to children. Nine percent assigned none, 48 percent assigned an averaage of one or two specific chores, and 43 percent assigned an average of three or more. Attitudes about assigning chores to children also varied:

> The most frequently mentioned single theme was that it is important for children to do something, partly so they will feel a part of the family but even more for training, so they will know how to do various things when they grow up. (p. 259)

Thrall added that, "implicit in this response is the idea that the actual labor contribution of the children is secondary, perhaps even negative" (p. 259). Another frequently given response was the opposite attitude, that the work assigned to children should be a real contribution, not made-up chores just for training. Thrall noted, "Here the implication is that if there were no real way the children could help, it would be better for them not to do any chores at all" (p. 259). According to Thrall, children's work participation appeared to be determined more by parental values than by any objective need for the children's help.

White and Brinkerhoff (1981) investigated parental reasons for involving children in household work. Noting a scarcity of research on children's involvement in housework, White and Brinkerhoff stated,

> Almost universally, children's work has been a sidelight rather than a focus of research and there is little accurate descriptive data on children's work in the family. Nor has there been any systematic consideration of the meaning of children's work for family organization and interaction. (p. 789)

To help fill that gap, White and Brinkerhoff (1981) questioned parents and children in 790 Nebraska homes regarding "the meaning families attach to children's work, i.e. their rationales and interpretations" (p. 789). Their findings suggested five primary reasons why parents assign work responsibilities to children:

> Developmental: Doing chores builds character, develops responsibility, helps children learn.
>
> Reciprocal obligation: It is their duty to help the family; working together is part of being a family; occasionally, more bluntly, "they live here, don't they?"
>
> Extrinsic: Parents need help.
>
> Task learning: Children need to learn how to do these tasks.
>
> Residual: All other reasons, most often that child has to earn an allowance or needs something to do in order to keep busy. (p. 793)

White and Brinkerhoff found that over seventy percent of parental responses were in the developmental category, and suggested that the frequency of response is indicative of "a normative or socially desirable response" (p. 794). Their survey indicated that in families where children's work was assigned only a developmental meaning, children worked the fewest hours (4.40 mean hours/week), while in families where work was given an extrinsic interpretation, children

were likely to work the longest hours (4.86 mean hours/week) and were also most likely to get paid for their work.

White and Brinkerhoff (1981) concluded that children's work around the house is "an ubiquitous and value-laden feature of family life" (p. 797). Although their research did not examine family interaction in the context of housework, they speculated that "the parent-child division of labor (chores) may create almost as much family tension as does the husband-wife division of labor" (p. 797). They recommended that, "given the centrality of chores for the experiences of children and families, further research is necessary in order to document the vital role of work and work methods in family life and the consequences (developmental and otherwise) of children's involvement in the family division of labor" (p. 797).

The findings of Thrall (1978) and Berheide, et al (1976), as well as White and Brinkerhoff (1981), indicate that the overall contribution of children to housework is minimal. Keniston (1977) has indicated that historically, this was not the case. Referring to the historical changes in family functions, Keniston stated that especially in early agrarian families in America, children made important contributions to household work activities and to the economic well-being of the family.

> The most important difference between these early American families and our own is that early families constituted economic units in which all members, from young children on up, played important productive roles within the household. The prosperity of the whole family depended on how well husband, wife, and children could manage and cultivate the land.... Children were economic assets. (p. 13-14)

Keniston noted that today, in contrast, "most American adult family members work for pay, while children rarely work at all" (p. 14). Rapoport and Rapoport (1977) suggested reasons for children's nonparticipation in housework may go beyond the economic. They noted the trend today is to exempt children from participation in household work and to focus instead on the "needs" of the child: "No sacrifice is too great when it comes to one's children" (p. 219). Rapoport and Rapoport indicated this is often done at the expense of the needs of the parents. They also suggested parents may be doing their children a disservice by attempting to provide "too ideal a climate for development" (p. 208), promoting the child's "needs" at the expense of values "of a humanistic, co-operation kind" (p. 213) that might better equip them to contribute to the development of an "equitable world" (p. 213). Would participation in housework contribute to the development of those kinds of values? The review of literature suggests there is little if any theory or research that examines the relationship between participation in housework processes and the development of values.

D. Smith (1977) has stated that sociological theory in general is inadequate as a tool for evaluating human experience in any context because it tends to detach researchers from the phenomena they study. According to Smith, this distancing between knowers and known creates a detachment with the result that social relations disappear:

> Integral to the relation thus formed is its organization to suspend the particular subjectivities of knower and known in such a way that its character as a social relation disappears ...such that relations between actual people appear as relations of exchange between things, money, and commodities. (p. 158)

Elaborating on this idea, Smith stated:

> The conceptual procedures developed in sociology serve to suspend the presence of an actor in her actions; what people are doing, what they experience, what is happening to them, become "roles," "norms," "systems," "behaviors." We have learned a method of thinking which does away with the presence of the subjects in the phenomena which only subjects can accomplish. (p. 159)

This detachment is apparent in the sociological studies relating to housework cited in this review, both those based on institutional and role theory. While the sociological research provides many clues relative to the social relations that surround housework, insufficient attention is given to ongoing interaction processes.

Lee (1959) provided some clues to the social relations integral to family housework processes in an anthropological study. Writing about the meaning work processes may have for families, Lee described the "deep enjoyment" she experienced when, late one Christmas Eve, she was pushing herself to complete a gift for her daughter and found herself adding "an entirely unpremeditated and unnecessary edging of embroidery" (p. 28). She recorded,

> It was a feeling that had nothing to do with the pleasure the work would give to my daughter on the morrow; it had nothing to do with a sense of achievement, or of virtue in duty accomplished. And I knew that I had never liked to embroider. There was no justification for my work, yet it was the source of such a deep satisfaction, that the late hour and my fatigue had ceased to exist for me.
>
> At this moment of discovery, I knew that I was experiencing what it meant to be a social being, not merely Dorothy Lee, an individual; I knew that I had truly become a mother, a wife, a neighbor, a teacher. I realized that some boundary had disappeared, so that I was working in a social medium; that I was not working for the future pleasure of a distant daughter, but rather within a relationship unaffected by temporality of physical absence. What gave meaning to my work was the medium in which I was working--the medium of love, in a broad sense. So far, my rationalization and justification of my work had

> obscured this meaning, had cut me off from my own social context. It suddenly became clear to me that it did not matter whether I was scrubbing the kitchen floor or darning stockings or zipping up snowsuits; these all had meaning, not in themselves, but in terms of the situation of which they were a part. They contained social value because they implemented the value of the social situation. (p. 28)

Lee elaborated that as work assumed a social value, there was a disappearing of the boundary between the existence of a distinct self as individual and self as an integral part of the family, to where "my family and I were aspects of one whole" (p. 29).

Building on this idea, Lee described the ways in which work and other activities in our culture build the boundaries of self as separate from others in contrast with the ways the Tikopia build the continuity of the individual with the social unit. For example, caring for children among the Tikopia was not treated as a "task" but as an expression of interdependence within the social unit. One example she included was of a man, "called away from talk of men by his wife to stay with the baby, (who) leaves the group with a sense of dignity, not of annoyance and interruption" (p. 30).

According to Lee, work among the Tikopia is socially conceived and structured, and because of this "work can take place without coercion, without the incentive of reward or the fear of punishment, without the spur of individual profit; because work as participation is meaningful" (p. 38).

Marxist-Feminism

Both sociologists and economists are included among the ranks of Marxist-Feminists, since Marxism constitutes both a sociology and an approach to economics. However, because Marxist-Feminists differ to

some extent from mainstream sociologists and economists both in the reasons for their interest in household production and in their theoretical perspectives, the Marxist-Feminist literature is being reviewed separately.

Marxists define production in capitalism as the creation of surplus value. Much of the Marxist-Feminist literature on domestic labor revolves around an on-going debate as to whether or not housework constitutes productive labor in the Marxist sense of production. A review of this debate is beyond the scope of this research, except to note that there are divisions on the productive-unproductive character of housework. (See Sokoloff, 1980, for a brief review of this debate.) Literature for this review is taken primarily from those who do consider housework as production.

The Marxist-Feminist concept of household production generally includes both housework and child care, with housework being defined as the reproduction of the labor force on a day-to-day basis and child care as reproduction of the labor force on a generational basis (Olson, 1979). Benston (1969) characterized housework as socially necessary production and included child care in the concept of household labor.

Zaretsky (1976) added a third dimension to the concept of household production in his analysis of the privatization of family life under capitalism. He stated that the household labor of women today includes not only the traditional tasks of production--housework and child rearing, but also a "new responsibility for maintaining the emotional and psychological realm of personal relations" (p. 31).

Benston (1969) was among the first Marxist-Feminists to provide an analysis of the interrelationships between household labor and the subordination of women under capitalism. She noted that in capitalism, men are structurally defined in terms of their relations to the means of production. Since the domestic labor of women is a pre-market type of production, it is generally excluded from commodity production. According to Benston, women's responsibility for domestic work became the structural basis for a definition of women in capitalism and the material basis for their inferior status:

> In a society in which money determines value, women are a group who work outside the money economy. Their work is not worth money, is therefore valueless, is therefore not even real work. And women themselves, who do this valueless work, can hardly be expected to be worth as much as men, who work for money. (p. 4)

Benston used the concepts of exchange-value and use-value to explain the difference in the relationship of the labor of men and of women to the means of production. Products created for exchange in the market have both use-value and exchange-value, while all products created for direct consumption have only use value. According to Benston, the latter would include all things produced in the home.

Regarding the value of housework in creation of surplus value, Gardner (1975) argued that "domestic labour does not create value, on the definition of value which Marx adopted, but does nonetheless contribute to surplus value by keeping down necessary labour, or the value of labour power, to a level that is lower than the actual subsistence level of the working class" (p. 58). In this way, housework benefits capitalists.

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Molyneux (1979) referred to a pamphlet, The Main Enemy, by Christine Delphy, stating that women's domestic labor benefits the husband. Delphy stated that it is erroneous to view domestic labor as valueless because,

> (it) is not in any intrinsic sense different from the socialized form of domestic labour existing in the commodity sector. The only difference is that the staff of laundrettes, restaurants and nurseries are paid for their labour, whereas the housewife is not. Thus married women, in performing housework for free, are being exploited by the beneficiaries of this situation--their husbands. (Molyneux, 1979, p. 5)

Delphy noted that whereas women in precapitalist societies at least received their subsistence in return for their domestic work, under capitalism those who do wage work end up doing domestic work for free because they are generally required to pay for their subsistance (e.g. child care and laundry) from their own wages.

The foregoing references (Gardner, 1975, and Molyneux, 1979) represent two positions among Marxists as to who benefits from women's domestic labor: capitalists or husbands (i.e. patriarchy). Referring to this debate, Glazer-Malbin (1976) stated there is general agreement among radical analysts that "the housewife works for the maintenance of capitalism rather than simply being a worker for her family" (p. 919). Glazer-Malbin argued that the view that sees husbands and children as the only beneficiaries of the domestic work of wives supports the division between the sexes by posing the husband as exploiter of his wife and further privatizes the family.

Zaretsky (1976) analyzed the devaluation of household labor from an historical perspective. He stated that the rise of capitalism isolated the family from socialized production and privatized the

family as it "created a historically new sphere of personal life among the masses of people." Zaretsky continued:

> The family now became the major space in society in which the individual self could be valued 'for itself'.... While housewives and mothers continued their traditional tasks of production--housework, child-rearing, etc.--their labour was devalued through its isolation from the socialized production of surplus value. In addition, housewives and mothers were given new responsibility for maintaining the emotional and psychological realm of personal relations. For women within the family 'work' and 'life' were not separated but were collapsed into one another. (p. 31)

According to Zaretsky (1976), as the family lost its core identity as a productive unit,

> material production within the family--the work of housewives and mothers--was devalued since it was no longer seen as integral to the production of commodities.... At the same time the family acquired new functions as the realm of personal life--as the primary institution in which the search for personal happiness, love, and fulfilment takes place. (p. 65)

Molyneux (1979) addressed the causes of the subordination of women from yet another point of view, suggesting it is an oversimplification to date oppressive domestic labor from the beginnings of modern capitalism and, in particular, the decomposition of the family as the main productive unit:

> Even where the family was a unit of production there still exists a distinction between domestic labour for domestic consumption (e.g. food preparation, cleaning, washing, weaving, sewing) and childrearing, and production for exchange--in the market or by barter. This distinction is found in the least technologically advanced societies; in other words, domestic labour (even <u>privatised</u> domestic labour) and the sexual division of labour pre-date capitalism, and would seem if not to be universal, then to be very nearly so. (p. 15)

She added that this was not to say that the domestic sphere is "eternal and immutable." But she noted that there are some aspects of housework that have been and will continue to be resistant to change.

Molyneux (1979) asserted that although the considerable body of literature published in the decade since the first articles on the domestic labor debate appeared has made an important contribution to the debate on women's subordination, "the theoretical work so far produced on domestic labour has not adequately addressed the problems which they identified" (p. 4). She included among the limitations that have characterized these attempts to build theory, (a) a tendency to economic reductionism, (b) a recourse to functionalist modes of argument in constructing the relationships between capitalism and domestic labor, and (c) a narrow focus on the labor performed in the domestic sphere at the expense of theorizing the wider familial/household context. According to Molyneux,

> This latter focus has led, among other things, to over-emphasising the importance for the male wage worker of the labour performed by the housewife, and to the virtual neglect of that performed on behalf of the next generation of workers in the work of rearing children (p. 4).

Molyneux also stated that the focus on economism displaces feminist issues from the debate: "Why housework is performed by housewives and how it is linked into the structure of female subordination" (p. 21). Molyneux identified four forces which act to maintain women in the home: (a) wage form, (b) the sexual division of labor, (c) high unemployment and especially high female unemployment, and (d) the premium placed by most societies on women's reproductive role. And she argued that the subordination of women

> is mediated through (these) different levels of the social formation and is inscribed within a number of distinct relations; it is not reducible to any simple causality and is certainly not reducible just to the problem of domestic labour (p. 27).

According to Molyneux (1979), the measures required to end subordination of women must go beyond the position of urging women to participate in employment and politics since that concentrates only on "the external front, and generally ignores the need simultaneously to restructure relations within the home on an equal basis" (p. 27). She identified two measures she considered necessary for this equalization. The first is the equalization of the domestic labor load, and where there are children, the socialization of that dimension of domestic labor. The second is "that women can work on equal terms to men, with a resultant increase of employment opportunities for women and the dissolution of female dependency on a privileged male wage" (p. 27).

Gardner (1975) stated that the likelihood housework and child care will be socialized depends on the value of domestic labor to capitalists. According to Gardner, when capital is trying to hold down the level of wages, as in times of economic crisis, domestic labor performs a vital economic function and it would not be to the advantage of capitalism to socialize housework or child care. However, when capital needs additional wage workers or needs to expand markets for workers' consumptions, as in times of economic expansion, it might be to their advantage to socialize housework and child care.

Hartmann (1981) noted the "persistence and resilience of family forms in the midst of general social change" (p. 366), and called attention to the need for feminists "to consider what women's interests may be in the maintenance of a type of family life that we have often viewed as a primary source of women's oppression" (pp. 366-

367). Hartmann suggested that such an analysis would require placing emphasis on the sources of conflict within family life in addition to the sources of conflict between family structures and various other aspects of social life.

Hartmann identified two locations of conflict or struggle between families and institutions: (1) tensions over the location of production (housework), e.g. home prepared foods versus fast-food chains and parental child care versus state-provided care outside the home; and (2) conflicts over the redistribution of economic resources such as paychecks, e.g. taxes as an example of the state making decisions for the family on the redistribution of its resources.

In viewing the family as a locus of struggle, Hartmann explored the material aspects of gender relationships within the family. She examined two dimensions of household production that fall into this category: (1) the nature of the work people do in the family, and (2) their control over the products of their labor. Hartmann viewed household production as encompassing the biological reproduction of people and the shaping of gender, and their maintenance through household work. She stated that it is not possible to understand one type of production (housework) without understanding the other (production of people): "Together they create and recreate our existence" (p. 373).

Hartmann (1981) identified two perspectives on the creation of gender, one the biological sexuality mediated by social arrangements, and the other the division of labor or the economic perspective. Hartmann stated that the creation of dependence of women on men is

accomplished through institutionalized means which give men control over women's labor power and provides the material base for patriarchy. These institutionalized means include excluding women from employment opportunities, denying abortions to women, and monogamous, heterosexual marriage and the nuclear family arrangements that structure the division of labor by gender.

Hartmann referred to time allocation studies as empirical evidence that "the family (is) a primary arena where men exercise their patriarchal power over women's labor" (p. 337). According to Hartmann, these studies illustrate the lack of responsiveness of men's housework time to women's increased wage work, and illustrate that it is men who reap the benefits in the current housework arrangements.

In response to the queston: "If women are satisfied with things the way they are, why does it matter?", Hartmann noted that an important goal of the women's movement is "to document women's oppression so that they may recognize exploitation when they experience it in their daily lives" (p. 387). She identified some evidence that "the gender struggle around housework may be bearing fruit" (p. 384). The examples included increased purchases of commodities to replace home production, e.g. fast-food takeouts, which she suggested provide evidence of changing boundaries between home and market production. She also suggested there is some evidence of an overall reduction in time spent in housework in recent years which suggests an altering of standards for housework.

With regard to the prospects for shifting responsibility for some of the production that takes place within the home to men, Hartmann

stated, "prospects...do not appear to be as good" (p. 389). She referred to the example of the Soviet Union where 90 percent of the women ages 20 through 40 are in the labor force, and women still spend more than twice as much time on housework than do men. Hartmann stated, "We are forced to conclude that the increase in women's wage labor will not alone bring about any sharing of housework with men. Continued struggle will be necessary" (p. 387). Hartmann indicated that people have different interests in the future of household production that vary according to their current relation to productive activity outside the home:

> Some women might perceive their interests to lie in getting greater access to wages by mounting campaigns against employment and wage discrimination, others in maintaining as much control as possible over the home production process by resisting both capitalist inroads on household production and male specifications of standards for it. Some women might reduce housework by limiting childbirth. Some capitalists might seek to expand both the market and mass production of meal preparation if this area appears potentially profitable. Other capitalists may simply need women's labor power in order to expand production in any area or to cheapen labor power. Or their interests might lie in having women in the home to produce and rear the next generation of workers. (p. 390)

Hartmann (1981) noted that these widely ranging interests include "counteracting requirements and goals" which means the possible outcomes are "theoretically indeterminate" (p. 390).

Summary and Critique

Since its beginnings as a field of study, home economics has promoted research and educational programs related to work in the home. Home economists' initial interest in housework stemmed from a concern for the well-being of overburdened and/or undertrained homemakers caught in the social changes surrounding the industrial

revolution at the turn of the century. Education and research emphasis was on discovering means for simplifying work processes by developing skill in doing work and/or eliminating unnecessary work. As the goals of efficiency gained momentum, a few professionals attempted to focus more attention on the meaning changing work processes might have for families, especially as they related to the development of skills, attributes and the integration of groups (e.g. Hunt, 1909, McKeever, 1913, and Warner, 1915). However, in both education and research, skill development and efficiency, especially in the use of time and energy, remained as the dominant concerns. Later, interest developed in the economic value of housework, i.e. the goods and services produced in the home, with economic value first being considered in terms of household expenditures and later in terms of production (Kyrk, 1933 and 1953, Reid, 1934, and Walker and Woods, 1976). Currently interest in the socialization and integration value of housework processes has generally been subsumed by the emphasis on the economic value of the products of housework.

Historically, home economics has placed more emphasis on education than on research or the development of theory, and these educational efforts have been aimed primarily towards women as homemakers. In support of its educational thrust, home economics research has emphasized identification of the managerial and physical skills required to perform housework with greater efficiency and satisfaction. Little research has been done by home economists examining the interrelationships between the performance of housework and the social relations in the family, or to consider possible

relationships between housework processes and the growth and development of individuals and families. (Exceptions include the research of Baker, 1970, Davey, 1971, Nelson, 1963 and 1980, Paolucci, 1977, and A. Smith, 1968.) Consequently, contributions to the development of theory that consider family interaction in the housework context have been limited.

Home economics research, especially that contained in the area of family economics and management, has included the development of time-use measures as a method for quantifying the maintenance component of household production. This research was given impetus by the work of Kyrk and Reid in the 1930's through 1950's, and later by Walker in the 1960's and 1970's. Following an economic paradigm, these measures attempt to distinguish between production and consumption activities, with production defined as the goods and services produced in the home that have market equivalents. Time-use measures emphasize the more easily observable and quantifiable dimensions of housework, and they either ignore or consider as "secondary" the qualitative dimensions of household production such as nurturing and socializing of family members which are embedded in the work processes. Present time-use measures of household production appear to be inadequate for measuring these qualitative outputs of household work, and may, as a result, be contributing to their "invisibility," thus making it more difficult to derive an accurate picture of the overall contribution of the household either to economic or social well-being. Time-use measures also appear to be inadequate as a means for providing insights into the

actual dynamics of housework or the social relations that surround housework.

While acknowledging the need for measures of household production, the inability of household production measures to account for the qualitative (human resource) outputs of housework processes must be carefully examined. An examination of the ways in which the time-use data are used indicates a tendency to assume that what is measured is the ultimate output of the household, and that what has not been measured either does not exist or does not matter. This line of thinking is apparent in the theoretical formulations related to time allocation in households developed by mainstream economists, and especially by economists in the "new home economics" (e.g. Becker, 1974 and 1976, and Ferber and Birnbaum, 1977).

Two assumptions basic to Becker's (1976) theory of time allocation in households are (1) that households will allocate time between market work and housework so as to maximize family income, and (2) that market equivalents are adequate substitutes for home produced goods and services. In other words, according to Becker's theory, if what a woman could earn in the market place would have more economic value to the household than the economic value of her housework services, then the household would behave rationally by substituting either other family member's time or market equivalent products for the housewife's time.

Feber and Birnbaum (1977) took issue with the first assumption arguing that it is tradition, rather than economic rationality, that determines the allocation of time in households. They indicated

empirical research suggests households do not, in fact, allocate their time in order to maximize income but tend to follow traditional time allocation patterns. Brown (1982) took issue with Becker's second assumption, that market equivalents are adequate substitutes for home produced goods and services. She noted there is very little substitution made by households of market goods for housewife's time, and suggested that the noneconomic components of home produced goods and services, e.g. love, support and nurturing, make them noncomparable with the supposed market equivalents.

Housework enters into sociological theory and research as the labor of women in the occupation of housewife (institutional perspective), and as a dimension of the role of housewife (role theory). Research and theory in the instutional approach is concerned with comparison of the status of the occupation of housewife with occupations in the paid labor force. Social stratification theory indicates that women are in a disadvantaged position both with respect to socioeconomic status and decision power.

Housework has traditionally been excluded from socioeconomic rankings because it is not paid work. According to Acker, present social stratification theory is not adequate for explaining the disadvantaged position of women in the world of paid work or in the household. An effort in current theoretical development is to consider how housework as a component of women's lives has contributed to the disadvantaged position of women in the paid work sphere. The study of housework from an institutional perspective does not consider

either family interaction or the contribution of housework processes to family well-being.

Research based on role theory has examined the division of labor in households in order to identify components of family roles; housework is also considered as a factor in role satisfaction and role strain. One of the purposes of research on family roles has been to examine the impact of women's work outside the home on home-related work, and vice versa. Role theory divides activities of family members into "roles," with the activities of the housewife typically dichotomized into child care and housework roles. These two roles have been viewed as contradictory (e.g. Olson, 1979) and as a source of stress for women (e.g. Piotrkowski, 1979). Role research has also included the comparison of housework and paid labor as sources of satisfaction (e.g. Ferree, 1976, and Wright, 1978).

Marxist-Feminists share with home economists and mainstream economists an understanding of household labor as production. The emphasis in Marxist-Feminist theory and research has been on the organization and exploitation of labor, and especially on the exploitation and oppression of women as domestic workers. As with institutional sociologists, a major concern of Marxist-Feminists is with status and power hierarchies in the labor market. The basis of women's secondary status has been identified as primarily economic (e.g. Benston, 1969), and rooted in a capitalistic and patriarchal system of social relationships (Hartmann, 1981, and Sokoloff, 1980).

Critique

In each of the fields of study considered in the Review of Literature, the pattern for research and analysis of housework has been to begin from a position within a particular conceptual framework, one that has developed from a particular paradigm. The selected framework determines what is looked for and how findings are interpreted, what should be placed in the forefront and what should be considered as secondary. However, as noted by Skolnick (1973), "a paradigm also acts like a blinder." Skolnick notes that "a scientist, for example, when immersed in a particular paradigm, will reject or misperceive facts that cannot be fitted into the paradigm" (p. 29).

The review of literature for this research indicated that an economic paradigm has dominated in the development of research and theory related to housework. Home economics and economics have approached the study of housework almost exclusively from an economic perspective. The influence of an economic paradigm is clearly evident in the production/consumption dichotomy used to describe household work, and in time-use studies where the purpose is to determine the economic worth of household production outputs. Outputs with market equivalents are considered "primary" while nurturing and socialization of family members are ignored or labeled as "secondary." While the production/consumption dichotomy may make an important contribution to the understanding of the nature of housework, when one considers the full context of family interaction, these categories may be limiting.

The influence of an economic paradigm is also apparent in the conceptual frameworks used for the study of housework in sociology and

Marxist-Feminism. Sociology views housework as labor, an occupation to be compared with labor in the paid labor force, and Marxist-Feminism views housework as capital and as an occupation. While both consider housework as necessary labor, required for the maintenance of the family, at the same time it is seen as a burden, and one which men as well as women should help bear. Recommendations for reallocating the work include the socialization of housework (Marxist-Feminism), substituting market equivalents for home produced goods and services, and changing the division of labor in households so men carry an equal share of housework responsibilities.

When housework is viewed primarily from an economic perspective, the disadvantaged position of women compared to men is readily apparent, and the analyses often reflect a feeling of anger over the observed inequalities. While this anger is more apparent in the writing of Marxist-Feminists than home economists, for example, the review of literature indicated many who research housework share some common concerns about the relationship between housework and women's subordination. The role of housewife typically emerges as a high-risk occupation with few if any compensations for the economic losses. (See Ferber and Birnbaum, 1981, and Bergmann, 1981, for examples of this perspective.)

Role theory also reflects the influence of an economic paradigm. According to D. Smith (1977), role theory creates a detachment between the knower from the known and encourages the analysis of lived experiences or the study of natural phenomena from a rational, economic approach. The detachment is created through conceptual

procedures which serve to "suspend the presence of an actor in her actions," and what people do and experience become "roles," "norms," "systems," "behaviors" (p. 159). As expressed by Smith, "We have learned a method of thinking which does away with the presence of subjects in the phenomena which only subjects can accomplish" (p. 159). Smith stated,

> Integral to the relation thus formed is its organization to suspend the particular subjectivities of knower and known in such a way that its character as a social relation disappears--such that relations between actual people appear as relations of exchange between things, money, and commodities. (p. 158)

Smith (1977) elaborated on this idea in considering the problem women experience as they use existing frameworks as a means to come to an understanding of their own experiences. Where experience and the conceptual framework do not coincide, Smith indicated,

> We have learned to discard our experienced worlds as a source of concerns, information, and understandings of the actualities of the social world and to confine and focus our "insights" within the conceptual frameworks and relevances given in the discipline. Should we think otherwise or experience the world in different ways, with edges or horizons passing beyond what could be conceptualized in the established forms, we have learned to practice a discipline which disattends them or to find some way of making them over so that they will fit. (p. 158)

Dreyfus (1981) also noted that theory detaches people from the experiences of living by removing the segments to be studied from their everyday context then replacing them in a new configuration that is assumed to create the original whole, and in the process contributes to nihilism or loss of meaning in life. According to Dreyfus, in the decontextualizing and reassembling process,

> The everyday context is left behind as confused and unimportant. It gets bracketed out in the name of obtaining

> decontextualized elements; then these elements, whether they be ideas or atoms or whatever you like, are recontextualized into a new whole. Theory thus decontextualizes its subject in order to recontextualize it, but whereas the old context was implicit and open, the new context is explicit and complete--publicly shared commitments and the everyday perceptual world are replaced by an abstract system of ideas. (p. 511)

Dreyfus emphasized that this reconstituted "whole" detaches persons from life, from their connectedness with the processes of living.

The potential problems of using role theory (e.g. Smith, 1977) and theory in general (e.g. Dreyfus, 1981) for the analysis of phenomena are probably nowhere more apparent than in the applications of theory to the analysis of housework. Housework is lifted from the context of family life, and at the same time family "roles" are separated out so they can be analyzed free of the context in which they are lived. In the process, some of the meaning these processes may have for families becomes obscured.

What are the implications for theory and research related to housework? What needs to be considered in order to understand housework as a life experience, or what needs to be considered that is not seen from the perspective of existing theoretical frameworks? Conceptual frameworks that view housework only in terms of its maintenance products appear to be inadequate for examining the richness of housework processes as context for family life. For example, they appear to be inadequate for evaluating how the way the family organizes for the performance of housework is related to existing patterns of social relationships within the family, or how the structuring of housework processes influences family interaction. Present theory also appears to be inadequate for considering the

implications of housework processes and the social relations that surround them for the development of human skills and attributes and for the integration of family members.

The analysis of housework from an economic perspective has resulted in a rather myopic view of work in the home. What is needed is a view of work in the home from the perspective of the participants, from the perspective of those for whom housework is part of the daily experience of living. This would include all members of a household, whether directly or indirectly involved in the housework processes. How do family members perceive housework? How is family interaction shaped by the doing of housework? How is family interaction in the context of housework related to the development of people and relationships?

The review of literature has identified a need to develop new theory that will more adequately encompass the daily experience of housework. It is the purpose of this research, through the development of grounded theory, to contribute toward satisfying that need.

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CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

As has been indicated through the review of literature and the summary of the various frameworks currently used for the analysis of housework, an area that is consistently neglected in these frameworks is knowledge of what is occurring in the interaction processes that are integral to the performance of housework. Two dimensions of the social relations that surround housework are of interest for this analysis: (1) the way the household is organized for the performance of housework, and (2) family interaction in the context of housework.

The analysis of the data will examine how housework was perceived and the way housework processes were structured in the household. The analysis will also consider ways in which the structure of housework may be related to family interaction. Finally, the analysis will consider how family interaction patterns in the housework context may be related to the development of human attributes and skills.

In this presentation of the reseach findings, the researcher has drawn more heavily from observations made in the Allen household than in the Brice household for examples to illustrate the various interaction patterns. Reasons for this preference are that, as indicated in Chapter 2, observation data from the Allen family were used as the primary data source, and the researcher spent considerably

more time observing family interaction in the Allen household. Data from the Brice family were used to aid in revising and checking indications of interaction patterns observed in the Allen household. Examples drawn from observations made in the Brice household have been included where it was felt they might add additional insights into family interaction processes.

Perceptions of Housework

The ways in which family members perceive the relative importance of housework, or the ways in which housework is regarded, may influence the way the household is organized for the performance of housework. For example, if either spouse regards housework as the exclusive domain of the wife, or as a primary dimension of her family role, the allocation of tasks in the household will likely be different than it would if participation in housework is regarded as a means for socializing children. Or if housework is regarded as a manifestation of the subordinated position of women, that perception may also influence the way a family chooses to structure housework processes.

Indications of the way housework was regarded in the Allen and Brice households were identified through analysis of ethnographic interviews and the observation data.

Mr. and Mrs. Allen seemed to interpret the importance of housework primarily in terms of its contribution to other family processes rather than in terms of its worth in providing goods and services necessary for the maintenance of the household. This is not to say that the goods and services produced through housework processes were not important to the family. But the emphasis in housework processes

appeared to be on the interaction processes integral to housework and the developmental value of participation in housework at least as much if not more than on the more tangible maintenance products of housework.

The distinction between the emphasis on the process for doing housework as compared to the products of housework is illustrated in the following dialogue which was recorded during a meeting with Mr. and Mrs. Allen discussing their review of a preliminary draft of the analysis. The analysis draft had contained a reference to Mr. Allen's expression of satisfaction as he was removing freshly baked rolls from the oven. In the review session, Mr. Allen expressed the feeling that the description of some of the incidents was "like looking in the window for a minute and then going on." When Mr. Allen was asked to elaborate on what he meant, he stated the example that concerned him most was one "about me and the bread."

> Researcher: Do you mean the incident where you were taking the bread from the oven?
> Mr. Allen: Yes. Just take that one experience. It's the whole experience of making bread, of the father making bread for the family in the kitchen, with the kids helping, giving them a positive experience, mixing, getting dirty or whatever, but they get to help. Or making rolls. You know, that inter-action. Doing it.
> Researcher: So it wasn't that what I said was inaccurate, it just wasn't enough.
> Mr. Allen: That's right; it's just a trickle. I enjoy making the rolls, making them look good, watching them rise. But I enjoy the whole process, not just what comes out of the oven. (August, 1981)

Mr. and Mrs. Allen said they felt housework was important because it provided a means for teaching children skills and attributes they would need to be successful adults. Mrs. Allen said they felt a responsibility to raise the children to be "productive members of

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society instead of just making it." She expressed the belief that one of the most important things they could teach their children was "to be hard workers."

> Mrs. Allen: You know, of all the things you can teach your children (one of the most important) is to be hard workers and to know how to motivate themselves to do a job, instead of having to be motivated. (August, 1981)

Mrs. Allen noted, however, that the teaching process was not easy; rather, it required the commitment of the parents and a considerable investment of time and energy. In fact, Mrs. Allen identified this teaching and motivating process as a primary source of pressure in parenting. However, she said she considered the teaching process worthwhile in spite of those pressures:

> Mrs. Allen: It's easier just to let your kids go at 10:00 in the morning and run all day long. But then again when you get old you'd be frustrated because you would have taught them nothing. (August, 1981)

In other words, even though it required more effort on the part of the parents to include children in housework processes, they considered it worth the effort because of the benefits they felt would accrue through participation in housework.

In addition to learning to be "good workers," Mr. Allen indicated that housework was important because it contributed to the development of feelings of personal worth, that self esteem developed when children had the opportunity to complete something successfully every day. Mr. Allen stated, "Doing something constructive like housework makes you feel good about yourself." He indicated that too few children ever felt the satisfaction that can come from completing a job. Mr. Allen referred to an incident where Nancy and Cristine had worked together to

clean the range. When they were finished, Nancy had observed, "I sure enjoy doing a good job. Won't mother be proud?" Mr. Allen said Nancy later reported, "Mommy really liked the stove. She said it looked nice." Mr. Allen added, "That result relaxes you and brings out the good in you. It gives the whole mood of wanting to improve in other areas, too." (August, 1981) Mr. and Mrs. Allen said housework was important because it contributed to feelings of being part of the family. The following indicates one way they felt housework contributed to the feeling of belonging.

> Mr. Allen: For the last few months I've been giving the children assignments to do every Saturday morning, and they've loved it. They love it! They want to come and get them checked off after they're just beautifully done. They want me to come and sign my name and check it off and inspect it, and then they go on to the next task. And I give them really good tasks.
> Mrs. Allen: Yes, in fact, Mark's asked for one.
> Mr. Allen: Ya, he wanted some too. They want them. They want those responsibilities.
> Mrs. Allen: I think part of it is it makes them feel that they are part of the family, they are contributing and essential to the family. (August, 1981)

Group particpation in housework was important because it created opportunities for enjoyable social experiences, as the following indicates.

> Mrs. Allen: I mean, we painted the fence today, which is the biggest pain in the neck (laughs), but we really had a good time together, and every single kid painted on it. (August, 1981)

Mr. Allen, referring to the same family activity, stressed that both the integrative and developmental functions of shared participation in housework were important:

> Mr. Allen: The value of an activity is more than just the social activity. It's like the image you see of yourself when you see a job well done. It builds the image of the family, too. It builds it in the same way the hot rolls do. (August, 1981)

The emphasis Mr. and Mrs. Allen placed on doing activities together as a family and creating the image of "family" could be seen in the way housework as well as other activities were structured in the household. The following excerpt from the observation data illustrates the emphasis placed on eating meals together:

> 3:30 p.m.
> Mrs. Allen had a play rehearsal at 4:00 p.m. She had dinner prepared and was trying to get the family together so they could eat.
> Mr. Allen: Let the little boys sleep. (They were taking their afternoon naps.)
> Mr. Allen suggested the boys could eat later and Mrs. Allen could go to her practice.
> Mrs. Allen: My whole purpose is to have us eat together. (May 16, 1980)

Analysis of the observation data for the Brice family indicate they shared at least to some degree the view that housework processes were important because of the developmental and integrative possibilities. Both Mr. and Mrs. Brice invested considerable amounts of time and energy in teaching their children work skills as well as teaching them to work together. In addition, the importance of developing work skills and helping each other was occasionally verbalized. Mr. Brice spoke of the need for young people to learn to work, to be productive, an attribute they felt should be learned in the home (March 13, 1981). In a family discussion of ways they could increase family harmony, helping each other with household tasks was one means that was identified (March 9, 1981).

The balance of the analysis will describe the way in which housework was structured in the Allen and Brice households, ways that appeared to influence the growth and development of individual family members as well as integration of the family.

Structure and Interaction

The importance the Allen and Brice families placed on housework as a socialization tool was reflected in the way they chose to structure housework processes in the household.

Two dimensions of structure will be considered in the analysis. The first dimension relates to the structure of the work itself, or the structural characteristics of housework that suit it as a context for family interaction. Examples of these structural characteristics include what tasks were done, the divisibility of tasks into subtasks, range in difficulty and complexity of tasks, and the repetitive nature of housework. The second dimension is the way the family structures or organizes the doing of housework, i.e. who does the work, is it done alone or with others, when is it done and how frequently is it done.

Complexity of Structure for Doing Housework

One of the distinctive characteristics of housework processes in the Allen household was their complexity. To identify complexity the data were examined for frequency of activities, number of persons involved in the activity, and the number of activities occurring simultaneously. Three structural characteristics readily apparant from the analysis of the observation data were, first, that housework was a major daily activity; second, participants were rarely alone as they worked; and third, housework was seldom if ever the only activity occurring at a given time. Whenever housework was being done participants were also interacting with others, teaching and learning work and interpersonal skills.

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The following example is illustrative of the amount of activity that was typically in progress at a given time. On one particular morning (Thursday, May 15, 1980) Mrs. Allen was building a shadow box and at the same time giving assignments to the children, supervising and encouraging them in their work, giving directions on how to do a task, arbitrating a conflict between Mark and Greg, and helping the children make the necessary preparations for school. Concurrently, Brian was washing dishes, Nancy and Cristine were cleaning downstairs, then getting their breakfast, and preparing to leave for school. Throughout this time period the children were talking with each other as well as with their mother. In fact, it was quite impossible to keep up with all of the interaction. Not only were family members interacting while they were doing housework, but in addition several housework tasks were often in progress at the same time. Housework tasks were not done one by one as isolated entities but many tasks were done simultaneously and integrated within a dynamic pattern of family living.

Types of Maintenance Tasks

Both the Allen and Brice families participated in a wide range of housework activities. Both families produced many of the goods and services needed for the maintenance of the household. For example, it appeared that most meals were prepared from "scratch" rather than using convenience foods or eating meals out. Other kinds of goods produced in these households included building cabinets and shelves, making decorative items for the home, construction of clothing, and growing and preserving fruits and vegetables for their own use. Neither family

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used commercial housecleaning services but did all their own housecleaning. Each family also did much of the repair work needed for the maintenance of the household including minor repairs on automobiles and bicycles. In addition, both the Allen and Brice homes had yards which required maintenance. The physical care of children was also a work activity in each household. Preschool children generally require more care from other family members than do older children, and since the Allen family had four pre-school children, child care was a major work activity in their household. In the Brice household child care was a less frequent activity since there was only one pre-school child. For purposes of this research, all home production and maintenance activities as well as the physical care of children were considered housework.

Routine Nature of Housework

A structural characteristic of housework observed in each household was that some of the production and maintenance activities were done on a daily basis. Others, of course, were done less frequently, such as weekly or seasonally. In addition many of those daily activities occurred in an observable sequence, i.e. a daily routine. While there was also considerable variation in each day's activities, nevertheless there appeared to be a daily pattern around which other family activities were structured. The following describes the general daily pattern of activities in the Allen household.

A typical weekday in the Allen household began between 6:30 and 7:00 a.m. when Mr. and Mrs. Allen would awaken and one of them, usually Mrs. Allen, would awaken the school-age children. Mr. Allen would

dress for work while Mrs. Allen encouraged the children along as they prepared for school. There did not seem to be a consistent pattern for who would prepare breakfast; some days Mrs. Allen prepared breakfast, other days Mr. Allen; in either case there was usually some assistance from the children. The family generally ate breakfast together.

The children were expected to help straighten or clean the house before they left for school. The task of washing dishes was usually done by one of the three older children, with the persons not washing helping with other parts of the meal clean-up and/or straightening other areas in the house. Mrs. Allen often assisted the children with their morning tasks. Some mornings while the children were busy with their work, Mrs. Allen would drive Mr. Allen to work. The three older children left for school at 9 a.m. After they left, Mrs. Allen helped the three little boys get dressed if they had not dressed earlier.

Mrs. Allen's daytime activities were varied. One day each week she took her turn providing a two-hour "day nursery" for preschool children in the neighborhood. Sometimes she sewed children's clothing for their home business. She also ran errands, attended a workshop, and did volunteer work in the community. The little boys usually played at home or at a neighbor's home, attended the "day nursery" three mornings a week, and Greg and Alison usually took one or more naps during the day. The children generally ate lunch around noon, and Mrs. Allen usually did not sit down to eat with the boys.

Depending on his school and work schedule, Mr. Allen was sometimes at home when the children began arriving from school in the afternoon, which was usually about 3:30 p.m. The family ate dinner early, usually

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sometime between 4:00 and 5:30 p.m., depending on what other activities were scheduled, and the family all ate together sitting around the dining table. The children sometimes played during the time between their arrival from school and meal time, and sometimes helped with dinner preparations. Preparation and cleanup of the evening meal was usually a group effort, which, it should be noted, encompassed a fine-grained division of labor including the organization and direction of people and activities.

Evening activities were varied. Mrs. Allen often attended a play rehearsal in the evening; one evening both Mr. and Mrs. Allen attended a PTA activity. Some evenings the family played together, and/or watched television, and housework was commonly interspersed with these activities. One regularly scheduled evening activity was a Family Home Evening, a more structured teaching and/or recreation activity which was held each Monday evening. Bedtime for the younger children was usually around 8:00 p.m. and the older children went to bed around 9:00 p.m.

As the foregoing suggests, although there was some variation in the timing and context of each day's activities, nevertheless there appeared to be a rather steady core pattern around which the more flexible daily activities revolved. This became especially apparent during one morning (Thursday, May 15, 1980) when some of those core patterns had been disrupted. Mrs. Allen had been very busy the previous several days with preparations for a PTA program and rehearsals for a church play, and she had been away from the home more than usual. The researcher arrived at the Allen home at 8:30 a.m., and

sensed there was some confusion in the morning activities. Mrs. Allen was making a shadow box for Brian to give to a teacher who was directing a play in which Brian had the lead role. Mrs. Allen explained she had been planning to attend a PTA seminar that day, but had now decided not to. She added that her husband would disown her if she didn't get their house in order. Mr. Allen had already left for work. Mark and Greg were standing at chairs by the table where Mrs. Allen was working and they were pushing, shoving and crying at each other to get a better vantage point. Nancy and Cristine were downstairs cleaning their bedroom and the family room. The researcher had not observed where Brian was until Mrs. Allen issued a firm and irritated command: "Brian, I want the dishes done; I want the floor clean; I want the walls done." Brian responded with a plantive, "The dishes?" Apparently it was not his turn, but he was soon in the kitchen washing dishes and humming to himself while he worked.

Breakfast that day was a haphazard affair. At 9:05 Cristine went downstairs to tell Nancy, "Nancy, if you want breakfast you have to go get some." They both went upstairs, and were looking for something to eat. Mrs. Allen suggested, "Have some applesauce. Have an ice cream cone." Cristine, a bit incredulous, put a chair next to the refrigerator and climbed up to get the cones, "Do you mean it, Mom?" To which Mrs. Allen responded, "I don't care. There are no cones, just have ice cream." And they did. Brian, Nancy and Cristine were 15 minutes late leaving for school. Mrs. Allen reminded them before they left to clean their "groady" teeth.

After the children left for school, Mrs. Allen observed, "I hate daylight savings time. We usually get up early and have breakfast together. This way no one gets up until 8:00. Gary's gone to work, and I hate to fix breakfast anyway." That week was the first after the change from standard time to daylight savings, and it was apparently not easy to make the adjustment in the morning routine. Maintaining some routine and a sense of order was apparently an important goal for Mrs. Allen. She said it was important to her to have a clean house so she always tried to make certain it was orderly before the children left for school. She observed that it had taken them a few years to develop a system to keep the house in order. (May 7, 1980)

The daily routine of family activities has significance for family interaction because it determines when and how frequently the family comes together and what they do when they are together. As can be seen from the above description of the Allen family's daily routine, housework was an activity that brought the family together frequently. The children engaged in housework before school as well as after school. Except for occasional moments in the evening when Mr. and/or Mrs. Allen would play with the children or go for a walk, there were few times during the course of the observation study when either Mr. or Mrs. Allen was not doing housework. One evening at 9:00 p.m., for example, when the family was watching a television program, both the washer and dryer were running, Mr. Allen was folding clothes, and Mrs. Allen was in and out of the room doing various tasks, among them spot-mopping the kitchen floor. (May 16, 1980)

The repetitive, routine nature of housework also had significance from a developmental perspective. Participation in housework provided opportunities for skill development. Because housework must be done repeatedly it makes it possible for children to practice skills regularly. At the same time, the repetitive and routine nature of housework may also be a source of boredom or monotony and may at times be a constraint to development of human resources.

Participation of Family Members

Another major structural characteristic of housework in the Allen and Brice households was that all family members from 1-1/2 years of age and older did housework. It was common in the Allen and Brice households to divide tasks into smaller units so that more than one person could be working at the same job at the same time. For example, meal preparation was divided into a variety of subtasks such as the planning of what to eat, deciding how to prepare the food, teaching food-preparation skills, preparing the food, setting the table and serving the food. Housecleaning was also divided into smaller subtasks that included picking up, dusting, vacuuming, washing windows, putting items away, and straightening or rearranging furniture.

The subtasks of housework described above varied in difficulty and complexity from the very simple to more difficult and complex. Examples of simple tasks included providing a drink of water, pushing chairs around the table after a meal, and running errands to retrieve an item for a parent or sibling. More complex tasks included the planning and preparation of meals and the coordination of the efforts

of family members, tasks where multiple factors needed to be considered in making decisions about what to do and how to do it.

The range of complexity and difficulty of the tasks made it possible for each family member, from very young child to adult, to participate and find challenges in the work processes. In the Allen household it was not unusual for each individual, with the exception of the baby, to make some contribution to the preparation of a meal. At any given mealtime, one might observe Greg carrying plates or cutlery to the table, Mark running an errand to the basement to get a jar of food, Nathan putting the chairs around the table, and Cristine, Nancy, Brian and Mr. and Mrs. Allen each having some part in the preparation or clean-up of the meal. Joint effort was also the characteristic pattern for housecleaning. Even tasks that might have been done by one person often involved participation of more than one individual. For example, changing the baby's diaper might be regarded as a one-person job, but in the Allen household a second person was often asked to get the diaper and bring it to the person who was changing the diaper, and a third person might be asked to carry the soiled diaper to the diaper pail.

Teaching and Learning Work Skills

The interaction patterns observed while the Allen family did housework suggest that teaching and motivating children to do work were major and complex components of the housework processes. As parents taught children to do housework they not only provided information on how to do work but also provided support and motivation to encourage the children in their work efforts. In other words, involving children

in housework processes required considerable time and effort on the part of parents. Parents were not the only family members involved in the teaching processes, however. Children also taught and learned from each other and parents also learned from their children as they interacted in the housework context. While the emphasis in this analysis is on the teaching and motivating behaviors observed in the parents, brief attention will also be given to related interaction behaviors observed between siblings and those where children appeared to be teaching parents.

Teaching and motivating often appeared to be done simultaneously. However, there were interaction behaviors that appeared to be directed more towards providing motivation to do work than teaching how to do work. Examples of teaching behaviors will be presented first, followed by examples of activity patterns that appeared to be oriented primarily towards motivating children to do work.

The observation data suggest children begin showing an interest in helping with housework at a very early age. The following example is illustrative.

> 7:45 a.m.
> Mrs. Allen reminded the older children they needed to hurry to get their work completed before leaving for school. Nancy asked whose turn it was to wash dishes, and Greg (1-1/2 years old) offered, "I will help you wash dishes." (May 5, 1980)

This early interest in housework may have grown from a desire to be with other family members or to model the behavior of parents and/or siblings more than from an interest in housework per se. In any case, the data suggest that when a child's early interest in helping with housework is reinforced through positive interaction with other family

members, the child may also learn to enjoy doing the task. Negative interaction, on the other hand, may be associated with a dislike for the task. This pattern is illustrated in the following statement where Beth Brice recalled when she was a little girl and washed dishes with Mrs Brice.

> 4:00 p.m.
> Beth: I remember being really little and asking if I could wash the dishes. My brothers would laugh at me because I liked it, and then I didn't like it any more. I didn't want to do it for them, but I liked to do them. And I liked to do it with Mom. I guess that is why I liked to do them, because I liked to help Mom and she liked me to do them. (March 24, 1981)

Mr. and Mrs. Allen said they began teaching their children to particpate in housework when the children first began showing an interest in helping, which they said was usually around 1-1/2 to 2 years of age. The primary method they used to teach the children to do housework was to work with them, teaching both by example and direct instruction. It was especially common for the parents to work with the very young children, providing encouragement and expressing confidence in their ability to learn. Asking children to do certain tasks may be an expression of confidence which may influence the development of feelings of personal worth as well as teach work skills. For example, Mrs. Allen asked Nathan to give the baby her bottle, a particularly difficult task for Nathan because of his small size. The fact that Mrs. Allen asked Nathan to feed the baby could be seen as an expression of her confidence in his ability to do so. Mrs. Allen stood near Nathan as she helped him hold the baby in a comfortable position on his lap and position the bottle, offering encouragement through her words and patient actions. (7:15 a.m., May 6, 1980)

In a related incident, Mr. Allen had asked Mark to bring stools from the kitchen to the dining area. The stools were taller than Mark, making the assignment a challenging one. Mark tried to carry two stools at once, but the load was too heavy and awkward for him and he began to cry. Mr. Allen smiled at his predicament, explained he should carry one stool at a time, and then helped him carry the stools to the dining room. (7:30 a.m., May 6, 1980)

Mr. and Mrs. Allen typically assigned challenging tasks to the older children as well, such as planning and preparing meals and caring for younger children. They also often worked with the older children, offering verbal instructions and encouragement as they helped them develop needed skills. In addition to learning skills, the children may have also been developing feelings of competence and confidence in their abilities to do work. The following examples are indicative of these teaching and supportive behavior patterns:

> 7:20 a.m.
> Mr. Allen was preparing to making scrambled eggs for breakfast, and asked Cristine to help him crack the eggs into the pan. They stood side by side at the range.
> Mr. Allen: You are doing well, Cristine. Fill it up. (Pause) Let's turn it down a little bit. It's too hot.
> Cristine continued cracking eggs into the pan.
> Mr. Allen: Well you are going to have to hurry cause these are getting scrambled before the rest get in.
> Mark came into the kitchen, whining about something. Mr. Allen lifted Mark up to the stove, standing him on a stool so he could stir the eggs as they cooked. Mr. Allen walked from the kitchen to see how Nathan was doing on setting the table. (May 6, 1980)

In this example Mr. Allen was teaching Cristine and then Mark how to prepare scrambled eggs both by modeling the working behavior and by

verbalizing what he was doing (eggs should be cooked at lower temperatures), as well as by providing guidance and encouragement for the children as they worked.

While Mr. Allen was helping the children scramble eggs, Mrs. Allen was making preparations for a meeting she was attending that morning and also helping from time to time with the breakfast preparations. Mr. Allen had asked Cristine to get some applesauce and put it in a bowl.

> 7:30 a.m.
> Cristine shook the jar over the bowl but the applesauce didn't move. Mrs. Allen came to help her, showing her how to use a spoon to start the applesauce coming from the jar. In the process the jar fell into the bowl of applesauce. Mrs. Allen laughed good humoredly and Cristine smiled. Mrs. Allen pulled the jar out and scraped the remainder of the applesauce from the jar. Cristine finished stirring the applesauce and put it on the table. (May 6, 1980)

In addition to providing instructions for how to get applesauce from the jar, Mrs. Allen was also teaching that accidents were an acceptable part of the learning process. This example also suggests a potential advantage of learning skills in the home environment. When the parents are supportive, mistakes may be less threatening or less embarrassing than they might be in a less supportive environment. On the other hand, when parents and siblings are not supportive, the opposite effect may result.

Interaction observed in the Brice household, where four of the children were in their teens, suggest these teaching and learning processes continue as children grow older. One example is included in the interaction sequence reported on pp. 165-166. Beth was preparing waffles for breakfast and both Rachael and Mrs. Brice offered

suggestions to help Beth improve her skill at separating eggs. On another occasion, Mr. Brice and Beth were preparing spaghetti and Mr. Brice instructed Beth on the preparation process:

> 5:25 p.m.
> Beth: Dad, what pan do I put the spaghetti in?
> Mr. Brice suggests one.
> Beth: How much water? About half way?
> Mr. Brice: It won't be enough.
> Beth adds more water to the pan, and asks: How much spaghetti should I put in?
> Mr. Brice: I don't know.
> Beth takes the package to Mr. Brice. They both read over the quantity indications printed on the package, and together they decide how much spaghetti to use.
> Mr. Brice: That's probably too much, but.... (His voice trails off.)
> Mr. Brice stirs some ground beef which is browning on the range. Beth brings him the pan with the spaghetti in it, and asks: How about this?
> Mr. Brice: Honey, you didn't listen! I said after you get the water boiling you put the spaghetti in.
> Beth: Oops.
> Beth goes to the sink, dumps the spaghetti into a colander, fills the pan again and takes it to the stove. (March 24, 1981)

Another teaching pattern observed in the context of doing housework was identification of acceptable quality standards for work. For example, while Mr. Allen was supervising the Saturday morning cleaning activities, he asked Nancy to vacuum the floor in the dining area. She did a hurried job. Mr. Allen told her to do a better job, so she vacuumed the area again. (9:30 a.m., May 17, 1980)

Another example that involved teaching standards occurred on a Friday afternoon when Mr. Allen and Nancy were washing dishes they had used to make a pie, and Cristine was "licking the bowl" that had contained the pie filling:

> 4:55 p.m.
> Cristine finished eating the pie filling in the bowl, then took a damp wash rag and wiped the bowl clean. She took the bowl over to Mr. Allen saying it was clean. Mr. Allen noticed she had

wiped it with a wash rag, and told Cristine it needed to be washed in soapy water.

Mr. Allen: You can catch a disease if you wash it like that. (May 16, 1980)

In this example Mr. Allen was teaching an acceptable method for cleaning a dish, and in addition provided a reason for the preferred cleaning method.

Parents were not the only persons in the household involved in the teaching processes, nor were children the only learners. This was especially apparent in the Brice household where the interaction sometimes took the form of an exchange of ideas, with children and parents learning together, as illustrated in the example (p. 127) where Mr. Brice and Beth are preparing spaghetti and consult on the quantity they should prepare. In both the Allen and Brice households, children sometimes shared information and ideas related to housework with their parents. Most commonly these were food preparation ideas which they had learned at school or from friends; in this way may have also been teaching their parents.

Children were also observed teaching each other, sharing ideas on how to do work, and supporting and encouraging each other as they worked. For example, in the Allen household one morning after breakfast Nathan was assigned the task of pushing the chairs around the kitchen table. However, he was not having much success accomplishing the task. The carpet was creating some resistance, and Nathan seemed to have difficulty getting the leverage needed to push the chairs in place. In frustration he began whining and complaining, "This stupid chair." Nancy was working in the same room, washing the table top, and she encouraged Nathan, "You got to scoot, scoot, scoot." Her tone was

playful and supportive as she showed Nathan how to push the chairs around the table. (8:05 a.m., May 5, 1980)

Interaction with children in the housework context appeared to be a source of learning for parents. For example, parents may develop managerial and leadership skills as they work with their children since the teaching and motivating processes that accompany housework may provide managerial challenges, especially when housework includes coordinating the efforts of many people in a limited space. As an example, when Mrs. Brice was coordinating the "spring cleaning" of their home, she had originally organized the work so that all the family members were working in the same room at the same time. She observed that this had been a challenge in that it took continual vigilance to keep the children at their tasks and to maintain a feeling of harmony. She described the experience of all of them working in one room together as "a little chaotic." Mrs. Brice said she finally decided it was easier to work with each child, one at a time, helping them do their assigned tasks, rather than trying to do everything with the whole family together at once. Thus the work experience was a learning experience for Mrs. Brice as well as for the children.

Work Avoidance Behaviors

Although parents used time and energy teaching children to do work, the children were not always excited about doing housework. This was especially true for the older children. That housework was not always a priority activity for children was indicated in the variety of mechanisms they used to avoid doing work. Some of the work avoidance behaviors were stalling, disappearing to a more remote part of the

house or outside the house, ignoring or pretending not to hear a request, making excuses for why one should not do a task, complaining, teasing and/or provoking conflicts with siblings, and appealing to the parent's sense of what is fair. The following examples illustrate the work-avoidance behaviors of disappearing, stalling, appealing to the parents sense of fairness, and teasing.

Disappearing:

> 7:30 a.m.
> Mr. and Mrs. Allen and Cristine were all helping prepare breakfast. Apparently Brian was also supposed to be helping.
> Mr. Allen asked where Brian was, and Mrs. Allen responded, "Downstairs staring at the wall."
> Mr. Allen called to Brian, telling him to come upstairs. Brian appeared some few minutes later wearing a smile that suggested he had been purposefully avoiding the work. (May 6, 1980)

Stalling:

> 8:00 a.m.
> Nancy was washing the breakfast dishes. She began working on the task at 8:00 a.m. She would wash dishes for a few moments, wander to another room, play, wander back to the kitchen, work a few minutes, and would again be distracted by some other activity. Occasionally she looked at the clock, "Five to nine, I have five more minutes." She finished the task at 9:00 a.m. when it was time to leave for school. (May 7, 1980)

Appealing to rules or what is fair:

> 7:55 a.m.
> Mrs. Allen asked Brian to do the dishes, and he whined a reply, "Tomorrow's my day, Thursday. It's Nancy's turn because it was her turn yesterday and she didn't have to do them." (May 7, 1980)

Teasing:

> 5:45 p.m.
> Mr. and Mrs. Allen were out of town, and Mrs. Allen left a note telling the children what they were to do. Brian had cooked dinner, the children had eaten, and it was time to wash dishes. Nancy and Cristine discussed who was going to do the dishes. Nancy told Cristine it was her job; she said their

> mother's note said Cristine was to do it. Cristine looked puzzled; she looked for the note but could not find it. The researcher reminded Nancy the note said they were all to do the dishes. Nancy laughed and said she knew that. Cristine began working on the dishes. Nancy looked at a book a few minutes, then walked from the living room to the kitchen and back again. (May 8, 1980)

Behaviors employed by the younger children to avoid work appeared to be less sophisticated, relying less on evasive strategies, and usually included complaining and/or whining.

Although these ploys for avoiding work usually made it possible to delay the time they began working, or to prolong the time it took to do a task, the children were seldom, if ever, successful at avoiding the work entirely. Parents typically responded to work-avoidance behaviors with a command to do the work, as in the following incident.

> 8:00 a.m.
> Brian had been asked to wash dishes and instead picked up the baby and was playing with her. Mrs. Allen issued a firm command, "Put her down and get the dishes done!" Brian went to the kitchen and began washing dishes. (May 6, 1980)

While parents were teaching children to do housework, they were teaching more than skills to do work. They were also teaching attitudes about work. One of those attitudes was that work is something that needs to be done whether or not you feel like doing it, or whether or not you like to do the task. They may also have been teaching that there are times when personal goals must be sacrificed or delayed and precedence given to family or parental goals.

Motivation to Do Housework

Because doing housework was not always a preferred activity, an added dimension of the process in teaching children to work was providing motivation. The data were examined to identify clues of how

parents motivated the children to do housework. Methods included working with them, expressing praise and approval, and offering encouragement and rewards, and also by making the interaction enjoyable through singing, talking, and showing affection. In addition, parents sometimes used controlling behaviors such as prodding, expressing disapproval or impatience, commands, rules, and punishment as means for motivating the children to do their assigned tasks.

In the Allen and Brice households, the emphasis in motivating children to do housework appeared to be on maintaining positive interaction while doing housework, i.e. the participants seldom volunteered the information that the tasks themselves were fun to do, although there were suggestions that doing the work together was satisfying. For example, on a particularly busy Saturday morning, the Brice family had the added task of cleaning the front yard which had been "newspapered" by some of the children's friends. Indications were that they were not looking forward to the clean-up task: Mrs. Brice commented she was upset when she saw the newspaper strewn about the yard, "That was the last thing we needed right now." Beth and Rachael teased each other over who would have to clean it up:

> 7:42 a.m.
> Beth comes into the kitchen and laughs as she says to Rachael that it is her job to clean the yard.
> Rachael: I'm not going to do it. (She turns up her nose as she speaks.) (March 28, 1981)

A few minutes later James announced that Mrs. Brice had said "the whole family has to help clean the yard," and after breakfast Mrs. Brice succeeded after some prodding in getting all the children outside to work on the project. Once outside, they all seemed to enjoy the

work, although Mrs. Brice had to occasionally remind the children to continue working. When the yard was cleaned Mrs. Brice observed, "Doesn't that look good. Well, that didn't take very long, did it. Can you imagine, Beth, how long that would have taken if you did it by yourself." Back inside the house, Mrs. Brice continued, "Wow, you all helped really good" (9:30 a.m., March 28, 1981). The children looked happy and seemed to share her satisfaction in seeing the work completed.

The above example also illustrates what appeared to be a particularly successful strategy used by both Mr. and Mrs. Allen and Mr. and Mrs. Brice to motive their children to do housework, that of working with the children. A typical behavior pattern was for the parent either to work with the child doing the same general task, as when they worked together cleaning the kitchen following a meal, or to work at different tasks but sharing the same time frame.

The presence or absence of a parent also appeared to sometimes influence the motivation of children to do housework. There were occasions when the children put off doing assigned tasks when one parent or the other was not there to supervise. On the other hand, on more than one occasion when parents were not available to supervise, the children assumed responsibility for and completed their regular tasks.

The parents also encouraged their children in their work through praising them and expressing approval for their contribution to the housework. Approval was communicated through a variety of behaviors such as praise, a smile or a nod. In the following examples, Mr. and

Mrs. Allen were expressing approval of the quality of children's work performance and at the same time providing encouragement to the children as they worked.

> 8:15 a.m.
> Mrs. Allen returned home after taking Mr. Allen to work. She walked into the house, all the children were busy doing their assigned tasks.
> Mrs. Allen: You guys are doing well. (May 6, 1980)

> 7:20 a.m.
> Mr. Allen asked Cristine to help him make scrambled eggs for breakfast. Cristine begins cracking eggs into the pan.
> Mr. Allen: You are doing well, Cristine. Fill it up. (May 6, 1980)

Parental approval of the work children did may also be a form of encouragement that provides motivation for them not only to do their tasks but to do them well. The inspection and check-off system used by Mr. Allen to encourage the children in the Saturday morning tasks is an example (p. 112).

There were indications that the children needed and/or wanted the approval of their parents. For example, on occasions when parental approval wasn't immediately forthcoming, the children sometimes asked for approval. To illustrate, when Nancy and Cristine completed the task of straightening the basement, Nancy smiled and asked Mrs. Allen, "Doesn't this look better than the upstairs" (9:05 a.m., May 15, 1980). When Brian finished washing the dishes, he asked, "Does the kitchen look good?" He didn't get a response from Mrs. Allen so he asked again, "Does the kitchen look good?" (4:30 p.m., May 15, 1980). Brian may have been asking for approval so he could also get permission to leave, but he phrased the question in such a way that he could also get approval for the way the job was done.

The children also occasionally expressed approval of the housework tasks done by their siblings, and approval from siblings also appeared to be a source of motivation as well as contributing to feelings of competence. In the following example approval was expressed as much by the tone of voice as by the words expressed.

> 3:50 p.m.
> Nancy and Cristine were in the living room playing with a friend. Brian was in the kitchen, singing and making a peanut butter sandwich. Brian walked into the living room with his sandwich. The sandwich was made of four slices of bread layered with peanut butter and jam.
> Cristine, her eyes wide with amazement: Double toast sandwich!
> Brian, smiling: I made it myself. (May 8, 1980)

Parents often gave encouragement and approval to the pre-school children as they helped provide for their physical care, during tasks like dressing the children or teaching them to dress themselves, or while feeding them or teaching them to feed themselves. For example, Greg seemed not quite awake early one morning and was whining as he contemplated putting on his clothes. Mr. Allen encouraged him, "Can you get dressed? You can't! I bet a three-year-old can get dressed" (7:00 a.m., May 6, 1980). In this example as in others, encouragement and approval were often conveyed as much by tone of voice and actions as by the words used.

Mr. and Mrs. Allen also motivated children to do housework by offering more tangible rewards such as promising the children they could play when they completed their tasks. The following example illustrates this pattern:

> 9:45 a.m.
> Mr. and Mrs. Allen and the children were busy doing the Saturday morning cleaning.

Mrs. Allen: Gee, if we get this all done, maybe we can go to the mall and play around.

Nancy, sounding disappointed: I thought we could go on a picnic.

Mrs. Allen: Have you looked outside. I don't think we will be going on a picnic. (May 17, 1980)

It was raining outside, and Nancy appeared to be satisfied with this explanation. The example suggests that Nancy was looking forward to a picnic following their work activities and this anticipation may have added incentive to complete the housework.

Material rewards, negotiation and bargaining were also used as a means to motivate children to do tasks. For example, when Cristine seemed reluctant to go with him to weed the garden, Mr. Allen encouraged her by promising they could go "you know where" after they completed their work (May 13, 1980). ("You know where" was a neighborhood 7-11 store.) An example in which bargaining was used was when Mrs. Allen had spent the better part of a day working on a gift for Brian to give the director of the school play in which he had a part. When Brian came home from school, Mrs. Allen asked him to do the dishes "because I have just spent the whole morning working on your thing" (May 15, 1980).

Mr. Allen used a task check-off system to increase incentive for the children to complete their Saturday morning tasks (See p. 112). As the children completed their assigned tasks, they would ask Mr. Allen to inspect their work. Mr. Allen would then give them verbal approval as well as check off the completed work on a chart. Mr. Allen said he felt another important motivator was letting the children know exactly how much they were expected to do so they could estimate when they would be finished with their work and plan time for other activities.

Another incentive used by Mr. and Mrs. Allen to motivate the children to do work was singing and conversing with the children as they worked in order to make the interaction in the work context more enjoyable. The children were expected to do their work whether or not they liked the task. It was not uncommon, however, for children to begin doing a task reluctantly and then apparently forget the reluctance as they began singing or talking as they worked.

Singing while working appeared to be a common behavior of both parents and children. The Allen children often sang as they washed dishes, whether washing them by themselves or with others. Nancy said they sang mostly when their Dad worked with them, and apparently Mr. Allen was the parent who most encouraged the singing as a strategy to make work more enjoyable.

> Mr. Allen: The singing in the kitchen as they are doing the dishes, that's initiated by the parent. Because when you go to do the dishes, it's a chore, and initially when we started doing that, we knew songs together, and, you know, "let's practice this song," and we'd just sing our lungs out, and it got to be really fun. And now when we're not even around they still do it when they are doing the dishes. But I think it was initiated by the parents, to make it more fun. (August, 1981)

Parents also motivated children to do housework by reminding, by expressing disapproval or impatience, by giving commands, imposing and providing explanations for rules, and by the use of punishment. These behaviors were observed when children failed to do assigned tasks, or when their performance at a given task did not meet parental standards.

In the following example Mr. Allen was reminding Nathan he had not done his task, and also insisting the work be done.

> 7:30 a.m.
> Nathan was helping set the breakfast table, and had failed to put the cups on the table.

> Mr. Allen: Nathan, you didn't set the cups on the table yet. Did you lose them or did you hide them? Come on. The next time I see them I want to see them by those plates. (May 6, 1980)

Disapproval of the children's behavior or the quality of their work may be a means to teach children to improve interaction as well as work skills. The standards identified by the parent provide a norm against which children can measure their success at doing a particular task. In the process they may also develop perceptions regarding their competence to do the work.

On one occasion when a child's performance at a task was unacceptable the disapproval that was expressed was directed to the person rather than the behavior. When a parent makes statements equating a child's failure to reach a standard with failure as a person, i.e. what the child <u>does</u> with what the child <u>is</u>, the attributions may have an impact on a child's feelings of personal worth as well as their perceptions of competence. The following example illustrates this type of attribution.

> 8:10 p.m.
> Mr. and Mrs. Allen were away from home and Brian had been asked to care for the younger children. Mark was misbehaving; Brian shut him in a closet and left him there. Another child rescued Mark from the closet (May 6, 1980). When Mrs. Allen learned of the incident the following day, she told Brian she did not approve of what he had done, then added, "Maybe I shouldn't let Brian tend the kids--he isn't any good." (May 7, 1980)

While Mrs. Allen's intention may have been to expresss her disapproval of Brian's behavior and to teach positive interaction skills, the attribution, "He isn't any good," may have a constraining influence on the development of feelings of competence and personal worth.

There were apparently occasions when parents may have been feeling impatience with the children's behavior but the clues were not readily apparent to an outside observer. For example, Saturday morning while Mr. Allen was supervising the children's housework activities, Mrs. Allen and the researcher were talking. Mr. Allen had put all the chairs on the dining room table and asked Nancy to vacuum the floor. Mrs. Allen observed, "I better go help Gary. He's getting angry with the children" (9:30 a.m., May 17, 1980). The researcher had not noticed any difference in Mr. Allen's tone of voice or behavior. However, Mrs. Allen was apparently sensitive to something the researcher was not. This example suggests that disapproval and impatience may be communicated through subtle, nonverbal behaviors.

When parents were impatient with children, the pattern was to give commands rather than to request the children do a specific task. The commands seemed to convey more motivational force since the children usually did what the parents "commanded" them to do. Children also used commands to try to motivate a sibling to help with a particular task. However, the children were sometimes less responsive to the commands of their siblings than they were to their parents. For example, one morning while Cristine and Nancy were washing dishes and Mr. and Mrs. Allen were away from home, Greg was walking around the kitchen and dining area crying as he walked.

> 8:00 a.m.
> Cristine stopped doing dishes to ask Greg what he wanted. Brian told her Greg wanted a drink of water. Cristine did not acknowledge Brian's suggestion or get Greg a drink. Brian said it two more times, but Cristine continued ignoring Brian and paying attention to Greg. Brian said, more firmly, "Give him a drink of water, will you! I mean Greg." (May 6, 1980)

In the preceding example Cristine initially did not appear to hear Brian's advice, although Cristine finally took Brian's suggestion and got a drink of water for Greg. However, that was not always the pattern when a child "commanded" another child.

One of Mrs. Allen's more common controlling behaviors in the housework and child care context was the imposition of rules for behavior; she also typically added an explanation for a rule. The following example illustrates the use of rules as a means for motivating children in the context of child care and housework.

> 8:55 a.m.
> Mrs. Allen to Mark, firmly: Only one change of clothes today!
> Mrs. Allen went to the bedroom for Mark's clothes and when she returned said again: Only one change of clothes today!
> Mark: Okay.
> Mrs. Allen: If you change them, then you have to go to bed. You know that, don't you.
> Mark: Okey.
> Mrs. Allen: I'm washing about five times more than I ought to be. (May 5, 1980)

In the foregoing example, Mrs. Allen stated the rule as well as the punishment for disobedience, and also gave an explanation for the rule.

There were occasions when no explanation for the rule was offered at the time the rule was stated. In some of those cases the rule appeared to be reflective of a parent's general attitude or philosophy about work so perhaps needed no explanation. A rule Mrs. Allen consistently reminded the children about was, "If you are going to watch television you have to tend the baby." At one point Mrs. Allen explained that she considered television watching an idle activity and

disapproved of anyone watching it unless they were doing some observable and productive activity at the same time.

A final motivating behavior to be considered is that of punishment. There were few, if any, examples of physical punishment in the context of housework during the time of the observation. Parental disapproval and impatience may be interpreted by children as a form of punishment. One type of punishment that was observed in the context of housework was the assignment of a task as punishment for unacceptable behavior. It was observed that Brian had been washing dishes rather frequently during the recent observation visits, and the researcher asked Mrs. Allen if washing dishes had been Brian's regular assignment for that period of time. Mrs. Allen responded that his doing dishes was a follow-through on the punishment they were giving him for something he had done (9:15 p.m., May 17, 1980). Using housework as punishment may have the additional effect of teaching attitudes about work.

For the most part, strategies used by Mr. and Mrs. Brice to teach and motivate their children as they developed skills in doing housework did not differ noticeably from those used by Mr. and Mrs. Allen. Mr. and Mrs. Brice also began teaching their children to do housework from an early age, and worked with their children doing housework. They also sang together and conversed as they worked, and provided other kinds of encouragement. Mr. Brice said a method he had found effective in teaching children to accept responsibility for housework was the use of indirect praise, where one parent would tell the other parent about

the good work a child had done and would give that praise when the child was within hearing distance.

Division of Labor

The division of labor, including the processes for determining task allocation, was another important dimension of the structure of housework that influenced family interaction and also had implications for the development of human skills and attributes. Because all family members participated in housework, decisions had to be made as to who should do which tasks. Mr. and Mrs. Allen shared decision-making responsibility for allocating tasks among family members, and both did housework as well as supervised and directed the children as they did their tasks. Mrs. Allen typically coordinated the family work efforts on weekday mornings while Mr. Allen had primary responsibility for Saturday morning housework. Decision-making responsibility for evening work activities seemed less clearly defined; however Mrs. Allen, more than Mr. Allen, seemed to make the decisions about who would do tasks unless she was not at home or was busy with other activities. Whenever possible, both Mr. and Mrs. Allen would work with the children while they did their tasks.

It appeared that Mr. and Mrs. Allen maintained primary responsibility for deciding which tasks the children would do. During the time of the observations the parents did not usually ask children what they would like to do, rather they made assignments. Since it was not readily apparent whether the children had some say in the decision process, I asked Nancy how they decided who would do what

tasks on Saturday mornings. She responded, "My Dad just gives us different jobs each week. He says, 'You do this and you do this.'"

Weekday mornings Mrs. Allen appeared to be the one who decided which tasks the children would do. Some tasks appeared to be rotated among the three older children on a regular basis, e.g. there were occasional references to whose "turn" it was to wash dishes. Other tasks seemed to be assigned on the basis of what needed to be done and who was available to do it.

Tasks appeared to be allocated among the children more on the basis of age than of sex. The three older children, Brian, Nancy and Cristine, seemed to participate about equally in the preparation of meals, clean-up following meals, general house cleaning, and caring for younger children. The three younger boys, Nathan, Mark, and Greg, did small tasks such as carrying dinner plates to and from the table and running errands to get needed items for their parents or older siblings. The three older children spent considerably more time doing housework than did the younger children. According to Mr. Allen, the younger children probably had less responsibility for housework than the older children had at their age because it was easier for the parents to have the older children do the work.

Mrs. Allen said that during the summer months, when school was out, Brian, Nancy and Cristine were given additional responsibility for housework. They participated in the planning of menus as well as shopping for food, and also were given more responsibility for the preparation of meals (June 1, 1980).

There also seemed to be some effort on the part of the parents to assign tasks on the basis of particularistic needs, as suggested in the following example. Mr. Allen had mentioned he was going to take Brian with him to work in the garden:

> 3:30 p.m.
> Mr. Allen: Is Brian coming home to help me?
> Mrs. Allen: I thought he was coming home to help me. Why don't you take Cristine? She needs to go. (May 13, 1980)

"Needing to go" in this instance apparently meant Cristine was needing special attention from her parents. Mrs. Allen mentioned on one occasion that she felt Cristine was going through a difficult time and that she needed extra attention: "She needs to be an only child for a while."

Boundaries of responsibility for housework between Mr. and Mrs. Allen were not always clearly defined and there were occasions when conflicts surfaced regarding the allocation of tasks. Even where there seemed to be regular patterns of responsibility for tasks, there were occasions when lines of responsibility needed to be reaffirmed or renegotiated. There were also occasional conflicts regarding work assignments for children, conflicts between the parents and children, between the parents, and among the children.

The following illustrates conflict processes involving the division of labor among family members. In this interaction episode conflicts surfaced between Mr. and Mrs. Allen, between Mr. Allen and Brian, and between Brian and Cristine. The interaction gives some clues as to ways conflict is structured and helps identify the integral position of housework in the conflict processes. The example also illustrates the importance of considering whole family processes rather

than analyzing a "static moment" in isolation from the rest of family living in that each conflict incident cannot be fully understood in isolation of the whole interaction process. The muted conflict betwen Mr. and Mrs. Allen over task responsibilities also suggests that it is not easy for an outside observer to see all the issues involved in conflict processes. In other words, there appeared to be more to the issue being discussed than was apparent on the surface.

3:25 p.m.

Mrs. Allen had gone outside to talk to a neighbor. Before she came in the house she called to Mr. Allen, who was also outside.

Mrs. Allen: Gary, what are you doing?

There was no immediate response, but Mr. Allen soon appeared and said he was going to "dig in the corn patch." Mr. Allen asked how the car was working, Mrs. Allen said something. (All the coversation was not audible).

Mr. Allen: You mean you have to go to play rehearsal again?

Mrs. Allen: Yup.

They talked about the car battery.

3:28 p.m.

Nancy arrived from school, and talked with Mrs. Allen.

Mr. Allen: Is Brian coming home to help me?

Mrs. Allen: I thought he was coming home to help me. Why don't you take Cristine? She needs to go. (Mrs. Allen had apparently made arrangements with Brian to care for the baby while she went to the play rehearsal.)

Cristine arrived from school with a downcast expression on her face.

Mr. Allen greeted Cristine enthusiastically: Boy, am I glad to see you.

Mr. Allen talked to Cristine about going to the garden, and she responded with a droopy, "Oh."

Mrs. Allen, encouraging: That is one thing everyone has liked to do--go to the garden and have a fun experience with Dad.

Mr. Allen told Cristine that after they went to the garden they could go to "you know where." Cristine's eyes lit up.

Mrs. Allen: Where did you get some money?

3:30 p.m.

Greg had been napping upstairs, and came down the stairs. He looked listless, not quite awake. Someone said he was sick.

Mr. Allen: A normal mother would put shoes on him.

Mrs. Allen was on her way out the door to the play rehearsal.

Mr. Allen, in a quiet but serious tone: Are we having dinner tonight?

Mrs. Allen: Yes, I got hamburger out.

Mr. Allen: Are you going to make it?

Mrs. Allen: Yes.

Mrs. Allen left for the play rehearsal.

Mr. Allen was sitting in a large chair in the living room, and Cristine was sitting on his lap. Mr. Allen talked to Brian who was holding Allison.

Mr. Allen, good humoredly: Will you change her when we go? Will you wipe her nose regularly.

Brian, sounding less than enthusiastic: Who will take care of the boys?

Mr. Allen, with enthusiasm: You will. You will be the mother of four.

Brian, whining: I can't.

Mr. Allen: Yes, you can.

Mr. Allen gets up and walks out of the room.

Brian, looking at Allison's runny nose: See, that is why I hate babies.

The phone rings, someone about a ball practice for Brian. After talking about the ball practice Brian tells Mr. Allen he wants to go work in the garden.

Mr. Allen, smiling: All of a sudden you want to go labor, huh?

Brian: Dad, will you hold Allison for just a minute while I run see the corn?

Mr. Allen: No. We will let you go see it another time.

Brian, mumbling quietly: I never get to go see the corn.

Cristine was standing on the front porch, and said she couldn't find her stockings. Mr. Allen told her they were downstairs, and Cristine skipped off to find them.

Brian yelled in a critical tone: Cristine!

Mr. Allen: What's wrong.

Brian: She scared that bird. There was a bird on the porch and she scared it.

Brian turned to Cristine and in a demeaning tone said: You are just being your old dumb self.

Cristine's face dropped.

Mr. Allen: Just tell him to....

Cristine, more cheerfully: To cram it?

3:45

Mr. Allen and Cristine were leaving for the garden.

Mr. Allen: You ready to take charge, Brian?

Brian: No.

Mr. Allen: Get ready. And you boys play in the back yard, okay.

Mr. Allen and Cristine left.

Brian went to the kitchen to get a drink for Greg. Mark said he wanted a drink, too.

Brian: Do you want some juice?

Mark: Ya, carrot juice.

Brian got a drink for Mark, then went to Alsion who was lying on the sofa, crying.

Brian, in a motherly voice: What's the matter, Alison? What's the matter?

Brian played with Alison and sang a few notes: Get a smile on your face, little girl. (May 13, 1980)

The above example illustrates some of the issues that may arise relative to the division of responsibility for housework, issues such as whether individual or family goals should take precedence, what is fair when arbitrating among individual goals, and what a person in a given role ought to do. One could sense a certain amount of tension in the questions and comments Mr. Allen directs at Mrs. Allen. Questions about what is fair are not easily resolved; as the above example suggests, an individual may be more aware of his or her own contribution to the work than of the contribution of others.

Conflicts regarding division of labor may easily surface in the process of doing houswork. While it is a commonly held assumption that conflict should be avoided because it is negative, the overall effect of conflicts may not always be bad. Depending on how the family processes conflicts, they may constrain or promote the growth and development of family members. Conflicts are a part of life outside as well as inside the home; if skills in resolving conflicts can be developed in the home the individual will be better prepared to face conflicts in the world outside. Among the issues that surface while doing housework, as illustrated in the above example, are, what is fair? Why must I sacrifice what I want just so he or she can have what they want? Is 'not liking' to do something sufficient reason to avoid doing it? Families may resolve these questions in a variety of ways.

It is apparent that conflict is an integral part of housework processes, and may be an important stimulus to learning.

Development of Sex Stereotyping

The allocation of tasks among family members and the decision processes associated with the development of that particular dimension of the structuring of housework also have implications for the development of sex stereotyping. This section of the analysis will consider how the social relations in the context of housework activites may contribute to sex stereotyping.

Sex stereotyping may be transmitted through the assignment of household tasks and through differences in work expectations among the children. If there were differences in the children's task assignments on the basis of sex stereotyping they were not readily discernable. In an effort to identify clues the older children were asked, "Which are boys' jobs and which are girls' jobs?" Nancy looked at me with a puzzled expression and responded, "We just do it all together. Nobody has certain jobs to do" (May 8, 1980).

There was one incident in the data where a child's response to a work assignment suggested a difference in work expectations:

> 9:55 a.m.
> Mr. Allen to Brian: Did you finish your other job?
> Brian reported what housework he had completed.
> Mr. Allen: That was all one job.
> Brian, complaining: Daddy, the girls don't have to do that.
> Mr. Allen: I want you to go clean the stuff off the floor in Mommy's sewing room.
> Brian: Oh good, I did that yesterday.
> He smiled and went upstairs to clean the room. (May 17, 1980)

As can be seen in the above example, on this occasion Brian felt he was having to do more housework than his sisters. This was the only

incident observed where a child referred to a difference in task assignments based on sex differences.

Children developed sex stereotypes through modeling the behavior of parents. In the Allen household all family members made a substantial contribution to housework, and both Mr. and Mrs. Allen assumed some of the responsibility for housework, assigning tasks to children, teaching work skills and supervising the performance of tasks, as well as engaging in housework themselves. Their economic roles in the family were basically organized along somewhat traditional lines, i.e. Mrs. Allen was a fulltime homemaker and Mr. Allen left the home each weekday to work at a paid job. However, Mrs. Allen also contributed to the income for the family through a home industry which she had initiated.

Mr. Allen said he enjoyed the work he did in the home, and on more than one occasion spoke in a joking manner about their having their roles mixed:

> Mrs. Allen had made a shadow box for Brian to give to a teacher, and she asked Mr. Allen if he would like to walk to the school with us to see it. Mr. Allen was in the kitchen making tapioca pudding.
>
> Mr. Allen: Okay, this is almost done. Can you wait a second?
>
> Mrs. Allen: Um-hmm. (yes)
>
> Mr. Allen: I'll soon be through slaving over the hot stove and you'll be through with your carpentry items. I think we got our roles mixed. She had carpentry and shadow boxes and all that stuff and I'm fixing dinner. Did you ever think you had your role mixed up? We got our hormones mixed. We were put together to sort of even us out. You'd have never made it with a normal man and I'd have never made it with a normal girl.
>
> Mr. and Mrs. Allen both laughed.
>
> Mrs. Allen: I had a real advantage. Gary's mother died when he was thirteen so he had no preconceived attitudes about what his role ought to be.
>
> Mr. Allen, laughing: I cooked and did the dishes, and I made my little brother do the milking cows. (May 15, 1980)

Topics of conversation during play and the roles assumed by children as they played provided clues to the children's perceptions of adult roles and, therefore, to the development of sex stereotypes. While Nathan and Mark often assumed typically male roles in their play such as doctor, pilot, Superman and King Kong, they also occasionally played housework. The following examples from the data illustrate the modeling of housework roles in play. In the first example, Nathan and Mark were playing outside in the sandpile.

> 3:00 p.m.
> Nathan: We are making eggs.
> Mark: I'm not wiping them up.
> They both play in the sand. After a few moments Mark said he was going to the back yard to swing and asked Nathan if he wanted to come along.
> Nathan: Yah. As soon as I finish the eggs. (May 15, 1980).

In the following example, Nathan and Mark were in the family room where most of the family were watching television. Nathan and Mark were playing, and Mr. Allen has been trying to direct their play towards going to bed:

> 9:20 p.m.
> Nathan and Mark climb on Mr. Allen's legs and ask him to play.
> Mr. Allen: Okey, I'm a little boy and I want to come to bed.
> They continue their pretend dialogues.
>
> 9:25 p.m.
> Mark: Dad is going to fix dinner.
> Mr. Allen, in mock surprise: Dad is going to fix dinner! I thought mothers did that.
> Mark: The mother's died.
> Mr. and Mrs. Allen both smile.
> Mr. Allen: Mothers don't die. They just go to roadshows. (A reference to the play Mrs. Allen had been directing at the church). (May 16, 1980)

The above examples provide indications that, consistent with the behavior patterns the children saw modeled in their home, the gender

concepts they were developing did not follow strictly traditional sex-stereotyped lines.

While the sexual division of labor was minimal among the children, the field notes referred to above indicate a general awareness of sex stereotypes. Mr. Allen's statement that "mothers fix dinner" conveyed a belief about sex stereotypes. The dialogue (pp. 162-164) about inviting a girl over who was "chasing" Brian suggests strong beliefs about sex roles and what is appropriate and inappropriate. In other words, even though tasks themselves were not noticeably divided by sex, gender beliefs were still conveyed in the interaction surrounding the performance of tasks.

Sex stereotypes may also be learned in environments other than the home and shared in conversations with family members that accompany the performance of housework. On one occasion when Brian and Cristine were washing dishes, the topic of conversation illustrated sex stereotyping.

> 8:25 a.m.
> Cristine: Do you know why girls pick flowers?
> Brian replied that he didn't know.
> Cristine: They say the girls pick the flowers because the flowers stink.
> Brian: Ya, the girls pick the flowers because the flowers stink. (May 5, 1980)

The source of information for this conversation apparently was friends or classmates at school. The example illustrates the transmission of ideas from one sibling to another in the context of housework activity, the work providing the excuse to be together in the same room for a period of time thus facilitating the transmission of ideas. The example also illustrates the transmission of ideas about sex stereotypes from one sibling to another, with Cristine possibly

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testing the validitiy of the idea by stating it to Brian in order to learn his response to the idea.

Teaching and Learning Decision Making Skills

The structuring of housework to include participation of all family members provided opportunities for parents and children to learn decision-making skills. Much of what is taught or learned about decision making was communicated indirectly, through modeling the behavior of others and through making choices incidental to the housework processes. For example, coordinating the work activities of many family members required many managerial decisions. When Mr. Allen was coordinating the Saturday morning cleaning several logistical decisions were made:

> 9:35 a.m.
> Mr. Allen: Nancy, the vacuuming's not going to be done until after the kitchen floor is finished.
>
> 9:38 a.m.
> Mr. Allen: Brian, you can't do that (task) until the girls have washed the floor. (May 17, 1980)

Time allocation decisions were made in the housework context, i.e. deciding whether to do housework tasks first, let them wait, or ignore them altogether. Decisions were also made about the allocation of material resources, including whether to purchase inexpensive products or more expensive ones, what to eat for lunch and how much, and decisions about the use of energy resources. In both the Allen and Brice families interaction patterns indicated children had the opportunity to learn decision making skills through observing their parents as well as through their own involvement in the decision making processes.

In the following examples, decisions were made regarding the allocation of limited resources, i.e. food, money, and energy.

> 8:25 a.m.
> Cristine asked Mrs. Allen if she could have a banana. Mrs. Allen divided a banana between Cristine and Greg, and said that was all the bananas until she could get some more.
> Mrs. Allen: We'll need to get some cheap ones.
> After she said, "No more," Nathan and Mark started chanting, "I want a banana, I want a banana."
>
> 8:30 a.m.
> Mrs. Allen left in the car and returned at 8:45 a.m.
> Nathan: Mom, what did you get?
> Mrs. Allen: Cereal for the baby.
> Nathan: Did you get any bananas?
> Mrs. Allen: No, they cost too much money. (May 5, 1980)

The second example was observed in the Brice household:

> 6:55 a.m.
> Beth asked Mr. Brice to drive her up the street. Mr. Brice told her she could walk.
> Beth: Dad. (Pronounced with two syllables, complaining tone)
> Mr. Brice: Beth. (Said with same two-syllable tone.) I am not going to start the car just to go up there. My tank is on a quarter tank. (March 24, 1981)

Making the decisions in the preceding examples required a consideration of many alternatives and ideas, including the weighing of present needs and desires against future needs, and the weighing of personal goals against those of others. In other words, when the parents made these decisions they were communicating a system of priorities as well as decision making outcomes.

In the foregoing examples, the parent was the decision maker and the children were primarily observers. In the following examples, the children were invited to participate in considering alternatives.

> 7:15 a.m.
> Mrs. Allen had just come upstairs from waking the school-age children and was looking in the refrigerator, apparently looking for inspiration for breakfast.

> Mrs. Allen: How would you like banana cream pie?
> Nathan, coming up the stairs: No.
> Mrs. Allen: Come on, you guys are no fun. How about peaches and pears? There's no bread.
> Mr. Allen and some of the other children were now in the kitchen. No one seemed excited about the alternatives.
> Mrs. Allen, laughing: How about scrambled eggs without toast?
> The menu was decided on--scrambled eggs and applesauce. (May 6, 1980)

In the preceding example family members were considering which of the available alternatives could be used for breakfast. Decisions such as this were common in the housework context, and they provided family members with the opportunity of learning to weigh alternatives as they consider resources available for meeting human needs.

Other decisions which the children made in the context of housework processes involved the weighing of personal needs and/or desires against those of other family members, as in the following example where decisions were made about the allocation of food.

> 7:45 a.m.
> Mr. Allen had prepared French toast for breakfast. When Mrs. Allen sat down to the table she observed, "There's none left." Nancy offered to give her some of her's. Brian offered to give her some of his. Nancy remarked that the piece she gave was bigger than the one Brian gave. (May 7, 1980)

When children participated in decision making processes, they not only developed decision making skills but also contributed to family integration as they evaluated alternatives in meeting the needs of other family members.

Development of Attitudes about Tasks

As family members interact in the context of housework they may also develop attitudes about work. To identify clues of how tasks were regarded, the data were examined for patterns suggesting hierarchies in

preferences for tasks, adjectives used to describe tasks, and verbal statements describing feelings about tasks.

The analysis of the data suggest there were hierarchies in task preferences, however there were some indications these were not stable hierarchies but that they varied from individual to individual and from time to time. In other words, task preferences often appeared to be relative, or situation specific. Examples from the data already referred to in this analysis give some clues as to task hierarchies. For example, Nancy seemed to prefer cleaning dishes over feeding Allison (May 16, 1980), and Brian seemed to prefer hoeing corn over tending children (May 13, 1980), which would suggest that child care tasks were not high on their list of preferred tasks. At another time, however, Brian appeared to prefer tending Allison over washing dishes (May 6, 1980).

Clues as to how specific tasks were regarded were found in the names and adjectives family members used to describe tasks as well as in direct statements evaluating feeling about tasks. As an example of adjectives used to describe tasks, when Mr. Allen asked Brian to tend his younger brothers he referred to the task as "playing mother" (May 13, 1980). "Playing mother" could suggest the task was regarded as a typically feminine task. It might also indicate, however, that Mr. Allen, at least, did not see mothering as a strictly feminine task.

Adjectives describing tasks seemed to vary with the mood of the person describing the task. For example, when Mrs. Allen appeared tired and irritated (May 15, 1980), she asked the children to "pick up the crud on the floor." On other occasions she was more likely to use

the specific name of the item or simply say, "Pick that up." On that same morning, Mrs. Allen instructed the children to clean their "groady teeth" before leaving for school. On a more tranquil morning she simply reminded them to brush their teeth.

Indications of liked or disliked tasks were also observable through nonverbal cues such as facial expressions. For example, when Brian was washing pans after a meal, he grimaced as he tackled a particularly messy pan (4:25 p.m., May 16, 1980). It appeared the task was not a particularly pleasant one for him.

Statements indicating liked and disliked tasks were occasionally made incidental to the work processes. When Mrs. Allen was mixing bread one morning she sang as she worked, "Oh, I hate making bread" (8:45 a.m., May 7, 1980). It was apparent from statements she made on other occasions (August, 1981) that Mrs. Allen did not always "hate to make bread," but on this particular occasion it seemed apparent bread making was not a preferred activity. There appeared to be a pattern, in fact, suggesting that whether or not the activity in which an individual was participating was liked or disliked was related, at least to some degree, to what other activities were competing for the individual's attention.

Another factor that appeared to influence attitudes about tasks was whether the task provided a social opportunity and if it could be done with a particular person. The gardening example (May 13, 1980, pp. 145-146) also provided an example of this type of interaction. When Cristine arrived from school, Mr. Allen extended her an enthusiastic invitation to work with him in the garden. Cristine was

wearing a sad expression on her face as she came in the house and responded to Mr. Allen's invitation with a droopy, "Oh." Mr. Allen responded, "That is one thing everyone has liked to do--go to the garden and have a fun experience with Dad." The example suggested working with a parent was generally seen as helping make the work more enjoyable.

Indications of liked and disliked tasks were given more directly in response to the question, "What is your favorite task?" (May 8, 1980). The answers to this question also provided clues to factors that influenced the way tasks were regarded. Cristine said her favorite task was "Washing windows." When asked why, she responded, "Because you get to play. You can make designs with the water." This response suggested a factor influencing how tasks were regarded was whether they were seen as being somehow like play. On the other hand, activities which one might regard as play were sometimes considered work by others. As an example, Nancy said her favorite task was "jogging in the morning." When the researcher expressed surprise that she would call jogging a job she responded, "Yes, it is a job. My mother has to wake us up and we say, 'No, Mom.'" The activity was apparently regarded as "work" in this instance because it was something she was required to do rather than something she chose to do.

Other Interaction in Housework Context

This section of the analysis will consider interaction in the housework context that, while not directly related to the work itself, nevertheless was an integral part of the work processes. These

interaction behaviors included showing affection and listening (problem solving).

Displays of affection were especially prevalent while parents were providing for the physical care of children, while helping children dress or while washing a child's face, for example. When Mr. Allen washed Greg's face, it became a moment of playful and affectionate interaction. As Mr. Allen washed, he played, "Where's your face? Where's your nose? Where's your hair?" and Greg responded with obvious delight (5:00 p.m., May 17, 1980). Occasionally Mrs. Allen would pause from helping Greg, Mark or Nathan get dressed and hold them close or give them a hug and kiss and say, "I love you." (e.g. 9:30 a.m., May 5, 1980).

Communicating affection was not limited to child care tasks, however. On one occasion, for example, Mrs. Allen was washing dishes with Cristine. They were standing side by side at the kitchen sink, Mrs. Allen washing and Cristine rinsing the dishes. Mrs. Allen worked with one hand, her other arm around Cristine's shoulder, pulling her close and singing, "To know, know, know you is to love, love, love you...." (9:05 p.m., May 15, 1980)

Allowing a child to share the same physical space is another parental behavior that communicated a feeling of respect and/or affection for a child. In the following example there was no verbal interaction between the parent and children, nevertheless there seemed to be some type of supportive interaction taking place.

> 2:30 p.m.
> Mrs. Allen was sewing in the upstairs sewing room. Nathan and Mark were in the basement watching television.

> 3:05 p.m.
> Nathan and Mark went upstairs where Mrs. Allen was sewing. They talked animatedly to each other, but not to Mrs. Allen. They played and talked with each other in the sewing room while Mrs. Allen sewed and talked with the researcher.
>
> 3:10 p.m.
> Nathan and Mark were playing in the baby crib, talking noisily; Mrs. Allen seemed not to hear them.
>
> 3:15 p.m.
> A neighbor knocked at the door. Mrs. Allen went downstairs and answered the door, then went out on the front lawn to talk with the neighbor. The researcher remained in the sewing room upstairs. Within a few moments Nathan and Mark moved their play to the front lawn. They did not talk with Mrs. Allen but played near her. (May 13, 1980)

During this time segment there was no verbal interaction between Mrs. Allen and Nathan and Mark. Why did the boys choose to locate their play in the vicinity of Mrs. Allen? Nathan and Mark did not always play where Mrs. Allen was working, but they did frequently enough to suggest they felt some "invisible" support from sharing the same space. It was common for Nathan, Mark and Greg to play in the kitchen while Mr. or Mrs. Allen was working in that area (e.g. May 17, 1980). Even though the presence of the children sometimes seemed to create some inconvenience--family members had to move around them as they worked--nevertheless no one voiced any objection to their presence. This same pattern in the use of space was also observable in the Brice family; Steve often located his play in the same area where Mr. or Mrs. Brice was working.

The structuring of housework as a group activity created opportunities for children to talk with parents about issues of concern to them, and, at the same time, opportunities for parents to listen and respond. Behavior patterns indicated that whether or not a parent

listened and understood what the child was saying or feeling had an almost immediate, observable impact on the child's behavior and possibly also on the child's feelings of personal worth. Although all the interaction during each interaction segment has not been included, each is presented in some detail to provide a more complete picture of the setting for the interaction. The following two examples also illustrate how the structuring of housework may either encourage or constrain problem solving interaction.

> 8:15 a.m.
> Cristine had told Mrs. Allen she didn't want to go to school today. Mrs. Allen was working in the kitchen, and Brian and Cristine were in the basement. Brian came upstairs to report that Cristine was throwing things. Mrs. Allen commented that Cristine had been grouchy lately. Cristine came upstairs and Mrs. Allen asked what was wrong. Cristine did not reply, but she looked downcast.
>
> 8:20 a.m.
> Cristine and Brian were washing dishes; both were singing. Mrs. Allen were also working in the kitchen and that general area of the house. Cristine and Brian talked about why girls pick flowers. Mrs. Allen talked to Greg and got a drink of water for him, and checked on something Mark was doing.
>
> 8:25 a.m.
> Mrs. Allen asked Cristine if she was having problems at school.
> Mrs. Allen: Are you having problems with Amy? Is that what you are feeling bad about all the time?
> Cristine responded.
> Mrs. Allen: When I talked to your teacher she said you were really neat about it and finding others to play with.
> Cristine explained to her mother how she saw the situation, and Mrs. Allen tried to help Cristine think the problem through.
> Mrs. Allen: Maybe part of the problem is that Amy is leaving and she is trying to do this because she is upset. Do you think that is it?
> They continued their dialogue.
>
> 8:30 a.m.
> As Brian left for school Mrs. Allen reminded him to come home right after school. Mrs. Allen looked at a paper Nathan showed her, told Nancy she could get some item she needed "on pay day," talked with Nathan and Greg, and helped Cristine

finish cleaning the kitchen. Mrs. Allen, laughing, told Cristine she could stay home from school if she wanted, but if she did she would have to tend kids and stay in bed. Cristine smiled and replied that she didn't want to stay home. Cristine ran and skipped through the house as she got ready to leave for school. (May 5, 1980)

When Cristine left for school she had a smile on her face and a spring to her step, quite a contrast to her demeanor earlier in the morning. Talking her problem through with Mrs. Allen seemed to have alleviated some of her concerns. In addition, Mrs. Allen's willingness to listen to Cristine was a way of showing respect for her as a person. As can be noted, the topic of conversation between Cristine and Mrs. Allen did not relate to housework, but the work activities provided the reason for being together in a common space over a period of time, thus facilitating the problem-solving interaction.

In the second example, the "problem" resurfaced three times, each time while the participants were doing housework. The problem apparently continued to resurface because it was not resolved to the satisfaction of the participants in the preceding encounter.

Friday, 3:25 p.m.
Mrs. Allen had prepared dinner early so the family could eat together before she left for play rehearsal. She asked Brian to set the table.

3:30 p.m.
Mr. Allen suggested they eat later, after Mrs. Allen returned from play rehearsal.
Mrs. Allen: My whole purpose is to have us eat together. Kate can't stay at our house.
Brian: How come.
Mrs. Allen: What do you think? Girls can't stay at boys' houses.
Mr. Allen: What's this?
Mrs. Allen: Brian asked Nancy to ask Kate to stay over.
Mr. Allen, laughing: Wow! I can't believe it.
Brian: Can I have an orange?
Mr. Allen told Brian he couldn't have an orange, then offered him a roll, teasing, "Get down on the floor; now roll

over," in place of the orange. Mr. Allen asked Brian what they had for school lunch, and Brian replied they had carrots, celery and milk, and "I'm starved."

Brian stalled, played around, rather than setting the table. Mr. Allen told him to "stop fooling around" and set the table.

3:40

Brian had been teasing the younger children. Nancy and Cristine arrived from school, both in poor humor over a disagreement they were having. Mr. Allen asked Brian to set the table for dinner.

Mr. Allen: We have one Brian, one Nancy, and one Cristine home grouchy.

Mrs. Allen was preparing dinner, with Mr. Allen, Nancy, Cristine helping. Brian was setting the table.

Mrs. Allen to Nancy: Did you tell Kate today that she couldn't come over and stay tonight at our house?

Nancy replied that she did.

Mrs. Allen: Good. I think she's really rude to ask if she can stay overnight. And chasing you (Brian) like that!

Mr. Allen: Who told you you could have girl friends at ten years old.

Brian: But I have other girl friends.

Mrs. Allen: Yes, but there's a difference.

Nancy dramatized how she told Kate she could not come over.

Mrs. Allen: Did you tell her she can't stay over 'cause your mother thinks she is chasing her son?

Brian, with a hurt or defensive tone: I don't care, Mommy.

Brian continued to set the table as he talked, letting each piece of cutlery hit the table with a loud thump.

3:50

The family sat down for dinner. During the meal Mr. Allen tapped Brian over the head with a spoon, and Mrs. Allen criticized Brian three times for demeaning remarks (put-downs) he made to his siblings. At some point during the meal, Brian asked if he could go to baseball practice the next day. Nancy commented that Kate had said she was going to be at every game so she could watch Brian play. Nancy told how Kate was excited when Brian's team had won a game, and Brian blushed and grinned, "Oh, ya."

Mrs. Allen, in a tone of mock delight: Oh, that's wonderful. I'm happy you have a girl friend, Brian.

Brian, hopeful: You don't mind, huh?

Mrs. Allen: Oh, I think she's wonderful. I don't even know her. (May 16, 1980)

Saturday, 9:45 a.m.

Mrs. Allen and Brian were cleaning the family room downstairs. Mrs. Allen explained to Brian he was too young to be going places with a girl, "so if Kate asks you to go someplace

> you can't. You can just do things with her at school." Somewhere in the middle of her statement Brian asked, "How come?" (Observations were being made from the stairway and the remainder of the conversation was not audible.) (May 17, 1980)

These examples of problem solving and conflict processes provide some insight into the on-going and dynamic nature of family interaction. In the second example, the problem was not resolved during the observation time and may never have been resolved to the complete satisfaction of the participants. It is possible that many of the problems that surface as families interact are of this recurring nature. Conflicts are not isolated snapshots of interaction, but are an integral part of the overall social relations within the family.

Housework appeared to be especially suited as a situation for problem-solving interaction, not only because it provided a reason for being together over extended periods of time, but also because the housework tasks required minimal mental effort and the participants could devote their mental energies to the problem. The typical pattern in these dialogues was to work and talk, continue working while next ideas were apparently being formulated, continue interaction with other family members, return to the problem. And as the last example illustrates, at times there were rather large intervals of time before the participants were back together to resume the discussion of the issue. It is also possible that participation in housework "absorbs" some of the tension that might otherwise be part of a face-to-face discussion of the issues. Brian's noisily placing the cutlery on the table appeared to be an example of expressing frustration through the housework rather than expressing frustration directly.

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Similar problem-solving interaction in the housework context was observed in the Brice household. The following example took place on a Saturday morning. Mr. Brice had gone to work and Mrs. Brice was busy guiding breakfast preparations (Beth was making waffles), helping Rachael get ready for a school field trip, trying to help Steve find his belt (Steve wandered between the kitchen and bedroom whimpering, "I want my belt.") and washing dishes. James and Peter were sleeping in and Ted had gone to help a relative do spring cleaning. Earlier Mrs. Brice had explained she was feeling very tired and frustrated because of some concerns she and Mr. Brice had regarding his employment.

> 8:30 a.m.
> James came upstairs to the kitchen. Mrs. Brice asked him if Rachael was downstairs. James did not respond. He walked through the kitchen with a slow, foot-dragging step and a droopy expression on his face.
> Mrs. Brice: James, are you feeling sad today?
> Mrs. Brice paused, looked at James, and added: You know, I am feeling sad, too.
> James nodded a "yes" to her earlier question, then added: What did you say?
> Mrs. Brice asked again if Rachael was downstairs.
> James answered with some enthusiasm: I'll go get her.
>
> 8:35 a.m.
> James helped Beth with the waffles, pouring the batter in the waffle iron. Mrs. Brice looked for the broom, and Beth said it was missing.
> Mrs. Brice: James, can I give you the assignment of finding the broom?
> James jumped up, said "Yes," and left to look for the broom. (March 28, 1981)

Although in this example James did not talk over with his mother whatever was weighing on his mind, the fact that Mrs. Brice "listened" or noticed the nonverbal message that he was feeling sad appeared to be enough to change his mood. In this example, as in the previous one involving Cristine and Mrs. Allen (May 5, 1980, p. 161), there was a

noticeable positive change in the child's demeanor when the parent listened. There were also examples where the opposite was the case, where the parent did not listen or at least did not respond in the way the child seemed to prefer, and the child's mood appeared to change from positive to a more negative one, as in the following example in the Brice household. Mrs. Brice had expressed to the researcher that she was feeling tired and frustrated because of some other family concerns, and apparently did not have the emotional energy needed to listen.

> 8:00 a.m.
> Beth was making waffles for Saturday breakfast and wanted Mrs. Brice to listen to a story she was telling. Mrs. Brice was going hurredly from task to task, and finally said wearily: "Hey, I don't have time to listen to those. I have to help Steve find his belt."
> Beth stopped talking and began looking for some ingredients for the waffles. Rachael observed the waffle iron was ready, and said something about the recipe to Beth. Beth responded irritatedly: "Lay off. Where's the sifter."
>
> 8:10 a.m.
> Rachael offered suggestions for separating the egg yolk from the white, and Beth again responded with an irritated tone of voice: "Rachael, dear, I know how to do it, thank you. I'm just not good at it"
>
> 8:17 a.m.
> Mrs. Brice said she was feeling frustrated. She told Beth she needed to work faster, adding: "At this rate we will be eating breakfast by...." Mrs. Brice looked at her watch but didn't finish her sentence.
> Beth and Rachael consulted again about the waffles. Beth said it wouldn't whip if the yolk was in the white. Rachael said it would. Beth said it wouldn't because she did it once and it didn't whip. Their voices were subdued but Beth sounded edgy.
>
> 8:25 a.m.
> Mrs. Brice offered some suggestions on how to separate the eggs. Beth separated another one and was elated: Look at that one; it stayed whole!
> Mrs. Brice was standing at the kitchen sink scrubbing a pan.
> Beth: Mom, can I tell you about those stories now?

> Mrs. Brice, with a sigh: Beth, I just can't listen to those now. (March 28, 1981)
>
> Mrs. Brice again asked Beth to work "as fast as you can." Both continued working in the kitchen, but in silence. (March 28, 1981)

Interrelationship of Structure and Interaction

The analysis identified parental and child behaviors observed in the context of housework that appeared to influence the development of skills and attributes in children. The analysis illustrates that these behaviors were integral to the housework processes and that they were an important dimension of the social relations that surround housework. There are several ways in which the structure of housework seemed to promote these types of interaction:

(1) The division of labor was structured to include all family members in housework processes. Housework tasks ranged in complexity and difficulty, and tasks were subdivided so young children as well as adults could participate.

(2) When housework was a group endeavor, doing the work provided a reason to be together. This structural characteristic is important because interpersonal contact is a necessary ingredient for interaction.

(3) The repetitive nature of housework provided a reason to be together repeatedly over extended periods of time. The importance of this structural characteristic was especially apparent in the examples of problem solving processes where the problem solving interaction was threaded through other interaction in the housework context.

(4) Housework served as a topic of conversation, or the housework processes themselves created the need for interaction. The quality of

interaction between parents and children as they worked appeared to influence the development of skills and attributes in children and adults.

(5) It is also possible there may be some intrinsic value in the performance of housework that also contributes to this development. The development seemed to be influenced by the <u>combination</u> of interaction processes and work processes.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary and Discussion

Observation data were gathered on two intact families, the Allens and the Brices. Both families had pre-school and school-age children. In the Allen family, one parent worked outside the home for pay, and in the Brice family both parents worked outside the home for pay. The families were observed for a total of 77-1/2 hours, and observations were recorded using shorthand notetaking. The families were observed as they participated in housework and other activities in the household setting.

The intent of the researcher in doing this ethnographic study was to attempt to see the "whole picture" of the social relations surrounding housework, putting aside preconceived ideas in order to be open to new insights and chance discoveries. It is recognized that such a goal is difficult to achieve since the field researcher always comes with a background of assumptions and experiences. For example, the researcher began with some basic ideas of what to observe. These initial ideas helped focus the observations but at the same time may have obscured other potentially relevant observations.

The following generalizations were formulated based on analysis of the observation data: (1) Perceptions of housework affect the way

the household is organized for the performance of housework; (2) The way the household is organized for the performance of housework affects the quantity and quality of family interaction; and (3) Family interaction behaviors in the housework context are related to human resource development of family members. The following propositions are suggested:

Proposition #1: Perceptions of housework affect the way the household is organized for the performance of housework.

1a. The degree to which housework is perceived as a maintenance function with efficiency as a goal affects the way the household is organized for the performance of housework.

1b. The degree to which housework is perceived to have a socialization function affects the way the household is organized for the performance of housework.

1c. The degree to which housework is sex stereotyped affects the way the household is organized for the performance of housework.

Proposition #2: The way the household is organized for the performance of housework affects the quantity and quality of family interaction.

2a. The way the household is organized for the performance of housework affects the quantity of family interaction.

2b. The way the household is organized for the performance of housework affects the quality of family interaction behaviors (i.e. more/less supportive, controlling, coercive).

Proposition #3: Family interaction behaviors in the housework context affect human resource development of family members.

3a. The amount and quality of family interaction in the housework context affects the development of sex stereotypes.

3b. The amount and quality of family interaction in the housework context affects the development of decision-making skills.

3c. The amount and quality of family interaction in the housework context affects the development of attitudes about tasks.

3d. The amount and quality of family interaction in the housework context affects the development of self concept.

Figures 1 and 2 (pp. 180-182) present the above propositions in a diagram format. Hypotheses can be generated from these propositions which could be subjected to empirical testing to help explain the variation that occurs in human resource development in the family.

In both the Allen and Brice households, housework was regarded as a means for keeping the house clean and providing for the physical needs of family members. At the same time, and perhaps more importantly, the parents regarded housework as a means for teaching their children, helping the children develop skills and attributes they considered important. This perception of housework could be seen in the way the household was organized for doing housework: housework was a major daily activity, all family members over 1-1/2 years of age participated in housework, and parents and children often worked together at the same tasks.

Parental interaction behaviors observed in the housework context included providing support, approval, disapproval, commands and punishments as parents taught and tried to motivate children to do housework. Other types of interaction observed during housework

included conflicts, singing, showing affection and problem solving. Some of these interaction behaviors were directly related to the housework processes, such as the behaviors directed towards teaching and motivating children to do work. Other interaction behaviors were not directly related to the doing of housework; nevertheless, doing housework together created the context for the interaction. These behaviors included showing affection, and talking about and listening to non-housework topics such as children's concerns regarding relationships with friends.

The structural characteristics of housework (including the routine, repetitive nature of the work, and subtasks ranging in difficulty) and the way in which the household was organized for the performance of housework combined with the quality of interaction during work contributed to the development of skills and attributes. Because all family members participated in the work processes, all developed skills and attributes. Specificially, both parents and children were observed developing skills for doing work and making decisions. In addition, parents were observed developing the skills of teaching and motivating children to do work as well as managing housework processes. Attributes that were observed included the development of sex stereotypes and attitudes about work.

The analysis of the observation data suggests that housework may be organized in ways to encourage family interaction, and that the family interaction that accompanies housework processes makes an important contribution to family well being. First and perhaps foremost, when family members do housework together they are together,

sharing the same physical space at the same time, and being together is an essential ingredient for interaction. While giving low-level attention to the work, participants were free to talk to each other and to listen. If housework is organized in ways that emphasize group participation, family interaction may be enhanced.

Family members also participated as a group in activities besides housework. Further research is needed to consider the relationship between the structure and organization of those activities and the accompanying family interaction in order to identify behavior patterns conducive to the development of skills and attributes.

Limitations

The findings of this research were derived from the observation of two families, both of which were "intact" nuclear families with preschool and school-age children. They lived in similar communities and subscribed to similar beliefs regarding the importance of housework. While the research findings may be valid for the subjects of this research, it would be premature to assume the findings would hold for a different population. Further research is needed to learn about the social relations of housework in households of varying composition, such as single-parent or single-person households. In addition, more research is needed to learn about the social relations of housework in families who have varying perceptions of housework, including those who perceive housework more as drudgery than as an opportunity for interaction or as a means for socialization of family members.

The observation study was of limited time duration. Continued research is needed to learn how change in the family environment over time may influence social relations within the family. For example, what changes occur with changing work roles of the husband and wife, or as parents gain experience in parenting? As children grow and develop and take on new responsibilities outside the family, how do these new opportunities change the structuring of housework?

Implications for Practical Application

A major concern of early home economics educators, and especially family management specialists, was to find ways of relieving women of the burden of housework. Housework was regarded as burdensome and time consuming by both the home economists and homemakers. Hence family management specialists emphasized the goals of efficiency and skill development as a means of lightening the homemaker's work load. Today, even though the burden of housework seems to have lessened, educators tend to continue emphasizing economic goals of efficiency as a primary criteria for determining the structuring of housework. Home economists working as teachers and extension agents need to continue to make clients aware of efficient ways of doing work in the home. However, they also need to make them aware of the potential housework has for developing human resources in addition to finding ways of reducing time investments in maintenance tasks and minimizing negative aspects of the work. Family members can use the information on the potential of housework as a context for developing human resources as a basis for making rational choices regarding when housework should be done efficiently to meet maintenance goals and/or when the work

activities might more appropriately serve as a context for family interaction and developing particular human attributes such as decision-making and work skills and attitudes. It may also be feasible, especially as individuals develop skill in doing work, to achieve both goals simultaneously.

Educators and families also need to be aware that inherent in the everyday nature of housework is the potential for integrating family members by creating a sense of continuity between the individual and the family as a social unit. For example, participation in housework may be treated not only as a necessary labor to be accomplished for the maintenance of the household but also as an expression of interdependence and belonging to a particular social unit. Educators can help families understand that work as participation in a social unit such as the family can be culturally and personally meaningful.

The findings from this research suggest that family life educators need to view family relationships, management, and everyday tasks of child care, food preparation and other housework as an integrated whole. Relationships and/or management processes do not occur in a vacuum, independent of other family activities. Rather, they are inextricably tied to context. Housework is a recurring part of family activity and offers opportunities for developing family relationships and the building of human resources.

Implications for Theory and Research

Theory and research relating to housework in the fields of home economics, economics, sociology and Marxist-feminism rely heavily on an economic paradigm. Viewing housework from an economic perspective

has acted as a blinder, obscuring the social relations that surround housework as well as the developmental potential of participation in housework.

Production models, both human capital and Marxist-Feminist, neglect the array of human emotions experienced in housework processes as well as the nuances of family interaction such as teaching children and the positive interaction between adults and children as they work together. Economic, production oriented frameworks that assume market equivalents of goods and services produced in the home are adequate substitutes for those produced in the home may be misleading. Time-use studies in particular, with their heavy emphasis on maintenance activities, may be generating and/or perpetuating critical misunderstandings regarding the nature of housework because they ignore the human interaction which is integral to the work.

Research and theory in the field of family relationships and child development has provided valuable information regarding family interaction behaviors and their implications for development of skills and attributes. (See Rollins and Thomas, 1979, for an excellent summary of theory development in this area.) However, this body of theory has developed with an almost total disregard for the context in which family interaction occurs. The analysis of data for the present study suggest that the context or ecology of interaction is a critical variable in the development of human relationships and human resources.

Findings from this ethnographic research suggest a new paradigm for the examination of housework. This paradigm views housework as a

context for social interaction and human development, and places emphasis on the relationship between housework structures, family interaction and the development of human resources.

To sharpen the theoretical understanding of the propositions suggested by this research, it is important to observe and study varying types of households. Since learning needs of family members change over the family life cycle, families representing different stages in the life cycle need to be studied. The number of members in a family and the type of family, i.e. dual worker, single-parent, three-generation, may also be important variables to examine relative to the importance of housework as a context for interaction and human resource development.

Changes in family life style and technological changes may influence both the need for interaction as well as opportunities for family interaction. Changing activities of parents and/or children, such as whether piano lessons are given in the home, the extent to which goods are produced at home for sale, and involvement in school activities, may create new contexts for human resource development and/or they may diminish the role of family.

It may be noted that the household organization for doing housework (division of labor according to sex, age, skill or other criteria) and the structural characteristics of housework (the repetitive nature of housework and the fact that many tasks require little skill and mental effort) identified in this research as a means for encouraging family interaction and developing skills and attributes are the same characteristics that have been identified in

the literature as being related to dissatisfaction with housework and as justification for the denigration of housework. The present research suggests that to some extent the boredom and lack of challenge associated with housework may be related both to the way housework is perceived and to the way the family organizes housework processes. For example, if housework is regarded solely as a maintenance activity, and especially if one person consistently does all the housework and/or works alone, feelings of boredom, monotony, and dissatisfaction may be more common than if housework is regarded as a means for development of skills and attributes and is a group activity accompanied by interaction with others. More research is needed to understand these social dynamics and the developmental implications.

Differences in the way housework is perceived and the resulting organization for doing housework may also be related to variations in the kind and quality of family interaction in the housework context. The analysis of data for this research indicate that when housework is perceived as a socialization activity, the parents interact with the children in positive, supportive ways. On the other hand, if socialization of children and performance of housework are seen as contradictory goals, parental interaction behaviors may be more negative. For example, Olson (1981) reported a relationship between division of household labor and negative family interaction, i.e. "husband's help and market-service help decreased the frequency of negative interaction between mothers and children, but children's help

increased it!" (p. 78). In her analysis of why this was so, Olson stated,

> The findings are easily explained when we examine the content of helping behavior. According to the respondents, recruiting help from children involved a complex set of interactions between parent and child, with help often requiring more (not less) work for the mother. Recruitment of help from children is itself frequently characterized by negative interaction between mothers and children! Further, supervising children's housework help often involved frustrations for respondents, as did the discovery that the quality of help was less than was desired. In fact, help from children was often really no help at all! (p. 78)

In other words, according to Olson, for many women housekeeping and child care are contradictory roles. Further research is needed to discover whether there would be a difference in the kind and quality of family interaction in the housework context if families placed more importance on housework as a means for teaching skills and attributes than as a means for maintaining order, cleanliness, and providing goods and services needed for family maintenance. The perception of housework as a socialization activity could lead to different interpretations of "negative" interaction (see Olson, 1981), i.e. as a teaching/motivating behavior rather than symptomatic of conflicting goals. This view could also lead to different expectations which would lessen the frustrations parents may experience while working with children. Theory needs to be developed and research conducted to help us understand and answer these questions.

Research needs to be conducted to indicate how family maintenance tasks are structured in settings other than the household. For example, household maintenance tasks such as child care and housework occur when a family is on vacation, camping, or visiting in another

home. The potential for human resource development in these settings also needs to be considered.

Continued theory development and research is needed to understand the interdependence of family interaction and environmental context as it relates to the development of the human potential.

APPENDIX

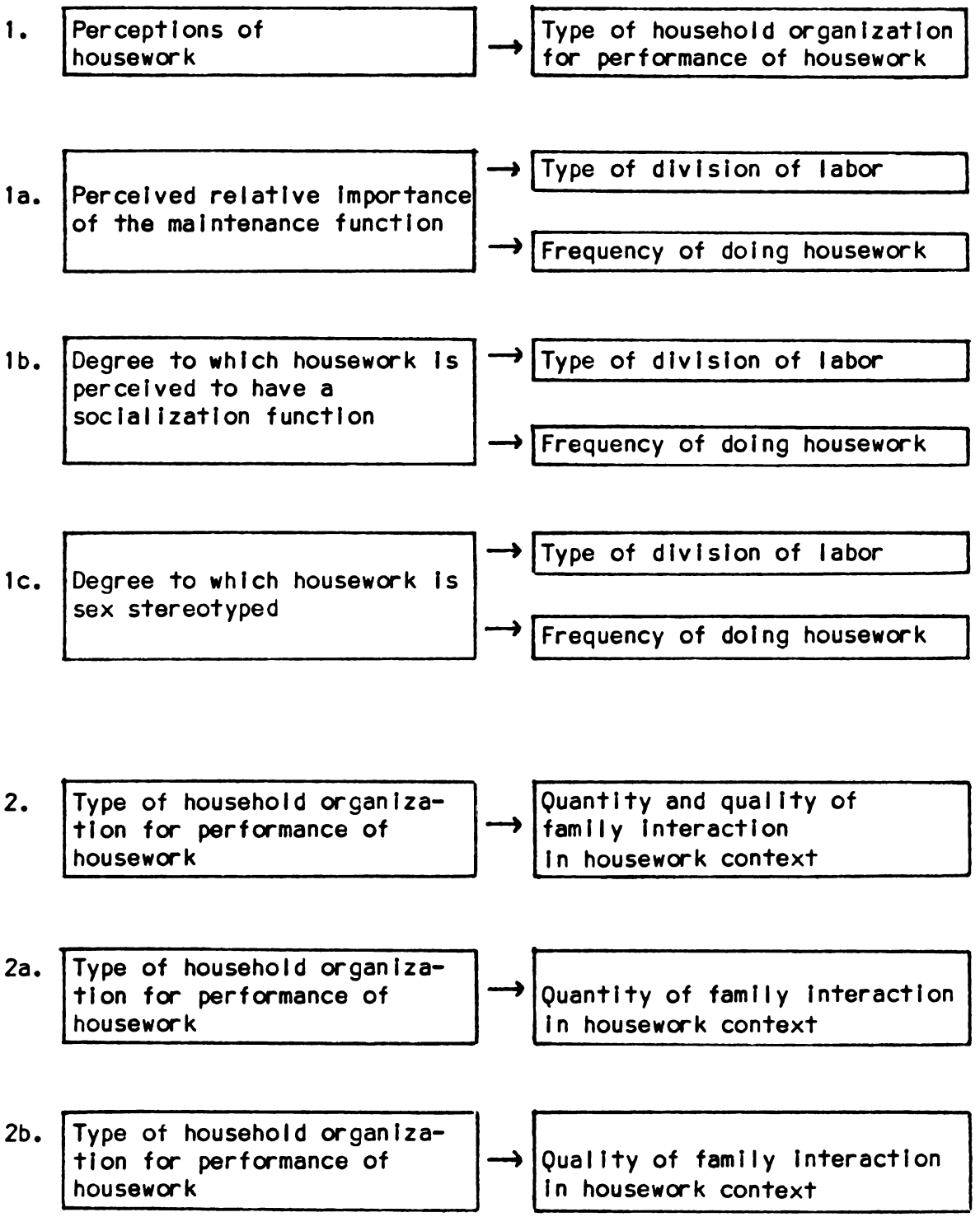

Figure 1. Diagram of Propositions.

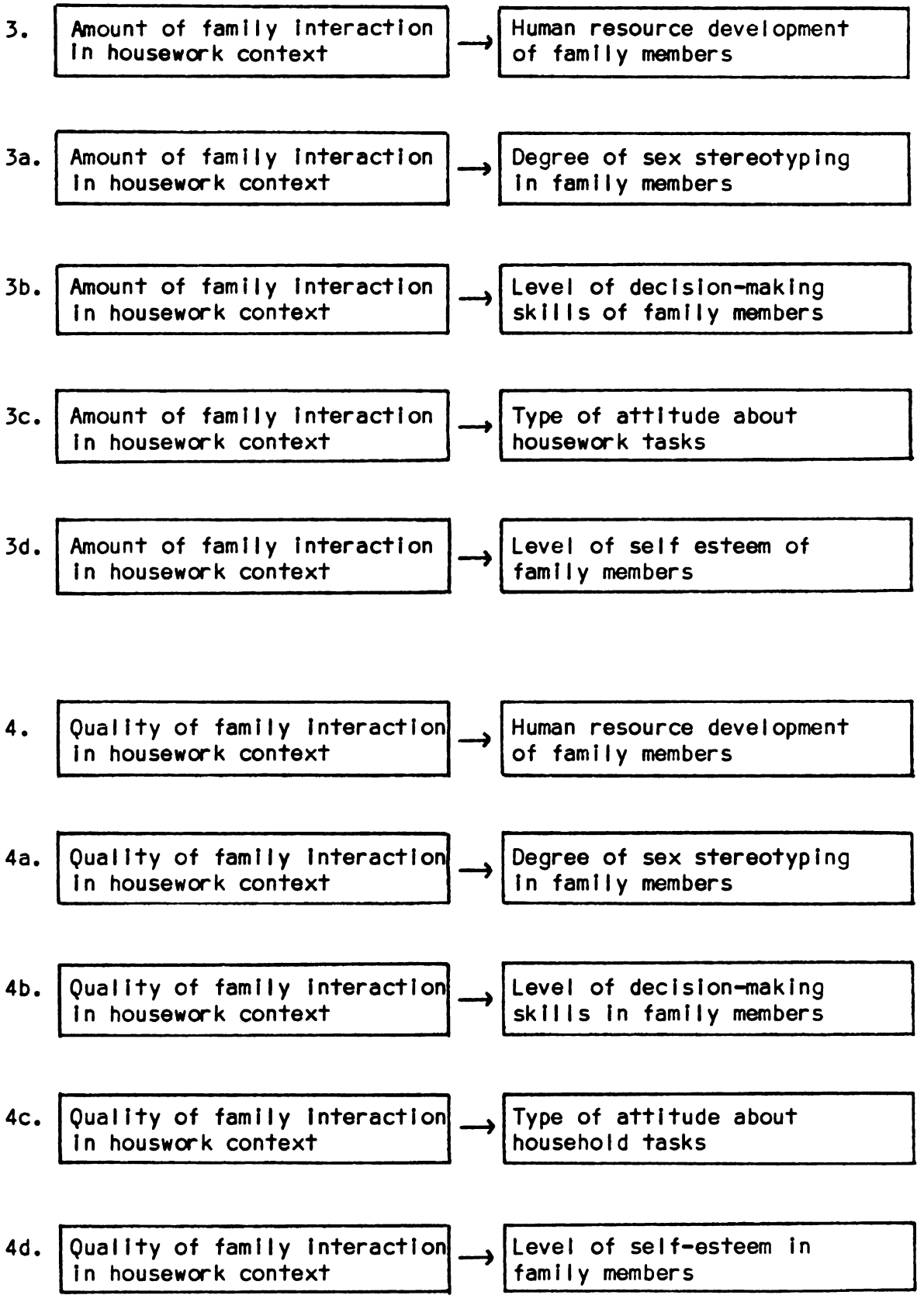

Figure 1 (cont'd).

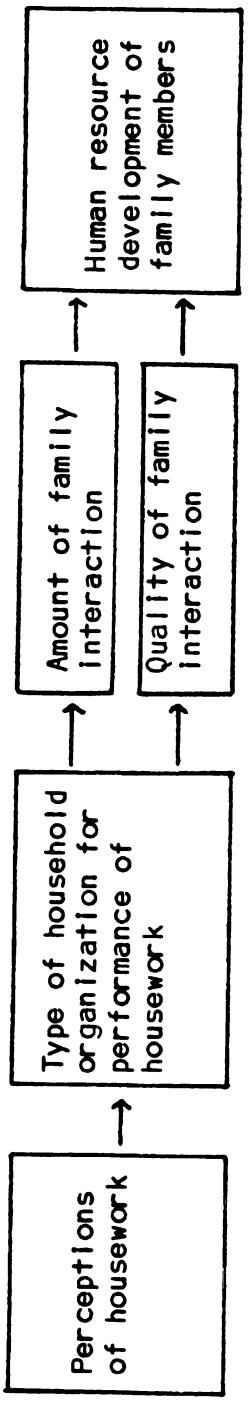

Figure 2. Summary of Propositions.

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