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THE ROLE OF THE HOME ECONOMICS PROFESSION IN THE REPRODUCTION OF SOCIAL RELATIONS: AN EXPLORATION OF SELECTED THEORETICAL AND HISTORICAL QUESTIONS

By

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ABSTRACT

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IN THE REPRODUCTION OF SOCIAL RELATIONS:
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The question underlying this study is the involvement of the home economics profession in power relations. The study brings a critical dimension to the self-examination of the field of home economics. It examines how the political nature of activities of professionals have been understood and explores conceptual issues related to the analysis of power in home economics. The focus is on two sets of relations: the sexual division of labor and the division between intellectual and manual labor.

An analysis of historical literature on home economics indicates that studies written by home economists generally do not deal with power in the sexual division of labor or the division between intellectual and manual labor. The limitations of historical studies are explored. Functionalist tendencies are pointed out, and the limitations of functionalist approaches for dealing with questions of power are discussed. The influence of positivism is also noted. Using elements from Habermas' social theory, the limitations of a positivist philosophy and its social role are considered.

This analysis lends weight to the proposal that home economists need to understand the political role of their profession, and indicates that frameworks used in existing historical studies are inadequate for that task.

Alternative frameworks are required. The study suggests that analytical tools must first be developed to study specific power relations in which home economists are involved. Aspects of Foucault's work are introduced. His conceptualizations of knowledge and power seem useful for an analysis of power relations in home economics.

The final section explores the fruitfulness of using Foucault's strategy of discursive analysis. Using examples from the home economics literature, an analysis of the discourse of homemaking is developed and particular power relations are explored.

The exploratory analysis indicates that Foucault's approach illuminates power relations in home economics. Further research using this framework is suggested. The study indicates that the power relations in which home economists have been involved are complex. These power relations need to be considered when decisions are made about future goals and activities in the profession.

Dedicated to

my parents,

Toit and Rina McLachlan,

and

to the memory of my friend and colleague,

Marilyn R. Parkhurst

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

This study explores some conceptual and theoretical issues concerning the development of an adequate framework for the study of home economics in social and historical perspective. It suggests that the social role of the field must be understood in terms of power. First, a critique of conventional approaches used in studies of the history of home economics is developed. On the basis of this analysis a number of requirements for an adequate theoretical framework are outlined. Finally, the study introduces aspects of the work of one theorist, namely Michel Foucault, and examines what discursive analysis, a strategy based on Foucault's work, could contribute to the historical understanding of the social role of home economics.

Context

The current efforts within the profession of home economics to reconsider its goals and philosophy provide the context of the study. During the last decade, home economists, like other academic and professional groups, renewed their efforts at self-examination and definition of their field. One of the major elements of this process was the

publication, in 1979, of Home Economics: A Definition, a paper commissioned by the American Home Economics Association, written by Brown and Paolucci. In this work, which home economists have used as a basis for study and continued dialogue about the future of the field, the authors characterize home economics as a practical science concerned with the persistent problems of the household and the family. Brown and Paolucci (1979) see as the major dilemma of the era the limitations placed on individuals to participate actively and critically in political thought and action.

In light of the present state of affairs, Brown and Paolucci (1979) define the mission of home economics as follows:

> to enable families, both as individual units and generally as a social institution, to build and maintain systems of action which lead (1) to maturing in individual self-formation and (2) to enlightened cooperative participation in the critique and formulation of social goals and means for accomplishing them (p. 23).

In the final chapters Brown and Paolucci (1979) explore the knowledge required in a field with such a mission, and the kind of social action required from its members.

For such a mission to be implemented, however, it would be necessary to add historical and social analyses to the work begun by Brown and Paolucci (1979). In fact, a shortcoming of their paper is the absence of reflection on the role home economics professionals may have played in the

very process of depoliticization and the rationalization of relations which the authors wish to overcome. In other words, the authors do not consider the political role of the field. Without an understanding of the historical role of the profession in society and the social reality it has become, the possibilities open for the field will remain vague. As Peterson (1979) points out in a critique of Home Economics: A Definition,

> It is not enough to state goals for a profession but these must be stated concretely (in the dialectical sense) in their relation to existing conditions. This requires not only consideration of the social context of the profession, but also of the internal state of the profession, the functions it actually performs today, the relations to other institutions it maintains, the conflicts and dilemmas resulting from these relations . . . (p. 89).

Purpose of the Study

The present study aims to contribute to the historical analysis of home economics. By examining assumptions and existing theoretical frameworks of historical studies, and exploring an alternative framework, the groundwork is laid for more concrete and specific studies of home economics history. In this way the study seeks to sharpen home economists' views of realistic goals and expectations for their profession.

Specific dimensions of the historical evolution of "helping professions" (Lasch, 1979, p. 15) that have come under scrutiny in recent years are the focus of the study.

The dimensions addressed are the development of a more specialized and complex division between intellectual and manual labor, and the role of professions in shaping the sexual division of labor.

Challenges to Professional Practice

Recent historical and sociological studies have raised questions about the outcomes of the various reforms advocated and implemented by intellectuals and professionals. In particular, professionals have been criticized for eroding family autonomy (Lasch, 1979) and for contributing to women's oppression (Ehrenreich and English, 1978).

As a field of study and practice that has throughout its history stated its goals in terms of service to families (Vincenti, 1982), home economics needs to take note of the challenge directed to professions with regard to their role in shaping family life. As a field with a predominantly female clientele, and which is generally associated with women's work in the home, home economics must heed the challenge to professions regarding their role in maintaining women's oppression.

Lasch (1979) criticizes professionals for undermining family autonomy. He bemoans the erosion of family life, and claims that social scientists and professionals have usurped the family's rightful role as the primary socializing agent of children. According to Lasch (1979), "The history of

modern society, from one point of view, is the assertion of social control over activities once left to individuals and their families" (p. xx). Lasch seeks to show how the experts eroded parents' confidence in their own skills, and increased families' dependence on the expertise of teachers, psychologists, and other helping professionals. He maintains that what social science has called "interdependence" in modern society, is in fact a reflection of "changing modes of domination" (p. 24). In other words, Lasch argues that relations between professionals and family members involve a form of domination. Lasch develops a critique of functionalist sociology for its view that the changes in family life are the outcome of abstract social forces. In contrast he sets out to argue that,

> the family did not simply evolve in response to social and economic influences; it was deliberately transformed by the intervention of planners and policymakers (p. 13).

Thus Lasch (1979) argues that professionals contribute to shaping social relations through their professional activities.

Lasch's argument can be understood in terms of the development of an increasingly complex and specialized division of labor in which intellectuals have come to play a more direct social role. This intensification of the division between intellectual and manual labor involves the exercise of a form of control through specialized knowledge of

one individual or group over another. Thus a set of social relations are developed which involve dependence and domination.

The feminist movement also poses a challenge to professionals in general, and to home economists in particular. There are two dimensions to this challenge. Like Lasch (1979), Ehrenreich and English (1978) emphasize the division between intellectual and manual labor. But they argue that it is women's autonomy in particular that has been eroded by the experts. Ehrenreich and English criticize doctors, home economists, and child psychologists for eroding women's traditional skills and knowledge. They claim that women have become dependent on "masculinist" experts (p. 18).

Furthermore, for Ehrenreich and English (1978), the activities of professionals contributed to shaping relations between men and women and defining women's role in society, by promoting a certain kind of family, of which the wife and mother was the core (Zaretsky, 1982). This latter role of the professionals can be understood in terms of the shaping of the sexual division of labor in society.

Other recent historical studies of women's work and family roles also make mention of the role of home economics. Hartmann (1974) sees home economists as key figures in promoting the ideology of motherhood. Hartmann claims that the activities of home economists served to reassert the traditional values of home, family, and motherhood. According to

Hartmann the ideology that motherhood was women's primary vocation, and that women's place was in the home, remained essentially the same from the mid-nineteenth century into the twentieth century. However, the way in which women were convinced of the "truth" of these ideas, had changed. For Hartmann (1974), the new conveyors of the ideology in the twentieth century were the home economists. She states,

> The particular form that the ideology took in this period was the home economics movement, with its emphasis on precision, science, and efficiency in housekeeping (p. 183-184).

Strasser's (1977) study of women's household work likewise analyzes home economics in terms of ideology. Her emphasis, however, is not on the ideology of "women's separate sphere" but rather on the development of a new ideology, necessary for the full incorporation of the home into the capitalist market. According to Strasser (1977) home economists were involved in,

> formulating an ideology which applied principles of capitalist social relations -- rationality, wage labor, class, hierarchy, and privacy -- to household life and promoted new roles for women as workers and consumers in economic life (p. 257).

Thus, like Hartmann (1974), Strasser (1977) pictures the role of home economists in society in terms of their contribution to shaping ideology related to women's roles in society.

By focusing on their role in intensifying the division between intellectual and manual labor, and in the sexual

division of labor, these studies assign a role to professions in the transformation and maintenance of social relations in society. In essence, they assert that professional activity must be understood as actually contributing to the reproduction of specific social institutions and relations in particular ways. Zarestky (1982) argues, for example, that the family was not simply eroded, as Lasch (1979) would argue, but transformed and preserved as an economically private unit through the activities of various groups, including professions. These kinds of social activities, which appear to be far removed from explicit political practices, are nevertheless a form of political activity. They involve the exercise of power, and reproduce social relations that, however indirectly, serve to maintain the existing economic and social order. Taken together, these processes can be understood in terms of a politics of social reproduction.

The present study suggests that home economists need to address the challenges directed to them with regard to their role in the intensification of the division between intellectual and manual labor, and the sexual division of labor. In other words, home economists need to study the role of their field in social reproduction, particularly with regard to shaping two sets of relations, the division between intellectual and manual labor, and the sexual division of labor.

Conceptual Issues

Such a project poses particular conceptual problems. Some critical remarks on the strategies used by the authors cited earlier indicate the kinds of conceptual and theoretical issues at stake.

Lasch (1979) makes a critical point: In order to understand the role of social groups such as professions in shaping social relations, a functionalist analysis is inadequate. Such an analysis would attribute social change to abstract social forces, and thus obscure human agency in social change. Nevertheless, Lasch (1979) falls into a kind of functionalism himself, by asserting a one-way, and direct influence of social scientists and professionals on families and individuals. He neglects the interests family members may have had in the reforms promoted by the professionals. He also does not consider families' need for the knowledge professionals had to offer. By neglecting these dimensions Lasch (1979) neglects the contribution of individuals and families themselves to the changes brought about in society. Also, Lasch (1979) does not deal with the resistance professionals might have encountered in their attempts to institute reforms. Furthermore, to blame social scientists and professionals for the erosion of traditional knowledge, which in many cases had become dysfunctional because of urbanization and industrialization, is to give them power far beyond what they had.

On the one hand, Lasch (1979) seems to assign to professionals a key role in social transformation. Yet, on the other hand, he regards professionals essentially as functionaries of the state or corporate capitalism. Thus, according to Zaretsky (1982), Lasch (1979) maintains that behind the reforms promoted by middle class professionals, lay "the need of twentieth century capitalism to reorganize and socialize the sphere of private and familial life" (p. 190). Such a view of the activities of professionals reduces them to "instruments" of a more powerful unit, and so does not allow for the possibility that professionals could also act independently, as human actors who have their own interests as professionals, which may be in conflict with that of the state or corporate concerns. Thus, Lasch's (1979) analysis does not illuminate the particular social role of intellectual activity.

A similar problem seems to plague recent studies of women's work in the home (Strasser, 1977; Hartmann, 1974; Ehrenreich & English, 1978). Although their emphases differ, these authors all analyze home economics and the role of home economists in society in terms of ideology. The study by Ehrenreich and English (1978) illustrates the conceptual dilemma. On the whole, their study is a careful analysis of the gradual erosion of women's autonomy and the invasion of the home by experts, including home economists, to dictate to women how they should raise their children and do their

housework. Nevertheless, their analysis is not discriminating enough. Their analytical framework does not allow them to distinguish carefully between issues of gender and expertise at work in the activities of the professionals. Ehrenreich and English (1978) state, for example,

> The experts' answer to the Woman Question was not science after all, but only the ideology of a masculinist society, dressed up as objective truth (p. 5).

There may be a more complex set of power relations involved in the activities of professionals than is suggested by Ehrenreich and English. The authors seem to oppose knowledge to ideology, and to reduce the intellectual activities of professionals to expressions of ideology. Such an analysis obscures the real knowledge being developed and used by professionals. Furthermore, an emphasis on ideology as a framework of false beliefs or ideas could obscure the real social effects of the cognitive practices of professionals. Thus, an analysis that focuses on ideology seems to exclude the possibility of a richer analysis of the social role of professionals.

Similar conceptual problems occur in Zaretsky's (1982) analysis of the relation between the family and the welfare state. Zaretsky wants to maintain Lasch's emphasis on human agency in social change, and the feminist concern for women's ambivalent experience of the modern family. After reviewing the history of the modern welfare state in America, he concludes that the welfare state has preserved the family

as an "economically private unit," and that

> state policy toward the family was not dictated by any capitalist conspiracy. Rather it was the outcome of a series of single-issue reform movements. . . (p. 218).

Thus Zaretsky (1982) acknowledges the contribution of a variety of different actors in efforts to change social relations (as evidenced in state policy). Yet, the actual contribution of particular groups, for example, professionals like home economists, are not theorized. It would seem that Zaretsky's analytical categories are inadequate for such a task. This is illustrated by the fact that in the midst of his careful analysis, he can state,

> I try to show that the class and sexual structure of American society, rather than the intentions of a single group, shaped the meaning of diverse reform efforts in unforeseen (and still untheorized) ways (p. 192).

This statement seems contradictory to his explicit intent to maintain human agency in social change, because it reduces specific actions to "class and sexual structure." Zaretsky wants to avoid reducing social change to the outcome of intentional activity of one group, but then replaces this reduction with another, namely a set of encompassing terms -- "class and sexual structure." These terms are not very useful for explaining the role of specific agents in social change.

To study the role of home economics in social reproduction a framework is required that would allow one to examine

the field in relation to the sexual division of labor and the division between intellectual and manual labor. This should be done in a way that allows one to examine the particular relations in which home economists were involved, and the cooperation and resistance they encountered in their reform efforts. The present study suggests that the intellectual activities of home economists could have contributed to power relations in ways that are not open for examination in terms of the categories provided by a class analysis or an analysis of ideology. The study seeks to develop some conceptual tools for such an analysis.

The Division of Labor

The concept of the division of labor is central to the present study. In particular, two dimensions of the division of labor, the division between intellectual and manual labor, and the sexual division of labor, are pertinent. Working definitions of these concepts are developed below.

All human societies are characterized by a division of labor. This division of labor concept refers in general to the fact that each individual in a society does not produce everything he or she needs, but specializes in some tasks, while entering into exchange relationships with others to obtain the goods and services needed to live in that society (Braverman, 1974; Lloyd, 1975).

Thus specialization and interdependence are key dimensions of the division of labor. Although conceptually, at least, such a division does not imply the development of power in relations of interdependence, it seems that historically, specialization and interdependence have been accompanied by relations of power.

Division between Intellectual and Manual Labor The division between intellectual and manual labor is based on the rise of distinctively cognitive practices. In a general sense it involves the separation of thought from doing, and thus gives rise to specialization and interdependence. Such a division means, in a general way, that some individuals or groups in society are able to have their material needs met through the manual labor of others. In a more specific use of the term, it refers to the set of relations that develop through a breakdown of the labor process which separates intellectual activity, organization, planning, and decision making from the actual manual labor process. Based on this kind of development, management practices have evolved which give certain individuals or groups direct or indirect control over other people's labor.

Thus the concept can be used to refer to relations in a factory, for example, where planning and management is done by specialists and managers, and workers carry out the specific tasks assigned to them. Such a division of labor involves a lack of control over one's own labor, because the

worker does not understand the total work process.

Control is exercised more indirectly through the intellectual practices of academics and professionals when abstract thinking is regarded as necessary to understand and solve social problems. To the extent that intellectuals are recognized as authorities, and their counsel sought in more and more areas of life, and specialized and esoteric knowledge is developed, the division between intellectual and manual labor is intensified. As indicated earlier, such an intensified division of labor seems to be characteristic of modern society.

Sexual Division of Labor It is generally agreed that all known human societies have allocated at least some tasks by gender (Brown, 1970; Kay and Voorhies, 1975; Rubin, 1975). The concept of the sexual division of labor is used to refer to patterns of specialization in particular tasks according to gender. While such a division of labor seems universal, the way in which tasks are allocated is specific to each group or community, and no clear pattern of responsibilities can be established (Lloyd, 1975; Illich, 1982). While the allocation of some tasks is influenced by biology, for example, childbearing and lactation, the sexual division of labor in general cannot be regarded as biologically determined. Even the tasks closely associated with childbearing represent cultural variety with regard to the involvement of men and women. The specific form childrearing takes, and the

importance assigned to it, also vary from society to society.

Relationships of power between men and women often have an economic dimension, as a woman is economically dependent on a man in a situation where the husband is the sole earner of income in a family (Luxton, 1980). The economic dimension of the sexual division of labor stretches beyond such direct dependence, however. For example, it finds expression in the belief that it is normal that women could be paid less than men, because "they do not have families to support" -- which is concretely expressed in gender-specific jobs in which women earn less than men do in comparable jobs.

Central as the economic dimension of the sexual division of labor is, it is not the only pattern of dependence associated with such a division of labor: Political and cultural dependence, for example, are expressions of the fact that women may be dependent on male policy makers, and on male writers or "informers" to form their political opinions. Similarly, they may be more or less dependent on the artistic expressions of men to develop imagery and patterns of language use.

In science and education generally, the exclusion of women from most fields has left them dependent on approaches worked out by and large by men, focusing on topics regarded as important by men, using methods regarded as valuable by men.

The sexual division of labor predates capitalism. Its interaction with class divisions is an important consideration -- sets of relations develop in which these divisions intersect in important ways.

In industrial society the specialization of the sexual division of labor has been associated with the separation of the domestic domain of home and family from the public sphere of decision making and production. Traditionally, in this division and distinction, women work in the home, and are closely associated with it, while men work in, and are associated with, the public domain. Thus the sexual division of labor in industrial society can be associated with patterns of specialization with the husband specializing in earning the income, and women being associated with household, family, and children; and interdependence of men and women. Specialization and interdependence serve to emphasize and exacerbate differences between the sexes.

The concept of the sexual division of labor also refers to patterns of restriction and exclusion to which women are subjected. For example, they are or have been routinely excluded from political decision making, most professions, executive positions in business and industry, and leadership roles in education and religious institutions. They have been restricted to certain environments, certain careers, and certain artistic and cultural expressions. Accompanying this has been a measure of isolation and invisibility.

Such patterns of distinction, specialization, interdependence, exclusion, restriction, and isolation have given rise to relationships of power between men and women. Patterns of relative autonomy and dependence emerge, and are institutionalized and internalized, giving to the sexual division of labor a dimension of structural domination.

Outline of the Study

Chapter II examines how historical literature on home economics portrays the role of the profession in shaping social relations. General comments on the focus of the historical literature are followed by a discussion of the way the literature deals with questions that relate to the sexual division of labor and the role of home economists in shaping this set of relations.

Chapter III examines the theoretical assumptions that underlie historical studies of home economics. Using concepts from Jurgen Habermas' comprehensive social theory, the political character of professional activity and the failure of functionalist theoretical strategies to account for power in home economics practices are discussed.

Given the shortcomings of existing explanations of the social role of home economics, Chapter IV identifies the need to develop a more adequate analysis of power in the practices of home economists. The chapter sets out to develop analytical tools appropriate to the task. Finally, the

chapter introduces aspects of the work of the French theorist, Michel Foucault. Foucault's explorations on the interrelation of knowledge and power appear useful for the present study. Discursive analysis, a strategy developed by Foucault, may contribute to the kind of analysis of home economics the present study requires.

Chapter V examines the fruitfulness of using discursive analysis to study the role of home economics in social reproduction. It uses examples from the writings of home economists to develop a discursive analysis. The chapter first sketches the dimensions of a discourse of homemaking, and then develops an analysis of power relations in the discourse, focusing on the intensification of the division between intellectual and manual labor, and the sexual division of labor.

Chapter VI includes a summary, and reflections on the limitations of the study, future research, and the implications of the study for the home economics profession.

Chapter Two

REVIEW OF HISTORICAL LITERATURE IN HOME ECONOMICS

The purpose of this chapter is to examine how historical accounts of home economics characterize the role of the field in the reproduction of social relations. In particular, it focuses on how home economists perceive the role of the field in maintaining and shaping a specific set of social relations, namely relations that are a part of the sexual division of labor.

Three questions guide the analysis of historical studies of home economics. These questions address particular aspects of women's roles and the sexual division of labor, namely women's education, the division between the domestic and the public sphere, and the content of women's work. The questions read as follows:

1. How do historical studies characterize developments in women's education, and the relationship between home economics and women's education?
2. How do historical studies portray the relationship between the family and other social institutions? How do they see the role of the field of home economics in maintaining and transforming relations between the family and society?

3. How do historical studies describe changes in the content of homemaking, and the role of the field of home economics in those changes?

Before turning to a discussion of these questions, a few remarks about the scope of the review and some general comments about historical literature on home economics are in order.

The review covers readily available historical accounts of home economics in the United States of America, written or commissioned by home economists. Home economics historians typically associate the beginning of the profession with the Lake Placid Conferences on Home Economics, held from 1898 to 1908, and the subsequent organization of the American Home Economics Association. Nevertheless, they recognize earlier educational and other activities as a part of the general history of the field. A similar perspective is adopted in the present review. It covers accounts of the history of home economics as a field of study, an educational movement, and a profession. Studies of the development of particular content areas and specializations, such as child development, food and nutrition, and textile studies, were not included.

While historical accounts reflect, to some extent, the self-perception of home economists about the field and its role in society, it is difficult to gauge the relation between these studies and the actual practices of home

economists. The extent to which home economists agreed with published views is a matter of conjecture. As Vincenti (1981) points out in her recent study of the history of the philosophy of home economics, many published accounts of home economics are isolated statements, and seem to reflect the views of only a few home economists. The literature of the professional association, particularly the Journal of Home Economics, shows little dialogue on statements among home economists. While Vincenti's (1981) comments pertain specifically to philosophical statements, her observations can be extended to historical studies.

The historical literature on home economics is quite extensive. The sources reviewed can be classified into three broad categories. The first group consists of those articles published at regular intervals in the Journal of Home Economics to commemorate specific events or milestones in the history of the field, such as the fiftieth anniversary of the American Home Economics Association (AHEA) (e.g., Adams, 1959; Andrews, 1948; Bane, 1959; O'Brien, 1948; Zuill, 1959). Typically, these articles serve to promote the profession and its activities and to provide inspiration for the future. It is therefore not surprising that they are generally uncritical, self-congratulatory, and devoid of rigorous theoretical reflection (Fritschner, 1973).

Secondly, a large number of studies focus on home economics in education. There are general studies of home

economics education, and specific studies tracing the development of home economics programs in particular schools and colleges (Bevier, 1928; Bevier & Usher, 1906; Carver, 1979; Eppright & Ferguson, 1971; Ferrar, 1964; McGrath & Johnson, 1968; Paolucci, 1980). Also in this group are accounts of the development of the AHEA (Baldwin, 1949; Pundt, 1980). These accounts share a number of characteristics. They are largely descriptive, giving factual information about when and how and by whom programs were started and conducted. Their intent, in general, is to explain the origin and development of home economics or specific programs in home economics.

In most cases, the explanation takes the form of a chronological account of events or developments. For example, Bevier's (1928) study of the development of home economics as it relates to women's education is in three parts. This widely quoted study starts with a summary of educational developments in early America. This is followed by an account of the development of women's education. In the final section Bevier first describes the various movements and events which led to the founding of the American Home Economics Association, and then recounts "new developments" in the field. Ferrar's (1964) study of the history of home economics in relation to liberal education follows a similar chronological pattern. Reviewing developments at the end of the nineteenth century, Ferrar concludes,

> Home economics was evolving in response to the social and economic conditions created by industrial development, as well as to the needs, interests and aptitudes of women in the family (p. 10).

Except for occasional references to "social and economic conditions created by the industrial revolution" (Lee & Dressel, 1963) these studies do not systematically relate developments in home economics to social changes. No studies were found that focused on the actual role of home economics in shaping social relations.

A third group of studies are those that focus on the philosophy or ideas behind home economics, rather than on its activities and achievements. (Budewig, 1957; Vincenti, 1981). Budewig (1957), for example, criticizes the overemphasis on events and activities in historical studies of home economics. She proposes that an adequate historical perspective on home economics must focus on the ideas underlying those events and activities. Budewig traces the "idea" behind home economics to Francis Bacon, who maintained, according to Budewig, that the concerns of everyday life, such as food, clothing and shelter, were worthy of study and the application of science. Budewig finds this idea also in the work of Count Rumford, Catherine Beecher, and Ellen H. Richards. She concludes that historically, the fundamental idea that gave rise to home economics has been "that the real and the ideal are one in spirit" (p. 305). She continues, "It

is the spirit of home economics that must be maintained if home economics is to have meaning for the future" (p. 306). Given this perspective, Budewig criticizes those historical studies that analyze the development of home economics in terms of other social developments, such as the women's movement, the cooking school movement, agricultural education or sewing classes (Budewig, 1964). Having rejected an understanding of the history of home economics in terms of other social events, Budewig (1957) adopts an analysis of the field in terms of the history of thought. Useful as such an analysis may be for establishing the uniqueness and enduring qualities of home economics, it does not contribute to an understanding of its role in social reproduction.

As these comments show, the focus in existing studies of the history of home economics does not seem to be on its role in social reproduction. This is borne out by the following analysis of the literature at the hand of the questions posed earlier.

Women's Education and Home Economics

The events and activities generally associated with the origin and development of home economics in the latter half of the nineteenth century took place in the midst of changing views and practices regarding women's education. The effects of education on women, the content of their education, and the merits of coeducation were topics of frequent debate among educators. Although perspectives on this matter

differ, most historical writings on home economics relate the development of the field to the issues surrounding women's education.

In Home Economics in Education (1928) Bevier studies home economics in relation to women's education. She maintains, "while the study of the home and its activities has many offerings of interest to men, yet it primarily concerns women, and has developed as a special phase of the education of women" (p. 8). While a tacit acceptance of the sexual division of labor is already evident in this statement, it becomes more explicit in the discussion of educational leaders' concerns about coeducation and the content of women's education. Bevier concludes that women had a basic right to higher education and that "the enlargement of the field of woman's activities" necessitated training. Furthermore, coeducation had probably become a permanent factor in education. Referring to the opinions of educational leaders she continues,

> Neither men nor women overlooked the biological argument for difference in training for men and women because they have different functions in society. Neither men nor women were willing that the best interests of the home should suffer from any cause, and particularly not at the hand of women. Coeducation was clearly one great step in the evolution of women. The question arose what was to be the next step (p. 102).

According to Bevier, these educational leaders were concerned that women's education was not sufficiently preparing them for their "sacred and imperative task" of being homemakers and wives. She states,

> Women had no desire to evade their high duty as conservers of the race. The home was still the bulwark of the nation, but it was in many ways a new home in which all that was best of the old was to be retained, modified by new conditions and with new problems (p. 107).

Bevier quotes a statement made in 1907 by Dr. Elmer E. Brown, United States Commissioner of Education, in which he argued that the integration of women's education had been successfully accomplished, but that its differentiation still had to be worked out, because men and women had different functions in society. For Bevier, home economics was the embodiment of this differentiation.

In a similar manner, Ferrar (1964) regards the differentiation of women's education as a progressive step. She characterizes women's education in the new women's colleges of the East as "hampered by tradition." Thus Ferrar argues,

> There they had continued to struggle for recognition of their intellectual equality and of their right to equal educational opportunity. As a result, the traditional curriculum persisted, long after women in the West had finished this phase and were ready to interest themselves in science applied to the home (p. 6).

Ferrar's remark refers to the development of women's programs in the land grant institutions. Historical accounts of these programs reflect an acceptance of the sexual division of labor, and of the notion of women's moral superiority. Gilcrest (1947) describes the development of home economics programs at Michigan Agricultural College in such terms. She notes that the legislation passed in 1855 to establish the college did not exclude women from attending.

But, the curriculum was to focus on agriculture, English and technical skills related to agriculture. According to Gilcrest, "Such a curriculum, designed for farm boys, naturally did not interest girls . . ." (p. 2). Nevertheless, ten women enrolled in 1870, and in 1879 the first woman graduated in agriculture. Gilcrest (1947) notes, "Women were always welcome at Michigan Agricultural College in the old days because of their needed 'ameliorating effect,' so it was said" (p. 4). According to Gilcrest, a Woman's Course of Study was established on the recommendation of a Faculty Committee established in 1895 to examine the reasons for the college's low enrollment. The committee stated that,

> the organization of a woman's course (was) not only . . . a duty, but . . . the great privilege of the Agricultural College to lead in the training for home work, known as domestic economy (p. 4).

Similarly, Eppright and Ferguson (1971) describe how the home economics program at Iowa State University grew out of its Ladies course. Initially, when the Iowa State Agricultural College opened, women and men were admitted, and they took the same courses. According to Eppright and Ferguson (1971) Mary B. Welch, the wife of the college president, was concerned about the kind of education the women were getting, and its lack of relevance to their future tasks as homemakers. The authors state that a program was developed, "that offered three dozen young women of Iowa a kind of education that would prepare them specifically for homemaking and 'discipline their minds'" (p. 9).

In a way similar to Ferrar (1964), Rose (1949) sees the differentiation of women's education in home economics programs as a progressive step. Home economics would give women access to higher education, and a role in the larger society, without challenging the sexual division of labor, or the notion of the home as women's special sphere. She states,

> Through the burgeoning of this movement in home economics, women acquired a room of their own in the field of higher education -- a place which they might occupy unchallenged and where they might work freely, a center from which they might extend to the community the results of their thinking about their special interests and needs, an oasis of influence centered on the home in the industrial house of Jack's building (p. 511).

In summary, these studies of the history of home economics in relation to women's education seems to regard it as a progressive response to the concerns of educational leaders regarding women's education.

A different perspective on the relationship between home economics and women's education is provided by Budewig (1957). At the beginning of her study, she takes a position similar in some respects to that advanced by Bevier (1928), when she states,

> Although education for home and family living is not exclusively by and for women but by both men and women for families, we cannot avoid recognition of the still obvious fact that the major portion of responsibility for homemaking and education for homemaking falls upon women. Therefore, education for home and family living and the problems of education of women cannot be separated (p. 9).

Nevertheless, at the conclusion of her study, she argues that it is a mistake to see home economics as an outgrowth

of the women's movement, because it did not further the goals of that movement. She maintains that the feminist goal to prove that women were the intellectual equals of men demanded that women and men study the same courses. And since home economics focused on home and family life, subjects considered to be "strictly feminine pursuits" (Budewig, 1964, p. 9) at the time of the development of the field, it could not contribute to that goal. She cites as evidence the fact that few women's colleges offered home economics courses. Likewise, in Budewig's opinion, the woman's movement did not contribute to the development of home economics. Budewig (1964) concludes,

> Therefore, I believe it is erroneous to say that home economics 'grew out of' the woman's movement and unfruitful to continue to attempt to trace the development of home economics through the history of women's education. To do so is to ignore the motivating forces behind the woman's movement and to be unaware of the profundity of the home economics movement and its significant social implications (p. 10).

In spite of these references to the social role of home economics, Budewig's (1957) study does not throw light on that role. This is due to the fact that she focuses on the "idea" behind home economics, rather than actual social developments in the field.

A final perspective on the relationship between home economics and women's education is provided by Marjorie East. In a recent study, Home Economics, Past, Present, and Future (1980) she identifies "The Education of Women

for Womenhood: Homemaking" as one of several "models" of home economics. She regards this model as "competing" with the "Applied Science" model, and does not attempt to explore how they have historically been interrelated. East also devotes a chapter to the "Femaleness" of the field but she does not provide any consistently historical or social analysis of how its predominantly female clientele and membership have shaped the field. She merely states, "If femaleness has influenced our field it must be because of special characteristics of women" (p. 137).

In conclusion, historical studies of home economics which relate the development of the field to women's education recognize the existence of the sexual division of labor. The development of home economics programs is regarded as a progressive step in contributing to broadening the women's sphere of influence, and bringing science into the household, without challenging or changing the sexual division of labor. No analysis of the role of home economics in maintaining or shaping the sexual division of labor appeared in the studies available to the researcher.

Historians' perceptions of the relation between home economics and its clientele, and the role of gender in these relations, are further explored in the sections that follow.

Home Economics, the Public and the Private

Some historians note that the development of the new profession meant access to the public sphere for some women (Rose, 1949). Nevertheless, consistent historical analysis of the relationship between the domestic and the public sphere, the changes in this relationship, and how women, including professional women, experienced these changes, is meagre.

The existence of a division between the domestic and the public is generally accepted, and as the previous section shows, most writers implicitly assume women's association with home and family. The relation between home and family and the rest of society is usually couched in functionalist terms -- society has particular needs that the family must fulfill. It is generally accepted that women are the main actors in the family's efforts to carry out its tasks.

Historical writings on home economics reflect a certain ambivalence toward the family and toward women. On the one hand, they emphasize the home as "the bulwark of the nation" and women's role as "preservers of the race" (Bevier, 1928). Yet, they often also deride the home for its backwardness, and women for their ignorance. Thus, Andrews (1948) accepts as a basis for the development of home economics, the following statement of Edward Youmans:

> Our kitchens are fortified intrenchments of ignorance, prejudice, irrational habits, rule of thumb, and mental vacuity . . . . The spirit of improvement must invade this last stronghold of stupidity, the kitchen (p. 291).

Such statements seem to provide a basis for the justification of home economists' involvement in the home. Without critique or analysis, Bevier quotes extensively from a speech given by Mary E. Sweeney, President of AHEA, at its 15th Annual Meeting in 1922. The statement gives one prominent home economist's view on the relation between the profession and its clientele. Sweeney stressed the need for professional input into families, because of housewives' ignorance. She also recognized the difficulty involved in seeking entrance into the home, because of its privacy. Thus she stated,

> Our professional work has had to do with the home, which as an institution is traditional and conservative. Those within it have had only a half-hearted belief in home-making as a profession and in the functioning of science in everyday life. Homes are individual units; there are few ways of reaching them collectively. No outside forces connected with incomes unify their attitude, interest, and point of view, and get certain standards into their mass mind and consciousness (Quoted in Bevier, 1928, pp. 182-183).

Sweeney seems to be justifying the existence and expansion of home economics on the basis of women's ignorance. What is described here, although not in such terms, is a transformation in the relation between the domestic sphere and the rest of society -- a new set of relationships in which the professional has carved out for herself a key role.

Other studies also reflect how social relations between the family, professionals, and other social institutions are viewed by home economists. East (1980), for example, recognizes changes in the family's relation to the government, but does not analyze the role of home economics in the loss of family autonomy she perceives as a result of these social changes. In fact, East characterizes the role of the home economist only as one of helping families adapt to increasing interdependence in society through educational programs. Similarly, Budewig (1957) sees home economics as being primarily concerned with adapting to change in the culture: Home economics itself must adapt, and its task is to help families to adapt also.

This, in essence, seems to be the way in which home economics historians analyze the relation between the family, professionals and other social institutions. Changes are due to abstract social forces over which individuals and families have little control, and home economists can assist them to adapt to these changes.

In the next section the perceptions of historians of home economics of the content of household work and the role of home economists in shaping the work is reviewed. While the historical literature does not pay much attention to this matter, the scattered comments do give some idea of the historical view of the content of women's work in the home, and, particularly, how the role of home economists with regard to the work done in the household has been understood.

Home Economics and Housework

Home economics historians, like other historians of the household, note that home economists recognized the home as a place of work (Hartmann, 1974; Hayden, 1981). Thus, home economists had a more realistic view of the household and family life than many sociologists and others who focused almost exclusively on interpersonal relations. The question is whether and how historians of home economics account for the transformation in household work in the nineteenth and twentieth century, and what role they assign to home economics in this process.

Some historical writings include references to housework as dignified and important. The authors of such works often stress the role of home economics in making housework dignified, scientific, and professional. Bevier (1928), for example, cites the 1913 syllabus prepared for the American Home Economics Association by its Committee on Nomenclature and Syllabus as evidence for the development of the "scientific phase of home economics" and the "scientification" of housework. However, she does not indicate how widely the syllabus was used or what effect it actually had on homemaking practices.

Other statements link home economics and the development of scientific homemaking more directly. For example, an editorial in the Journal of Home Economics of 1911, "The Home Economics Movement in the United States," accepts

the role of the expert in the redefinition of housework. It states,

> Just as the chemist in his laboratory has decided for the farmer the proper rotation of crops and the exact kind of fertilizer for each, and has given him the balanced ration for the production of milk or of fat in his cattle, thus revolutionizing farming while raising it to the dignity of a profession, by exactly the same application of the results of science in many fields is housekeeping and homemaking being put on a higher plain (1911, p. 323).

In her account of early developments in land grant institutions, Bevier (1928) quotes extensively from statements made by college administrators and early program leaders regarding housework and home economics. A fragment from a report by Mary B. Welch on the program at Iowa State College reflects the view held by many of these leaders,

> It (the department of domestic economy) has not only given them manual skill, but it has also increased their respect for all branches of such labor, and added dignity to that part of their life work hitherto considered menial drudgery (Quoted in Bevier, p. 122).

In sum, the historical literature in home economics does not discuss the relationship between housework and home economics in great depth. When a relationship is identified, home economics is credited with putting housework on a businesslike basis and relieving drudgery.

Conclusion

This chapter examined historical literature in home economics to determine how the role of home economics in social reproduction has been understood by home economists. The review focused on three questions relating to the sexual division of labor. It considered the relationship of home economics to women's education, the role of home economics in shaping relations between the family and other social institutions, and its role in transforming the content of housework and homemaking.

The analysis indicated that historical studies of home economics generally focus on the field itself rather than on its relations with the larger society. The emphasis is on events and activities in the field. The activities are rarely discussed in the context of social and historical change. Where social change is considered, it is regarded as being caused by abstract social forces and the role of home economists is to respond to those changes, to adapt, and to help individuals and families to adapt also.

Studies that attempt to go beyond an emphasis on events and activities are equally abstract. These studies focus on enduring ideas underlying the developments and changes in the field, or on changes in the philosophical underpinnings of activities. Generally, such studies do not relate ideas and philosophies to the actual social role of the profession.

With regard to the sexual division of labor, it appears that historical studies accept such a division as a natural and inevitable characteristic of society. While historians do not agree on the association between home economics and women's concerns, they recognize that home economics to a greater or lesser extent is concerned with issues surrounding women's education, their place in the home and in society, and the content of their work. While historical studies may credit home economics with specific roles in society, for example, making housework scientific and relieving drudgery, no study was found that actually analyzed the social role of home economists in shaping and maintaining the sexual division of labor.

Chapter Three

CRITIQUE OF HISTORICAL LITERATURE

The previous chapter focused on the portrayal of particular dimensions of the sexual division of labor in home economics historical literature. The intent was to explore and illustrate how home economists have interpreted changes in social relations following in the wake of the development of capitalism. The review showed that the femaleness of the profession, its links with women's education, and its preoccupation with women's work are accepted by home economics historians. Yet, the complex social relations implied by this interconnection of the sexual division of labor and the division between intellectual and manual labor are not theorized.

The chapter suggests that the lack of attention to issues of gender in relation to professionalization may be linked to particular theoretical commitments and unexamined assumptions made by home economists. The chapter first identifies a number of theoretical commitments evident in the historical literature on home economics. These are then placed in a larger social and historical context. To this end, some theoretical propositions and arguments advanced by

Jurgen Habermas are sketched, and related to the home economics literature. The chapter concludes that the frameworks and theoretical assumptions adopted in studies of the history of home economics are incapable of dealing with questions of power in social relations, and actually obscure its working.

Theoretical Commitments

The historical literature in home economics does not have great theoretical sophistication. In this it reflects the home economics literature in general. The emphasis in the field has typically been on practice rather than on theorizing. Nevertheless, theoretical commitments and assumptions about science, the role of intellectuals in society, and the nature of social change can be inferred from the literature.

With some notable exceptions, historians accept the faith in science that has dominated home economics since the early years. This faith is probably best exemplified by Ellen Richards, who is generally regarded as the founder of the home economics profession. In a biography of the leader, Hunt (1958) records that Richards described herself as that member of the first Lake Placid Conference who had "faith in science as a cure-all" (p. 144). This stance also is reflected in Richards' many books and articles.

The applied science model of home economics is often cited by historians as <u>the</u> definition of the field. In

Introduction to Home Economics, Bane and Chapin (1945) open the chapter on the history of the field with this statement:

> The home economics movement grew out of a realization of the lag between the findings of science and their applications where they would be of untold value to mankind -- in the home (p. 121).

Typically, historians see the development of the strong emphasis on science, especially natural science, in home economics as a neutral event, a consequence of the rapid development of the sciences. According to Bevier (1928) the reason for the early development of the scientific phase of home economics, as indicated in the syllabus of 1913 (Committee on Nomenclature and Syllabus, 1913), was the widespread interest in food and the development of nutrition research in the United States Department of Agriculture. Budewig (1964) sees the reason for the early emphasis on chemistry as largely an historical accident. She argues,

> If psychology, or sociology, or anthropology had been more developed fields of knowledge at the turn of the century, the face of home economics might look different today (p. 13).

Thus the virtually exclusive emphasis on natural science in the early years of home economics is noted by historians. Where they recognize a need for the study of social phenomena, the difference between the study of natural and social phenomena is regarded as one only of content, not of methodology. The purpose of both is prediction and control.

East's (1980) analysis of the oft-quoted 1902 definition of home economics is indicative of the orientation toward a unitary view of social and natural science, and an emphasis on control and prediction as the goals of science. The definition reads as follows:

> Home economics in its most comprehensive sense is the study of the laws, conditions, principles and ideals which are concerned on the one hand with man's immediate physical environment and on the other hand with his nature as a social being, and specially of the relation between those two factors (Lake Placid Conferences on Home Economics, 1902, pp. 70-71).

In her analysis of the definition, East (1980) understands "laws" as social contracts, "conditions" as empirical data, and "principles" as rules that explain or predict. Under "ideals" she includes norms, goals, and hopes. She interprets "man's nature as a social being" to refer primarily to the "regularities, predictabilities, and potentials" signified by the concept, human nature. Home economics studies all of these in the same manner, namely through analysis, examination, and recording.

Some historians reflect more self-critically on the predominance of science in home economics. Vincenti (1981) identifies it as a major theme in the philosophy of the field. She finds the belief in science dominant from the inception of home economics as a field of study, until the late 1970's. She suggests that until then, "scientific knowledge and methodology had remained perhaps the most important means of accomplishing the goals of the field" (p.

243). She argues that while some home economists regarded the scientific method as the only valid method to gain knowledge and therefore also the only method appropriate to home economics, others rejected this view. She states,

> Home economics seems to have reflected the cultural attitudes toward science. When positivism was strong, home economics accepted science as the bases for its professional activities apparently without qualms. When positivism came under frequent criticism, home economists also began to write about the negative implications of a scientific bias in the philosophy and work of the profession (p. 244).

Yet Vincenti is hesitant to conclude that home economists explicitly held to a positivist view of science. She does not regard the omission of other ways of knowing as sufficient evidence for such a view. Vincenti seems to oppose science to ethics and religion, rather than to the question of whether a restricted philosophy of science was accepted by the profession.

An earlier critic of the emphasis on science in home economics was Carolyn Budewig (1957, 1964). She recognized the limits of the scientific method, and called for an integration of science and humanities in home economics. Budewig (1964) states,

> For a field that so admirably combines the "two cultures," science and the humanities, and depends for its success and effectiveness on the interrelationship of the two, it is the more the pity that at least equal attention has not been given its humanistic side; or perhaps "core" rather than "side" is the more descriptive word in this case (pp. 13-14).

She continues:

> As we all know, the "idol" today is science, as it has been throughout the lifetimes of all of us. This time span also encompasses the life of home economics as a field of knowledge in the universities. Science being descriptive rather than normative enables many to predict and control. Science is abstract, impersonal, objective. It describes what is rather than what ought to be. It is a very important way of knowing, with this we cannot argue. But science is not the only way. Enduring institutions reflect integration in both the scientific and humanistic "cultures" and home economics can be no exception (p. 14).

While Budewig alerts home economists to the one-sidedness of an exclusive emphasis on science and the value of the humanities, it remains unclear how integration could be achieved. Budewig (1957) does not reflect on how the emphasis on science also permeates perspectives on the profession's role in society. And when she urges home economists to drop their "scientific conceit" and see homemaking for the art it is, she suggests "searching out values that count" but gives no indication of the basis on which these values shall be chosen. She still regards it as the professionals' responsibility to decide what kind of education is necessary "for home and family living that will build yet a better home life for all people" (p. 308).

Historical studies of home economics which focus on the recounting of facts and figures, with little interpretation of the facts, reflect a kind of empiricism. Though they do not necessarily intend to do so, such studies match a view of the world that gives an independent existence to objective facts, and obscures their relation to the subject

observing them, and their relation to other events and circumstances. As pointed out in the previous chapter, such factual or empirical accounts of home economics seldom relate developments in home economics to other social or historical events. Where attempts are made to place those developments in historical context, the relation is usually presented in a unidirectional, causal way. The historically contingent nature of the larger social context is not explored.

In the dialectical tradition, such analyses are criticized as being abstract, because events are treated as if they exist in isolation from others. In contrast, dialectical thinkers stress the need for concrete analysis. Hegel, the father of the modern dialectical tradition, stressed that social events must be understood as part of a totality. The interconnection of objects and subjects leaves neither untouched. Both subjects and objects are also shaped by previous events and experiences. To understand specifics, they must be treated as historical and placed in the larger context. This kind of analysis is called concrete analysis.

There is a place for abstract thought and analysis, but these must be placed in context.

> Concrete thought is required if we are to assess the real possibilities of a given historical situation and so if we are to be able to act in it consciously and effectively (Peterson, 1979, p. 67-68).

One of the consequences of abstract analysis in home economics is that changes in the field are not related in a

systematic way to changes in the larger social system. And, where an effort is made to relate changes to other social events, these changes are generally discussed as the result of the working of abstract social forces. This perspective does not allow for human intention and action in bringing about change.

Where changes in the society are recognized, the role of the professional is characterized as one of helping people adapt to change. Where changes were regarded by the professionals as negative, it was also their role to stem the tide of change. This reinforces the view that people are not actors, making independent decisions, and thus shaping their own futures. Rather, they respond to changes not of their own making.

The abstract analyses of the history of home economics, the general acceptance of the scientific model and a scientistic or empiricist world view culminate in home economics historical literature in an absence of critical reflection on professional activity, even an endorsement of social control by experts, and social engineering.

While home economics historians do not explicitly subscribe to the tenets of functionalism and positivism, it can be argued that the historical literature shows the impact of functionalism as a theoretical model, and positivism as a philosophy of science. This is hardly surprising, for their assumptions have virtually become the common sense of

educated people and their influence is pervasive (Peterson, 1979; McCarthy, 1978). To substantiate this claim, the basic assumptions and principles of functionalism and positivism are briefly reviewed below.

Functionalism. According to McCarthy (1978), functionalist notions are already discernable in the work of Durkheim. In the Anglo-American world, Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown are early proponents of this view. More recently, Talcott Parsons (1954) and Robert Merton (1957) have developed complex functionalist theories in sociology. There is widespread disagreement among functionalists about specific formulations of the approach. In general, however, it is "associated with unfolding models of change based upon metaphors of biological growth or evolution" (Giddens, 1979, p. 236). Thus functionalists hold the view that social systems have organismic characteristics, change is gradual and unfolding, and the result of abstract social forces, rather than human action.

In spite of attempts of some functionalists to overcome the limitations of positivism, functionalists generally accept positivistic philosophies of science. Thus Giddens (1979) states,

> Functionalism has been closely connected with a naturalistic standpoint in social philosophy, if naturalism is understood to refer to the thesis that the logical frameworks of natural and social science are in essential respects the same (p. 237).

As will be shown in the next section, this is a basic tenet of positivism.

Positivism. It would be impossible to identify one distinct positivistic philosophy of science about which there is general agreement today. There have been many exponents, many revisions, and many critics. Saint-Simon and Comte were early advocates of a positivist philosophy. Spencer and Haeckel contributed their evolutionary positivism. More recently, philosophers at the University of Vienna and Cambridge University developed the perspective known as logical positivism (McCarthy, 1978). McCarthy states that this perspective has disintegrated as a unified movement. Yet it has been reworked and absorbed into other perspectives, so that the net result is that the "legacy of logical positivism" -- a legacy of convictions and attitudes, problems and techniques, concepts, and theories -- pervades contemporary thought (pp. 137-138).

Although there have been considerable debate and disagreement among positivists and neo-positivists about the validity of the basic tenets of this philosophical orientation toward science, a number of general assumptions may be put forward to indicate its basic premises. McCarthy (1978) identifies four:

1. "The unity of scientific method." This implies that the methods of the natural sciences also apply to the study of human behavior.

2. "the goals of inquiry -- explanation and prediction -- are identical, as is the form in which they are realized: the subsumption of individual cases under hypothetically proposed general laws."
3. "The relation of theory to practice is primarily technical. If the appropriate general laws are known and the relevant inital (sic) conditions are manipulable, we can produce a desired state of affairs, natural or social. But the question of which states of affairs are to be produced cannot be scientifically resolved. It is ultimately a matter of decision, for no 'ought' can be derived from an 'is,' no 'value' from a 'fact.' Scientific inquiry is itself 'value-free'; it strives only for objective (intersubjectively testable) value-neutral results."
4. "The hallmark of scientific knowledge is precisely its testability. . . . Thus the empirical basis of science is composed of observation statements . . . that can be said either to report perceptual experiences or, at least, to be motivated by them" (McCarthy, 1978, pp. 138-139).

Finally, the claim that the methods of the natural and analytical sciences are the only sources of reliable knowledge, is also generally regarded as part of a positivist philosophy, although it may be more accurately regarded as an objectivistic claim.

The influence of positivism is suggested in home economics in the persistent goal of becoming more scientific, and wanting the housewife to be more scientific also; in the emphasis on empirical research to the virtual exclusion of other types of studies, and in the viewpoint that professionals provide technical knowledge to help families solve their problems. Historical studies and accounts also reflect the influence of positivism. With few exceptions these studies do not raise questions about the veneration of science, and the exclusive concern for doing empirical research. Empiricist influences can be seen in the "factual" nature of many historical studies.

The question to be considered is whether a positivist self-understanding is an adequate one for a field like home economics. According to the West-German social theorist and philosopher, Jurgen Habermas, there are epistemological and sociological reasons why positivism must be critiqued and transcended if a more adequate understanding of society is to be developed.

By applying elements from Habermas' theoretical framework to the self-understanding of home economics as reflected in historical literature, it becomes clear that existing frameworks for studying the social role of home economics are inadequate. The analysis also lends weight to the argument advanced earlier that the role of professionals in society needs to be understood in terms of power.

Habermas' Critique of Positivism

Habermas' critique of positivism is premised on the categorical distinction he makes between work and interaction as the two basic dimensions of human life. According to Habermas (1970a), work, or purposive-rational action, the activities through which human groups control outer nature, involves instrumental action and rational choice. Purposive-rational action is governed by technical rules. It seeks to find the most suitable means to reach given ends under specific conditions. According to Bernstein (1976), "Work, as a primary level of action, refers to the ways in which individuals control and manipulate their environment in order to survive and preserve themselves" (p. 193).

With interaction, Habermas understands,

> communicative action, symbolic interaction. It is governed by binding consensual norms, which define reciprocal expectations about behavior and which must be understood and recognized by at least two acting subjects. Social norms are enforced through sanctions. Their meaning is objectified in ordinary language communication. While the validity of technical rules and strategies depends on that of empirically true or analytically correct propositions, the validity of social norms is grounded only in the intersubjectivity of the mutual understanding of intentions and secured by the general recognition of obligations (1970a, p. 92).

Habermas maintains that human social evolution must be understood in terms that distinguish between work done according to technical rules, and interaction that proceeds according to norms that require justification. Habermas works

out this distinction between work and interaction at a number of levels (McCarthy, 1978).

He develops a theory of cognitive interests in which he maintains that different kinds of interests underlie different kinds of activity. According to Habermas, cognitive or "knowledge-constitutive interests" are "basic orientations rooted in specific fundamental conditions of possible reproduction and self-constitution of the human species, namely work and interaction (1971, p. 196). These cognitive interests function to,

> shape and determine what counts as objects and types of knowledge: they determine the categories relevant to what we take to be knowledge, as well as the procedures for discovering and warranting knowledge claims (Bernstein, 1976, p. 192).

Habermas maintains that a technical interest in prediction and control of objectified processes underlies purposive-rational action. A practical interest "in securing and expanding possibilities of mutual and self-understanding in the conduct of life" corresponds to communicative action (McCarthy, 1978, p. 57).

On the basis of the theory of cognitive interests, Habermas makes a methodological distinction between the empirical-analytical sciences, which correspond to an interest in technical control, and the historical-hermeneutic sciences which have a practical interest.

In summary, Habermas distinguishes between the technical, which refers to means-ends rationality, the empirical-

analytical sciences, and purposive-rational action; and the practical, which refers to the rational concern for coming to mutual understanding on the basis of norms and values, and corresponds to the hermeneutic sciences and communicative action.

Habermas also identifies a third cognitive interest, namely, an emancipatory interest. The status of this interest is different from that of the technical and the practical interests. McCarthy (1978) clarifies the distinction as follows:

> The interest of self-reflection in emancipation is viewed then as an interest in social relations organized on the basis of communication free from domination. From this perspective power, ideology, and critical self-reflection do not have the same anthropological status as work and interaction (p. 93).

Habermas links ideology to power at work in social relations. For Habermas, ideology is more than a set of false notions or ideas making up people's misunderstanding of their social relations and material conditions. Rather, he understands ideology as at work in language and communication. When the working of power in social relations is misrepresented, communication among people becomes distorted, as the interests being served are hidden or distorted (Habermas, 1970). The critique of ideology, for Habermas, is aimed at freeing subjects from misconceptions in their understanding of themselves and their society, and thus altering the quality of their interaction in the direction of the "ideal speech situation" (McCarthy, 1975, p. xvii). This involves

more openness of expression, equality of access to information, and ease of participation.

According to Habermas, an emancipatory interest underlies critical social science and the critique of ideology. Critical science

> is concerned with going beyond (the goal of producing nomological knowledge) to determine when theoretical statements grasp invariant regularities of social action as such and when they express ideologically frozen relations of dependence that can in principle be transformed (Habermas, 1971, p. 310).

Moving to a more explicitly sociological and historical analysis, Habermas carries the distinction between work and interaction over into the realm of the organization of society. He differentiates between society's institutional framework which "consists of norms that guide symbolic action" and subsystems, such as the economy "in which primarily sets of purposive-rational action are institutionalized" (1970a, p. 93).

Habermas develops his critique of positivism on the basis of these distinctions between work and social interaction. He claims that positivism obscures the distinction between work and interaction, between the technical and the practical. At the epistemological level, this restricts rationality to the methods of the empirical-analytical sciences. The problem with the claim that the methods of the empirical-analytical sciences are the only reliable means to gain knowledge is that it cannot be verified through those methods.

The norms governing the activities of scientists are not open to reflection through the methods of the empirical-analytical sciences. It is impossible to explain how a community of scientists could develop solely through technical rationality. A scientific community presupposes a level of action, namely social interaction or communication, that can only be grasped if a more inclusive form of rationality is accepted. The existence of such a community presupposes consensus arrived at through interaction about the norms that guide their scientific practice. The objectivism of the social sciences is attributed to the failure to recognize this, and to the consequent reduction of all rationality to one kind, namely technical rationality.

The reduction of practical rationality to technical rationality leads to a redefinition of the role of the professional as one of applying technical knowledge derived from empirical-analytical sciences to reach given goals. The norms and values underlying these goals are not open to examination through empirical-analytical means. As long as those are considered to be the only rational means, norms and values are beyond rational discussion. The interests served through the interaction of the professional with the public are not open for discussion. Thus Habermas would argue that a positivistic understanding of intellectual activity is ideological because reflection on the power exercised in those activities is blocked.

Habermas argues further that a positivistic self-understanding is not limited to the sciences, but that it operates in advanced capitalist countries on a much larger scale. He identifies two important tendencies in these societies since the 1870's. In the first place, he notes the increased role of science in society. Habermas argues that the interdependence of research and technology has made science the leading productive force in the society.

Secondly, the state is increasingly involved in the economy. This has become necessary to stabilize the economic system, which is prone to periodic crises, due to over-production, and under-consumption. Thus the state becomes more actively involved in reproducing class relations. It now has to find a way to justify its involvement in a system which distributes surplus wealth unequally (Habermas, 1975). However, justification on the basis of traditional world views is no longer feasible. Furthermore, the democratizing results of bourgeois emancipation in the nineteenth century (e.g., the right to vote, and general political participation), cannot be taken away without seriously threatening the stability of the system, which is what state intervention wants to prevent at all costs.

In this situation, the task of politics becomes negative. The main function of government becomes one of securing economic growth and stability. Its action is now geared,

> toward the elimination of dysfunctions and the avoidance of risks that threaten the system: not . . . toward the <u>realization of practical goals</u> but toward the solution of technical problems (Habermas, 1970a, p. 103).

This technical management of society requires not the participation of citizens, but, in fact, the depoliticization of the population, for

> public discussions could render problematic the framework within which the tasks of government action present themselves as technical ones (Habermas, 1970a, p. 103).

The key problem then becomes how this depoliticization will be made acceptable to the masses. Habermas, following Marcuse, argues that it is achieved by making science and technology into an ideology.

Science and Technology as Ideology

The ideological dimension of science and technology is tied to the obliteration of the distinction between work and interaction. In developing his argument, Habermas contrasts capitalist societies and traditional societies.

> "Traditional" societies exist as long as the development of subsystems of purposive-rational action keep within the limits of the legitimating efficacy of cultural traditions (Habermas, 1970a, p. 95).

However, the capitalist mode of production provides a mechanism for self-sustaining economic growth. Consequently, this

> guarantees the permanent expansion of subsystems of purposive-rational action and thereby overturns the traditionalist "superiority" of the institutional framework to the forces of production (Habermas, 1970a, p. 96).

Increasingly, areas of life, such as the family, formerly organized on the basis of explicit norms , are subjected to instrumental reasoning. This development effectively

obscures the normative content of more and more institutions in society.

In addition, science and technology function as an ideology to the extent that people lose consciousness of the distinction between work and interaction. With the rapid development of science and technological progress it appears that the development of the social system depends, not on development in mutual understanding, but on scientific-technical progress. Habermas argues that this understanding can become

> a background ideology that penetrates into the consciousness of the depoliticized mass of the population where it can take on legitimating power. It is a singular achievement of this ideology to detach society's self-understanding from the frame of reference of communicative action and from the concepts of symbolic interaction and replace it with a scientific model. Accordingly the culturally defined self-understanding of a social life-world is replaced by the self-reification of men under categories of purposive-rational action and adaptive behavior (1970a, pp. 105-106).

The technocratic ideology places the activities of professionals beyond the reach of public discussion. The interests served through professional activity are not open for discussion. Furthermore, as people begin to understand themselves and their society in terms based on purposive-rational action, they also accept the role of experts in society, and the limitation of their own political role to that of choosing among administrators.

Habermas maintains that it is the task of critical theory to bring to light the distortions in people's self-understanding through the critique of the technocratic ideology.

Habermas identifies as the most urgent practical problem of our time,

> to oppose all those intellectual and material tendencies that undermine or suppress practical discourse, and to work toward the achievement of those objective institutions in which such practical discourse can be concretely realized (Bernstein, 1976, p. 219).

To return to the context of the present study, Habermas' concern for uncovering structures and practices that undermine open communication free from distortion, is echoed in the mission statement proposed for home economics, cited in Chapter I (p. 2). However, the analysis of Habermas' critique of positivism suggests that professions themselves have been involved in suppressing practical discourse. It would seem, therefore, that for home economics to implement the mission stated by Brown and Paolucci (1979), it needs to understand its own role in maintaining oppressive relations.

The analysis of historical literature in home economics indicated that existing historical studies do not reflect on power exercised through the activities of home economists. To the extent that they remain at the level of factual reporting, and use functionalist strategies that obscure questions of power, their analytical categories make it impossible for them to challenge the dominant ideology, or the involvement of home economists in maintaining that ideology.

In effect, those categories allow them to propagate the technocratic ideology. Thus it would seem that new frameworks need to be used to critically analyze the social and historical role of home economics.

Conclusion

While Habermas' approach suggests a basic framework for such a critical analysis, it does not provide appropriate analytical tools. Habermas focuses primarily on the reproduction of the existing economic system, and the role of the state in maintaining that system, and the class relations within it. Habermas' concern is with the misrepresentation and masking of power relations, rather than with the particular dimensions of distorted communication in which power is at work. To develop an analysis of particular power relations, the present study turns to the work of another theorist, Michel Foucault, whose work seems to provide analytical tools suited to the task.

Chapter Four

CONCEPTUALIZING POWER AND KNOWLEDGE

The present study argues that an adequate understanding of the social role of home economics must recognize power at work in the relations in which home economists participate. Two sets of social relations were identified as pertinent for understanding power in the practices of home economists. These relations are the sexual division of labor, and the division between intellectual and manual labor. However, the analysis of historical literature in home economics showed that conventional accounts of the activities of home economics do not take power into consideration. In particular, these studies fail to offer an analysis of the specific kinds of power relations represented in the sexual division of labor and the division between intellectual and manual labor.

In Chapter II, historical literature on home economics was reviewed to examine how the evolution of the field has been related to certain aspects of the sexual division of labor. The review focused on developments in women's education, the changing relationship of the family to other institutions in society and the content of housework. The analysis indicated that the available historical accounts neglect issues of power in gender relations.

In Chapter III, the assumptions underlying historical studies were examined. Using concepts from Habermas' comprehensive social theory it was argued that positivist and functionalist assumptions underlay most of these studies.

A functionalist approach is inadequate for several reasons. It typically includes a view of society as an organism of which the different parts are to be integrated. In this view society has "needs," to which individuals or groups respond. Needs are often portrayed as trans-historical. Such a view of society also favors an orientation to the status quo. A functionalist account of the activities of home economists sees their activities as responding to society's enduring needs, and obscures their political character. Corresponding to this view of society is the notion that change is due to abstract social forces, rather than the activities of individuals or groups. Consequently, functionalist accounts give one-way, causal explanations, thus obscuring the relational aspects of change. In other words, the interaction, cooperation, resistance, and contradictions that occur in the process of change are obscured.

The scientistic self-understanding of the field, evident in historical studies of home economics, reflects the influence of the dominant technocratic ideology in society. It gives rise to a view of the activities of the field in terms of the technical application of knowledge. Such a

perspective obscures the political character of professional interventions. Inasmuch as historical studies describe home economics in causal terms, for example, as responses to "social needs," and suggest that such explanations are sufficient, they obscure the dimensions of power in social relations, and the interests being served by the interventions of home economists.

The present study rejects a functionalist approach to understanding the social role of home economics, because it obscures power in professional activities. It also suggests that those approaches that attempt to explain the activities of home economists in terms of the exercise of the power of the state, or "patriarchy," or "capitalism" may be inadequate. A number of such studies were reviewed briefly in Chapter I. While these studies recognize that the activities of professionals in general, and home economists in particular, involve the exercise of power, they do not reflect systematically on the particular nature of the power relations professionals enter.

Therefore, before power in home economics can be explained, and related to other dimensions of power in society, it seems necessary to analyze the particular workings of power in home economics practices. The present study proposes to bracket the question of explaining power in home economics in relation to other forms of power, and to explore the particulars of power relations in home economics.

A first task in such an exploration is the development of analytical tools. The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to this task. First, a conceptual definition of power is attempted. This is followed with a statement of particular requirements for an analysis of power as it relates to intellectual practices. In the final section selected aspects of the work of Michel Foucault are introduced. Foucault's emphasis on the interrelation of knowledge and power, and his conceptualization of power seem to provide the kind of analytical categories required to analyze specific power relations in home economics.

Power

The concept of power is an ambiguous one, and its meaning is highly disputed among social theorists. It has been variously linked to wants, needs, interests, and conflict. A first distinction can be made between power as a capacity, that is, power to do something, and power as relational, that is, power over someone.

In one prevalent view, power is understood in terms of intention or willed action, that is, the likelihood that actors will reach intended outcomes. Lukes (1974) summarizes this view, which he calls one-dimensional, as one that,

> involves a focus on behaviour in the making of decisions on issues over which there is an observable conflict of (subjective) interests, seen as express policy preferences, revealed by political participation (p. 15).

This perspective sees domination as a network of decision making without considering the institutional background against which it takes place.

In opposition to this view, some theorists have seen power as a property of a group, the medium through which the group's interests can be reached. From this perspective, domination is primarily an institutional phenomenon. Human agency (e.g. in decision making) is either not considered, or regarded as being determined by the institutional arrangement.

Several attempts have been made to reconcile these two perspectives. Bachrach and Baratz (1962, 1963), for example, attempted to overcome the emphasis on behavior in the one-dimensional view in terms of "mobilization of bias." Lukes (1974) summarizes this view as follows:

> It involves a qualified critique of the behavioral focus of the first view . . . and it allows for consideration of the ways in which decisions are prevented from being taken on potential issues over which there is an observable conflict of (subjective) interests, seen as embodied in express policy preferences and sub-political grievances (p. 20).

As both Lukes (1974) and Giddens (1979) point out, this view still stays within the framework of understanding power as a matter of the will and intention of social agents.

Lukes (1974) develops a "three-dimensional view" of power in which he attempts to overcome the emphasis on decision making. In his view, power is exercised when one actor or party can affect another in a way contrary to that other's

interests. Thus power can be exercised in the absence of observable conflict.

Giddens (1979) argues that Lukes still does not deal satisfactorily with the reality that people do not always act in accordance with their own interests, whether someone intervenes or not. He maintains that, because the notion of interests refers to individual interests, Lukes still has not resolved the problem of incorporating structural domination into the framework of power. In a recent essay, Lukes (1977) makes an attempt in this direction. He maintains that structural domination places limitations on the ability of both parties in power relations. Thus he develops a notion of power as involving the relative autonomy of actors within structurally determined limits. While this is a useful elaboration, it still associates power with individual action, and structural domination as somehow conditioning power. Nevertheless, it indicates that structural domination limits a person's ability to function as a subject who is fully aware of his or her interests and able to realize those.

Giddens (1979) develops a comprehensive set of concepts in an attempt to incorporate notions of action and structure into a unified social theory. As a part of this larger effort he also develops a notion of power in terms of "the duality of structure" (p. 5). An explication of Giddens' theory will not be attempted here. Nevertheless, he advances several propositions regarding power that seem pertinent for

the present project, and these will be outlined below:

1. Power is not an act in itself, but makes its appearance in action.
2. Power is not a resource that can be used, yet it has to do with the utilization of resources. Giddens (1979) states,

> Resources are the media whereby transformative capacity is employed as power in the routine course of social interaction; but they are at the same time structural elements of social interaction (p. 92)

3. Power involves human agency, but this does not imply a subject/object differentiation. (Thus, for Giddens, agency does not imply acting with full consciousness of one's interests.) He maintains that power should not be understood in terms of intention, will, motivation, or wanting.
4. Power is a relational concept. It "concerns the capability of actors to secure outcomes where the realization of these outcomes depends upon the agency of others" (Giddens, 1979, p. 93).

   Power in social systems is regarded as "involving reproduced relations of autonomy and dependence in social interaction" (Giddens, 1979, p. 93).
5. Finally, power relations are two-way. Giddens states,

> Power relations are relations of autonomy and dependence, but even the most autonomous agent is in some degree dependent, and the most dependent actor or party in a relationship retains some autonomy (p. 93).

On the basis of this analysis, power is to be understood as relational, and involving human agency. However, power is not necessarily exercised with the full consciousness of one's interests, given that reproduced relations of autonomy and dependence in society restrict full consciousness of one's needs and interests.

Further Conceptual Requirements

To study power relations in the activities of home economics, it is necessary to understand knowledge as having social effects. This is not to be construed as an instrumental relation, as if knowledge is merely a thing or a resource that one has and can use in social relations to achieve a desired effect. Rather, intellectual activity must be seen as forming and reproducing social relations at the same time as theoretical knowledge is produced and employed. The social role of home economics and home economists should also not be reduced to ideology. If ideology is seen in strict opposition to knowledge, as is often done, reducing home economics to ideology would deny the coherence of the intellectual activities of home economists. Furthermore, treating home economics' knowledge merely as disconnected beliefs underlying the activities of home economists obscures the role of theoretical practices in shaping social relations.

It has been claimed in the present study that the activities of home economists have political dimensions. This is

not to be understood in instrumentalist terms. It would be inadequate, and no advance over a functionalist perspective, to understand professional activity as the application of knowledge to reach given ends. Knowledge can be used in this way for political purposes. In one sense, the power exercised through the technical application of knowledge is an important dimension of the activities of professionals, but an exclusive focus on such activities obscures the working of power in more subtle ways in relations of which home economists are a part.

The requirements outlined thus far have defined the social role of home economics in terms of knowledge relations, and also in terms of power relations. It is evident that an adequate framework for studying the role of home economics in social reproduction must allow one to conceptualize the relation between power and knowledge in a way that does not reduce knowledge relations to power relations. Nevertheless, the close interaction between knowledge of power must be conceptualized.

Finally, a concept of power must be developed that allows one to study power relations in their variety and specificity. In other words, the specific power relations of which home economists are a part, must be studied in their integrity. Nevertheless, to move from an analysis of power to explaining the role of home economics in social reproduction, these power relations must eventually be placed in the

context of other power relations, for example, the reproduced relations of power existing in the sexual division of labor, economic power relations, and the exercise of state power.

Foucault: Background

Having sketched conceptual requirements to analyze specific power relations in home economics practices, selected aspects of the work of Foucault are outlined below to illustrate what the kind of analysis he proposes could contribute to the understanding of power in home economics practices.

Foucault, a French intellectual, has made the detailed examination of the relationship between knowledge and power the focus of his work of the last two decades. Foucault's writings have covered such apparently diverse topics as insanity, the evolution of the medical profession, the history of the French prison system, and the history of sexuality in the West (Sheridan, 1980). One of his associates, Donzelot (1979) has traced the development of the social work profession using strategies akin to those developed by Foucault.

Foucault's analytical approach seems useful, in the first place, because, with the notion of discourse, he provides conceptual tools to see intellectual practices in social terms. Furthermore, he maintains that the social content of intellectual activity is to be understood in terms of power. These aspects of his work are discussed below.

Foucault's historical studies are not merely studies of events and activities of the past. His intent is to trace the historical development of particular forms of rationality in the West. Foucault is critical of the modern philosophical tradition with its emphasis on autonomous rationality, the rational subject, the abstract distinction between subjectivity and objectivity, and the norms that guide the formation of knowledge. Foucault maintains that such an emphasis has obscured how knowledge actually plays a formative role in society.

Given his rejection of received approaches to questions about knowledge, Foucault (1972) has set himself the task of developing a new set of concepts to shift the focus away from the subject/object distinction, to the social role of knowledge.

He wants to focus on the kinds of knowledge and the conditions that make the development of certain forms of knowledge possible, rather than on the problems of the validity of certain kinds of knowledge.

Discourse and Discursive Analysis

A key concept in this formulation is that of a discourse. A discourse is a linguistic framework that involves forms of knowledge and intellectual activity. It is not constituted through the will, intention, or action of an individual, nor does it correspond to particular world views,

traditions or goals of participants in the discourse. Rather, it is constituted through formative rules which operate at a non-intentional level.

While resembling linguistic analysis in some respects, discursive analysis is more general. Its rules of formation are not the formal rules of grammer or logic, for example. At another level, discursive analysis is more specific, because it takes specific historical circumstances into account, and its formative rules involve social relations. Through these rules of formation the dimensions of a discourse come into being. The dimensions of a discourse are the objects that are created, the statements allowed, the concepts used, and the theoretical strategies chosen. These dimensions are briefly discussed below.

Objects.

Objects are the things spoken about in the discourse. In a general sense, these are the things considered important by those who have, or claim to have, the authority to speak in the discourse. Foucault emphasizes that the discourse does not merely signify things that already exist: the discourse actually creates the things of which it speaks. The formation of objects is ruled by the complex interrelation of "surfaces of emergence," "authorities of delimitation," and "grids of specification" of the discourse. These are the institutions and groups in which the objects first appear, the persons and groups who have authority to

name the objects, and the systems and concepts of classification used. Foucault maintains that the existence of a discourse does not depend on the objects remaining the same all the time. Rather, the discourse depends on the permanence of this set of relations.

How the discourse talks about the objects that it constitutes is clarified by considering the statements that are made, concepts that are developed, and strategies that are chosen in the discourse according to its rules of formation.

Statements

The discourse includes a range of statements. These statements do not necessarily form a logical, deductive system. Nevertheless, there are rules which guide the formation of statements. These rules concern the authority of the subject who makes the statement, the site from which it is made, and the position or situation of the subject who makes the statement. Power operates in these statements. Not anyone or everyone can make a statement with authority. The kind of statement made, and its authority, are influenced by the site from which it is made. Finally, the statement is influenced by the position or situation of the speaking subject. With this Foucault seems to mean whether one is in the position of a listener, as in the confessional, or an observer using standardized tools, and that the kind of statement one can make is influenced by this position.

Concepts

Out of the variety of statements that do not show coherence at first glance, and that may even seem to contradict one another, a set of concepts can be identified. According to Foucault these concepts do not arise directly from world views or ideas held by individuals in the discourse. One should not attempt to trace them back to such ideas.

Theoretical Strategies

This term refers to the ways of knowing chosen as appropriate to use in the discourse. It relates to the way statements, concepts and objects are grouped together. As in the case of concepts, Foucault claims that theoretical strategies chosen do not emerge directly from world views or from particular interests of subjects. Rather, these strategies emerge on the basis of the range of concepts and statements employed to talk about the objects of the discourse.

The interaction of rules of formation of the discourse creates a "discursive space" or "relational field" within which the intentional activities of individuals or groups are to be understood.

Knowledge operates centrally in the discourse. Foucault makes a distinction between general knowledge (savoir) and specific theoretical knowledge (connaisance). Within the discourse they are related. Theoretical knowledge, although more abstract than everyday knowledge, is developed within the broader framework constituted according to the formative

rules of the discourse. Thus the specific rules of a theoretical discipline are not totally removed from the more general and abstract rules of discursive formation.

Such a perspective on knowledge allows Foucault to maintain the relative independence of intellectual practices and the activities of professionals, while relating them to other social practices. This provides a tool for the historical analysis of particular disciplines and professions within a broader framework of knowledge.

Foucault (1978) regards the era since the French Revolution as the era of the emergence of "knowable man." The institutions of the modern era, such as the family, factories, hospitals, and mental institutions, are uniquely organized, functioning according to specific cognitive techniques, such as record keeping, observations, and the development of standards based on scientific norms. Foucault would not link the emergence of the social sciences only to the prior existence of natural science and the social scientists' fascination with the methods of the more mature sciences, but also to the emergence of these cognitive techniques that developed in particular institutions. Foucault argues that these techniques have gradually provided the norms and standards in terms of which people come to know themselves.

For Foucault this role of knowledge involves the exercise of a particular kind of power. The era of knowable man

is also the era of the politicization of the body, the extension of control over life. There developed in Western societies multiple forms of power that served to discipline bodies and regulate populations. However, received notions of power are insufficient for understanding the working of these forms of power.

Foucault's Critique of Traditional Notions of Power.

Foucault (1980) argues that it is inadequate to understand power as it functions in modern society in terms of right, sovereignty, or law. In the modern philosophical tradition, he argues, power has been based on a juridical or economic model. In that model, power is established contractually, and involves individuals giving up their rights to establish sovereignty. Power is legitimate power, and oppression occurs when power oversteps the boundaries of the contract. Thus power is a commodity, something that one has, and that can be taken away. This notion of power is tied up with the traditional distinction between subjectivity and objectivity. It sees power operating between rational subjects. For Foucault, this is power on the monarchical model, power vested in one source, exercised from above, and enforced through the law. Foucault argues that this is a negative view of power, because it is seen as essentially repressive.

Foucault argues that the traditional view of power is

unable to account for the much more pervasive forms of power exercised in modern society. In fact, he says, as long as power is solely understood in terms of the juridical model, the power that is exercised through subtle ways of domination and subjugation is obscured. Foucault therefore rejects analysis in terms of sovereignty and obedience, to focus on domination and subjugation, which in his view is the more significant way in which power functions in modern society. (Of course, Foucault does not deny the existence of power in the former sense, but he does not consider analysis in terms of that kind of power as the most fruitful way to understand modern society.)

Foucault launches his critique of received notions of power in the context of a consideration of the development of a discourse of sexuality. Foucault (1978) maintains that to talk about sexuality in terms of repression is not sufficient. What this language of repression obscures is the society's will to know and to talk about sexuality. But this speech is regulated throught the discourse. The development of knowledge about sexuality, through definition, confession, description, is also at the same time the development of new forms of control over bodies. The activities of social scientists and professionals are not to be understood solely in terms of liberating people from repression, but also as developing new forms of control because they developed

a new set of concepts through which people come to understand their human possibilities, their bodies, their sex.

Thus, for Foucault, the era of "knowable man" is also the era of "bio-power." The development of all the techniques and methods to discipline bodies and regulate the population represent the development of a biopolitics of the population. Foucault understands these historical changes in power relations in society in terms of micropowers and normalization.

Micropowers and Normalization.

Foucault is committed to studying power relations in specific situations, in all their variety and intricacy. Foucault uses the concept of "micropowers" to refer to these local, varied, and pervasive relations of power. Knowledge and relations of knowing are a part of micropower relations. The development and use of particular methods of knowing involve power. Foucault (1980) states that power is involved in

> the production of effective instruments for the formation and accumulation of knowledge -- methods of observation, techniques of registration, procedures for investigation and research, apparatuses of control (p. 102).

Foucault sees these micropowers as having a more generalized effect in society. He argues that the exercise of power in knowledge relations, and the use of knowledge in power relations have given rise to a disciplinary society. He

characterizes the society as one in which people's self-understanding is shaped by the techniques used in and the knowledge generated through the human and social sciences. Foucault refers to the kind of power exercised through knowledge as normalization. He considers this more pervasive and of greater importance for understanding modern society, than power exercised through the Law. Normalization, thus, is a kind of regulation exercised in society through knowledge relations. One could also understand normalization as the power dimension of an intensified division of intellectual and manual labor in society.

For the specific analysis of power in terms of domination, subjugation, micropowers, and normalization Foucault lays out a set of "methodological precautions" (1980, p. 96) regarding the study of power. These are summarized below.

Foucault's Propositions about Power and How it Should be Studied.

1. Analysis of power and power relations should be concerned with power in specific situations, where it functions in specific institutions through specific techniques.
2. Analysis of power should not be at the level of intention or decision making by rational subjects. He proposes not asking "Who has power and why?", but "How does power work?" He argues that one should study,

> how things work at the level of on-going subjugation, at the level of those continuous and uninterrupted processes which subject our bodies, govern our gestures, dictate our behaviours, etc. (Foucault, 1980, p. 97).

For Foucault power is not to be understood as exercised between subjects, but rather as that which subjugates people. Thus he states,

> We should try to discover how it is that subjects are gradually, progressively, really and materially constituted through a multiplicity of organisms, forces, energies, materials, desire, thoughts, etc. We should try to grasp subjection in its material instance as a constitution of subjects (Foucault, 1980, p. 97).

This does not mean, however, that power is totally haphazard or the outcome of abstract forces. In fact, Foucault (1978) talks about power relations as being, "both intentional and nonsubjective" (p. 94). By this he means that there are aims and objectives involved, but that these are not the direct result of the decisions of individual subjects.

3. Power is not a homogeneous phenomenon or a thing. It is not an institution or a structure, nor is it a commodity that one group or individual has and uses to dominate another. Rather,

> Power must be analyzed as something which circulates. . . . It is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in a position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power (Foucault, 1980, p. 98).

Thus power comes from many points and occurs everywhere in non-egalitarian and changing relations (Foucault, 1978, p. 94).

4. Power should not be examined as something that originates with a central authority like the state, and reaches down into every social relationship. Such a view is insufficient, Foucault maintains, because the state cannot gain access to every power relation. What is more, the state depends on existing relations of power for its functioning. Foucault (1980) argues,

> The state is superstructural in relation to the whole series of power networks that invest the body, sexuality, the family, kinship, knowledge, technology and so forth. True, these networks stand in a conditioning-conditioned relationship to a kind of "meta-power" which is structured essentially round a certain number of great prohibition functions; but this meta-power with its prohibitions can only take hold and secure its footing where it is rooted in a whole series of multiple and indefinite power relations that supply the necessary basis for the great negative forms of power (p. 122).

Rather than studying power as descending from above, one should "conduct an <u>ascending</u> analysis of power" (Foucault, 1980, p. 99). Such an analysis would start with the techniques and mechanisms of power and then move to an analysis of how these techniques and mechanisms are used, modified and extended by more generalized forms of domination. Foucault (1980) states:

> It is only if we grasp these techniques of power and demonstrate the economic advantages or political utility that derives from them in a given context for specific reasons, that we can understand how these mechanisms came to be effectively incorporated into the social whole (p. 101).

Thus, in addition to the analysis of specific power relations, an important dimension is to examine how, "general powers or economic interests are able to engage with these technologies" (Foucault, 1980, p. 99).

5. As noted before, Foucault sees power not as a thing that can be used, but as a relation. Thus, power is relational. Power relations, furthermore, are not the outcome of other relations, neither do they act only to prohibit or limit other relations. Foucault (1978) states it in this way:

> Relations of power are not in a position of exteriority with respect to other types or relationships (economic processes, knowledge relationships, sexual relations), but are immanent in the latter; they are the immediate effects of the divisions, inequalities, and disequalibriums which occur in the latter, and conversely they are the internal conditions of these differentiations; relations of power are not in superstructural positions, with merely a role of prohibition or accompaniment; they have a directly productive role, wherever they come into play (p. 94).

Limitations of Foucault's Conceptualization of Power

While Foucault's recent work is more political, and makes reference to power operating in class relations and through the state, he is basically opposed to thinking in terms of totality, or "global" forms of power. Consequently, Foucault does not provide analytical tools to relate specific power relations to the exercise of more encompassing kinds of powers.

Foucault maintains that power is always accompanied by resistance, in fact, that it depends for its existence on "a

multiplicity of points of resistance: these play the role of adversary, target, support, or handle in power relations" (Foucault, 1978, p. 95). Again, this notion of resistance as occuring in particular instances, in many forms and in many places, is in opposition to any notion of world views or global strategies. Thus he rejects the notion that revolution can result from the actions of one group, as for example through class struggle. Rather, it is the multiple resistances and diffuse networks of power and resistances that would make revolution possible. However, Foucault has not yet shown how this would actually come about.

This points to one of the central weaknesses in Foucault's work. He seems to feel negatively about the working of disciplinary power in modern society, and detects a general increase in disciplinary coercion. While Foucault seems to regard these historical forms of power as potentially alterable, he does not provide a coherent account of what an alternative would look like, or how the kind of power he characterizes could be overcome.

Conclusions

In spite of these limitations, Foucault's conceptualization of power seems useful for analyzing power in the practices of home economists. The concepts of micropowers and normalization, and the way in which knowledge and power are linked in Foucault's work show features of the requirements laid out above for a framework for studying the role of home

economics in social reproduction. Foucault views knowledge in social terms. For Foucault, knowledge relations and power relations are distinct, yet interrelated. By focusing on micropowers, Foucault draws attention to the specifics of particular relations involving intellectual activity, without reducing them simply to instances of the exercise of power by the state, the dominant class, or economic forces. He leaves room for recognizing contradictions in power relations in society, opening up for closer examination relations that are often simply labeled examples of state control or class hegemony.

Chapter Five

EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS OF THE DISCOURSE OF HOMEMAKING

In the previous chapter it was proposed that discursive analysis might contribute to an understanding of home economics in terms of social reproduction. This chapter explores the usefulness of such an approach. It is suggested that a discourse of homemaking developed in the United States of America during the nineteenth century, and that home economics played a key role in its development and functioning. The analysis of the discourse is in two parts. First the discourse of homemaking is reconstructed in broad outline, by identifying key aspects of four dimensions, namely the objects created, statements made, concepts used, and theoretical strategies adopted in the discourse. Further analysis is in terms of the power relations of which home economics was a part, as these relations contributed to, transformed, and reproduced the sexual division of labor and the division between intellectual and manual labor. The chapter concludes with reflections on the kinds of power relations created and maintained through the activities of home economists in the

discourse of homemaking, and on the fruitfulness of discursive analysis as an approach to understanding the role of home economics in social reproduction.

While the chapter includes reflections on these matters, its purpose is not principally to establish the existence of the discourse of homemaking or to defend the claim that it actually exists. Neither does it aim to establish within a particular historical period the actual power relations in which home economists were involved. Rather the aim is to explore the contribution discursive analysis could make to the study of such power relations.

For the exploratory analysis, examples were drawn from a range of home economics literature sources. With a few exceptions, all the works consulted were published between 1898 and 1930. During that period, the foundations of the new profession of home economics were laid. The Proceedings of the ten Lake Placid Conferences (1899-1908) were examined. Several early volumes of the Journal of Home Economics, the publication of the American Home Economics Association, organized in 1909, also were examined. In addition, textbooks, manuals, and other books by home economists were scrutinized.

The Discourse of Homemaking

This section draws theoretical concepts from the work of Foucault, and examples from the home economics literature to begin to outline the discourse of homemaking. For the purposes of this study it is assumed that written texts in home economics are not merely reports of events or ideas, but actually a part of a discursive practice, which creates objects, produces particular statements, forms concepts, and chooses distinct theoretical strategies. Examples from the home economics literature serve to indicate the range and kinds of objects, statements, concepts and theoretical strategies that make up the discourse.

Objects

Among the objects of the discourse of homemaking are the home, homemaking and the homemaker, and women's ignorence. The first designation of these objects probably occurred in social groups which had specific expectations and concerns regarding the sexual division of labor. Such groups would be families, the church, and schools, for example. As the following examples from the home economics literature show, home economists assumed the authority to talk about these matters. Each of the objects identified above are briefly discussed:

The home The discourse focuses on the home as an object with characteristic features. For example, it defines the ideal home as the place, "where the adult worker is rested and refreshed, where the child is prepared for effective

citizenship and where hospitality may exert its cheering and refining influence" (Abel, 1903, p. 29).

> The home should be considered the place where are to be developed and conveyed the precious qualities which are so vital to the continuity of the race and the progress of human society and civilization. Those factors which are of a more material or physical nature, such as shelter, food, dress and personal health, are to be estimated in their relation to mind, character and effective conduct (Wood, 1902, p. 27).

The home is called upon to give up its former independence, and to accept its dependence on other institutions.

> No longer is the home an independent unit where the family may do as it chooses; rather it is a demonstration that the sum total of all family activities, the final resultant of the family life, is an acceptable share in the larger community life (Hickok, 1916, p. 441).

While the home is a part of society it must retain its uniqueness, as the following statement points out:

> The individual home is unspeakably precious, it has even been called indispensible to the continued integrity of a nation . . . (Abel, 1903, p.29).

It must also fulfill the functions society assigns to it. It is to be "the retreat from outside annoyances" and "a place to recreate ourselves for labor" (Abel, 1927, p. 12).

Homemaking and the homemaker The discourse identifies homemaking as women's primary vocation. It makes a distinction between homemaking and housekeeping, and defines in some detail what homemaking is, and should be. As the analysis of statements, concepts, and theoretical strategies will

show, the discourse develops a comprehensive language which gives specific content to homemaking, and sets standards for it. Here a few examples must suffice to support the claim that homemaking is an object in the discourse.

Homemaking is woman's primary vocation:

> . . . of all the activities in which a woman may be engaged. . . , she is best adapted to be employed in the maintenance of her home -- this is the function for which by nature she is constituted, which is capable of giving her the largest measure of happiness in return, which is the field in which she can be of the greatest service in the community, aad (sic) which has possibilities for culture beyond that of any other employment (Warbasse, 1911, p. 59).

Homemaking is a task particularly suited to women. Richards (1899) states, for example, that "women take kindly to the regular systematic oversight which this home economics demands, if once they see the value of it" (p. 111).

The woman is the head of the household, its manager, "the centre of [the] centre" (Spencer, 1911, p. 51), the "centralized authority which has the power to regulate the family behavior as regards social affairs" (Hickok, 1916, p. 446).

The content of homemaking was undergoing change. Richards (1899) states,

> Housekeeping no longer means washing dishes, scrubbing floors, making soap and candles; it means spending a given amount of money for a great variety of ready-prepared articles and so using the commodities as to produce the greatest satisfaction and the best possible <u>mental</u>, <u>moral</u>, and <u>physical</u> results (p. 103). (Emphasis added.)

Homemaking includes, according to the discourse, providing good food, pure air, space and time for recreation, and protection from disease; cultivating taste, a sense of beauty, and culture; teaching morality; and developing "rational sociability," meaning healthy forms of recreation (Lake Placid Conferences on Home Economics, 1905, p. 85).

Women's ignorance The discourse makes "women's ignorance" into an object with specific features. Ignorance is related to women's lack of scientific training, the absence of homemaking standards, women's unwillingness to accept what science has to offer, and their tendency to cling to outdated practices.

The following references to women's ignorance indicate the development of this perspective:

> It is the present duty of the economist to magnify the office of the wealth-expender, to accompany her to the very threshold of the home, that he may point out with untiring vigilance its woful (sic) defects, its emptiness caused not so much by lack of income as by lack of knowledge of how to spend it wisely (Edward Devine, quoted in Richards, 1899, p. 100).

> Women enter this vocation (i.e. homemaking) with various degrees of skill and efficiency which must be supplemented by training if they are to carry on the work of the home in such a way that the ideals of our family life are to be preserved and we are to rear a happy, healthy American people (Richardson, 1920, p. 300).

In her account of the Lake Placid Conferences on Home Economics, Richards (1908) states:

> 10 years ago one of the crying needs of the country as seen by some students of social tendencies was the appreciation of what science might do for the housewife in her daily home keeping, in making her work

> both easier and more efficient. But the obstacle seemed to be in the woman herself. She had no faith in the promises held out to her by the fanatical scientist. . . . How could she be induced to look with serious eyes upon the new century bearing down on her with irresistible power? (p. 20).

How the discourse talks about these objects is shown below by considering the statements that are made, concepts that are developed, and strategies that are chosen in the discourse.

Statements

The formation of statements is guided by rules concerning the authority of the subject who makes the statement, the site from which it is made, and the position or situation of the subject who makes the statement. It would seem that home economists sought to gain the authority to make statements about the home and homemaking, for example, through appeals to women's ignorance and lack of training.

The kind of statement, and its authority, are also influenced by the site from which the statement is made. The university, the school, one's own home, or the laboratory would be sites of a homemaking discourse. The sites from which statements are made could shift. (It might be, for example, that the authority of one's statement could change with a shift from merely giving advice out of one's own experience, speaking from one's own home, to speaking out of the university with its hierarchical arrangements, and general status as a source of knowledge in society.

The statements made by home economists reflect their aspiration to develop new norms and standards for homemaking, to redefine it in scientific and businesslike terms, to be recognized as authorities, to provide training and advice, and thus, generally, to become the accepted mediators between the family and other institutions, for example, business and the state.

The discourse includes a wide variety of statements regarding the crisis in home and family life, the new standards applicable to homemaking, and women's ignorance and need for assistance and training. Some examples follow.

The discourse includes statements about change and continuity in the family. At first glance, these statements seem to contradict one another. They are, nevertheless, all a part of the discourse.

There are statements that emphasize the timelessness of the family and the home and their enduring, essential characteristics.

The family is regarded as a normal social institution:

> Of all normal social relations the most important is that which exists between a man and a woman and their own children, what we call the true family group. It has been the soul and center of early settlements and the solid foundation of civilized states (Abel, 1927, p. 10).

The discourse stresses unity and harmony of interest as defining characteristics of the normal family. Thus, for example, Richards (1911) states,

> the civilization of the past has been developed, we believe, through the family home, the bond of mutual interest between parent and child, grandparent and grandchild, brother and sister, which makes cooperation under one roof possible (p. 117).

These apparently timeless characteristics are given specific historical content. For example, for Vincent (1908) the essential characteristics of the family are similar to those Richards identifies, namely,

> a unity of thought and sentiment which binds adults and young into a common life and inspires a common loyalty. It is only in such intimacy that the highest types of personality can be fostered (p. 155).

Yet Vincent continues with the statement: "Only as this higher unity replaces the earlier economic unity can the family render efficient social service" (Vincent, 1908, p. 155). Thus he seems to regard unity and harmony of interest not as timeless characteristics, but specific to a particular historical period.

On the other hand, the discourse includes statements that give the appearance that historically-specific characteristics of family life under industrial conditions have always been essential aspects of life. Thus it talks about the family's role in relation to the market place as if this role had remained constant throughout history. For example, the home is said to be the place,

> where the adult worker is rested and refreshed, where the child is prepared for effective citizenship and where hospitality may exert its cheering and refining influence (Abel, 1903, p. 29).

Even more explicitly, the discourse states that the

ideal home

> has provided a place of rest and recuperation after labor and of preparation for future work, both the preparation of the adult for the work of the coming day and also the long preparation of the child for future social service (Lake Placid Conferences on Home Economics, 1905, p. 84).

Finally, it points out counterproductive elements of traditional family life, and seeks to eliminate them. For example, traditional economic unity must be replaced with a "higher unity" of thought and sentiment (Vincent, 1908, p.155), individualism must be abandoned, and idiosyncratic and haphazard ways of doing housework must be abandoned in favor of the scientific approach.

For example, Richards (1899) states,

> "Children are workers in preparation, are future citizens. The state cannot afford to allow them to grow up inefficient." Therefore public welfare demands that the home life shall be governed by the best knowledge which science has been able to gather with reference to health and efficiency (pp. 25-26).

A number of other examples of such statements indicating the need for changes in homemaking and the family follow.

> The housewife needs access to expert advice in order to adjust to modern conditions and standards (Abel, 1927, p. 103).

> Women enter this vocation (i.e.homemaking) with various degrees of skill and efficiency which must be supplemented by training if they are to carry on the work of the home in such a way that the ideals of our family life are to be preserved and we are to rear a happy, healthy American people (Richardson, 1920, p. 300).

Concepts

The discourse of homemaking develops a set of concepts that appeal to nature, biology, and tradition to characterize home and family, homemaking and women's roles.

The family is a "normal" social institution as Abel's (1927) statement cited previously indicates:

> Of all normal social relations the most important is that which exists between a man and a woman and their own children, what we call the true family group. It has been the soul and center of early settlements and the solid foundation of civilized states (p. 10) (Emphasis added).

The normal family of the discourse is monogamic and heterosexual, constituted through legal marriage between two partners, and it includes children (Henderson, 1902; Howard, 1911).

Henderson (1902) claims that "convictions which create and maintain the monogamic family have become innate in our modern civilization" (p. 63).

Similar evolutionary and biological metaphors are used in the following statements:

The home is "the place in which social and domestic instincts are cultivated, where there may be mutual understanding and sympathy in success or in failure" (Abel, 1927, p. 12) (Emphasis added).

> what is represented by the term "home" is the germ of Anglo-Saxon civilization, the unit of social progress . . . the home is the nursery of the citizen . . . no subject can be of greater importance than a discussion of the standards involved in home life (Richards, 1899, p. 5) (Emphasis added).

> The home should be considered the place where are to be developed and conveyed the precious qualities which are so vital to the continuity of the race and the progress of human society and civilization (Wood, 1902, p. 27).

Women are said to be by nature adapted to homemaking, and the division of labor between men and women is thought to be rooted in biology.

Thus, women and men have different places in the "evolution of civilization," and the "manifest destiny of women" is "to be the mother of children and the creator of the home" (West, 1920, p. 343). Richards (1899) states,

> Women take kindly to the regular systematic oversight which this home economics demands, if once they see the value of it (p. 111).

Another concept used to characterize the family's role in society and women's role in homemaking, is that of specialization.

The family is said to have delegated certain tasks to other institutions. It gives up much of its educational task to the school (Lake Placid Conferences on Home Economics, 1905) and its productive functions to the factory. It is repeatedly stated that the home has become "a place of consumption, not of production" (Richards, 1899, p. 23).

The specialization characteristic of the market place is said to carry over into the family:

> The increasing pressure for specialization in all kinds of work gives new meaning to the demand that the man of the family, at least that family in which there are young children, shall be able to concentrate on the earning of the money income, and that the woman shall be free for her important duties in

> the center of home life, of choosing, adjusting, dispensing, teaching, and there making in the many other ways . . . her necessary contribution to the income (Abel, 1927, p. 243).

The concept of specialization could be seen as a "bridge" between the set of concepts based on organic metaphors and a set of concepts that reflect the influence of economic rationality. Examples of such concepts employed in the discourse are management, scientific management, expertise, and professionalism. The following statements employ such concepts.

The home is a business, it should be run with "far sighted business sense" (Richards, 1899, p. 50); and studied like a business unit (Kinley, 1911).

Given its similarity to business, successful family life is at times defined in businesslike terms -- it requires order, a division of labor understood and accepted by all family members, and systematization (Terrill, 1907). In contrast, irregularity, for example in mealtimes, is considered a sign of problems in a family (Hyams, 1900).

Management is a key concept in the discourse. According to Gross and Crandall (1963) the concept was first introduced by Maria Parloa, in her First Principles of Home Management and Cookery (1880), but it is already present in Beecher's Treatise on Domestic Economy (1852, first published in 1841) in which she emphasizes as the key to sound housekeeping, "a habit of system and order" (p.157).

Homemaking is characterized in managerial terms. Managerial statements include, "It is the work of the housewife to initiate, plan and direct the business of the house" (Terrill, 1907, p.6). And, the woman is "manager of the house and the buyer of nearly all the commodities that are consumed by the household" (Abel, 1927, p. 43).

Homemaking further requires making a distinction between "essentials and non-essentials of housekeeping," economizing strength and time, and striving for efficiency (Wade, 1901).

Scientific management principles are considered applicable to the household: "All of the productive processes in the home are facilitated by the application of the principles of scientific management" (Hickok, 1916, p. 445).

Concepts like "Standardized Operations," "Standard Conditions," "Dispatching," "Scheduling," and "Efficiency Reward" are adopted from scientific management and applied to homemaking (Frederick, 1923).

With the introduction of scientific management, the general concept of management takes on a different meaning:

> what separates the new "Scientific Management" from the old methods by a sharp dividing line which all must recognize is the application of the true laboratory method. Each complex question is separated into its parts and then each part is studied by itself with the help of all known sciences (Journal of Home Economics, 1911a, p. 195).

Women's roles are described in terms that reflect a business orientation. For example, the homemaker is called

"Director of Consumption" (Journal of Home Economics, 1916c, p. 372). She is a "Purchasing Agent," "Producer of Finished Goods," "Conserver of Health," and "Home Accountant," as well as "Regulator of Social Activities," "Teacher of Children," and "Creator of Home Atmosphere" (Hickok, 1916, pp. 444-447).

Homemaking is also defined in terms of professionalism by comparing it with other professions. Wood (1926) wants homemaking to be a profession that would render "a specialized and superior service" (p. 66). To accomplish this goal, women should receive standardized training.

Theoretical Strategies

The theoretical strategies chosen in the discourse of homemaking reflect a transition from an orientation to homemaking as a craft, practiced more or less according to personal preference and tradition, to a science, practiced according to scientific principles and standards developed by scientists and professionals.

The discourse reflects two themes: The need for science and a scientific approach to homemaking, and the need for education and training.

Thus, Catherine Beecher (1852) argues that Domestic Economy should become a science:

> This should be done because it can be properly and systematically taught (not practically, but as a science), as much so as political economy or moral science, or any other branch of study; because it embraces knowledge, which will be needed by young women at all times and in all places; because this science

> can never be properly taught until it is made a branch of study; and because this method will secure a dignity and importance in the estimation of young girls, which can never be accorded while they perceive their teachers and parents practically attaching more value to every other department of science than this (p. 6).

Home economists set themselves the task to develop a body of scientific knowledge regarding the home and homemaking. For example, Goodrich (1902) calls for developing a "true science" of home economics, increasing the body of exact knowledge, classifying what has been collected, and developing a laboratory for studying home and social economics. She concludes, "There must be increased knowledge in the line of scientific investigation, of accurate observation, of practical application and demonstration" (p. 37).

To develop a scientific approach to homemaking the homemaker needs formal training by the professionals. Thus scientific study is not to be limited to the professional. Terrill (1907) writes,

> The fullest, most completely rounded education is none too good for one who is called upon to use and impart so varied information as is the housewife. The study of science is especially practical for one who aspires to master all the things that come within the range of her work (p. 6).

The discourse develops abstract systems to analyze and classify household tasks (Wood, Lindquist and Studley, 1932), and introduces record-keeping systems, budgeting, and accounting procedures into the family (Bradford, 1921).

Homemaking involves the application of scientific

knowledge. It requires using scientific methods, and managing family life according to business principles. To be a successful homemaker, a woman must implement standards for housekeeping that are based on scientific knowledge.

In the following sections theoretical strategies used are further elaborated in the process of analyzing the power relations in the discourse.

Power Relations in the Discourse

The dimensions of the discourse indicate the range and kinds of objects, statements, concepts and strategies that are a part of the discourse of homemaking. In the following sections the discourse will be analyzed to explore the kinds of power relations that seem to be at work in and through the discourse of homemaking. Following Foucault's suggestion that discursive analysis should start with specific power relations, and subsequently move to studying the interaction of such local power relations with other instances of the exercise of power, a kind of "ascending" analysis of power relations is attempted.

The analysis seeks to show that distinctive power relations operate in home economics. It demonstrates how discursive analysis permits the identification of specific power relations, and, to some extent, the interrelation of those power relations. The analysis is carried out in several stages. First, specific aspects of the attempt to give new content to homemaking are identified. The cognitive

strategies used have the potential to give rise to relations of relative autonomy and dependence between professionals and homemakers. Such relations of relative autonomy and dependence involve power. They are discussed as instances of normalization, and linked to the intensification of the division between intellectual and manual labor.

Secondly, examples of the efforts to define homemaking as women's primary vocation are identified. Again, these show that power relations of specific kinds are involved in the discourse. Here the focus is on how the activities of home economists could have shaped and reinforced the sexual division of labor.

Thirdly, the analysis seeks to show that the power relations existing in the sexual division of labor and in the division between intellectual and manual labor can be interrelated.

Finally, the analysis develops evidence that the power relations identified in the previous stages intersect and overlap with, and contribute to, other power relations in society, such as economic relations and the exercise of state power. The section also includes some observations about the possible role of home economics in social reproduction, based on the exploratory discursive analysis.

New Content for Homemaking

Four aspects of the attempt to give new content to homemaking are identified here. In the first place, criticism of homemaking practices includes a cognitive dimension:

women's knowledge about homemaking is insufficient because it lacks scientific rigor. Secondly, an elaborate new language of homemaking is introduced. Homemaking is defined as something that requires particular kinds of abstract cognitive strategies. Furthermore, norms and standards for homemaking are developed on the basis of science. And, finally, homemaking, to be done successfully, requires training. Examples from the home economics literature are given to illustrate the kinds of statements made regarding each of these aspects. The micropower relations involved are identified, and discussed in terms of normalization and the intensification of the division between intellectual and manual labor.

The discourse calls into question the adequacy of traditional ways of doing housework. Traditional practices are said to be based on inadequate, outdated and inaccurate knowledge on the part of women. The discourse maintains that the specific, practical knowledge that women use in their own homes is not sufficient. Homemaking requires the application of scientific principles. Thus, women's ignorance in matters of homemaking is defined in terms of their lack of scientific knowledge. To overcome ignorance, there is a general call for training and scientific investigation regarding all aspects of homemaking.

The discourse also develops a comprehensive new language of homemaking, based on the authority of science. Thus it defines homemaking as an activity that involves specific, abstract cognitive strategies. Home economists took upon

themselves the task of developing the new science of homemaking. Such a task required systematizing existing knowledge, conducting research directly related to the household, and applying research findings from other disciplines to the problems of the home.

The discourse calls for putting homemaking on a scientific basis. For example, as indicated on page 99, Catherine Beecher (1852) argues that Domestic Economy should become a science.

In a similar manner, Goodrich (1902) calls for developing a "true science" of home economics, increasing the body of exact knowledge, classifying what has been collected, and developing a laboratory for studying home and social economics.

Richards (1911) states,

> It is universally conceded today . . . that home keeping under modern conditions requires a knowledge of these conditions and a power of control of persons and machines only obtained through education or through bitter experience, and that education is the less costly (p. 123).

She concludes, "Household engineering is the great need for material welfare, and social engineering for moral and ethical wellbeing" (p. 124).

Pattison (1915) also shares the conviction that science is applicable to homemaking. She asks, "And how should the home be run?" and then answers,

> Science has told us in almost every detail. It is no longer an imitation standard of the way others do it, but an original output, based upon research and standard practice instructions. Every theory and working

> idea that is developed in the world at large, is available for the home, for every one of these goes from, and comes back into some home (pp. 165-166).

All aspects of homemaking are to be mastered by science, as the following statements show:

> Cleanliness should be scientifically understood by those responsible for the order of homes and food. This subject until recently was on a rule-of-thumb basis; but the science of bacteriology has defined just what cleanliness is and placed it within the realms of accuracy. Cleanliness has both an hygienic and an esthetic side. Its practical significance should be elucidated (Warbasse, 1911, p. 53).

> A knowledge of chemistry is necessary to an understanding of food composition, of cooking, cleaning, etc. For the mother, modern psychology is an indispensable study, if she is to understand her child and wisely guide its development (Terrill, 1907, pp.6-7).

The scientific management movement in home economics exemplifies the efforts to put homemaking on a scientific basis. Household efficiency experts, such as Frederick (1923), did not base their work on research conducted in the home. Rather, they adapted principles of scientific management, developed in industry, to the household. They wrote several books on the subject of household management, in which they introduced an elaborate vocabulary and detailed instructions on how to run a household along scientific lines. Thus, in Household Engineering (1923), one of the first full-length books on the subject of scientific management in the home, Frederick introduces the housewife to the Principles of Scientific Management, and tells how to apply them in the home. For the first time, concepts like "Standardized Operations," "Standard Conditions," "Dispatching," "Scheduling," and "Efficiency Reward" are used to talk about

housework.

Frederick (1923) also gives advice about "The Labor-Saving Kitchen." All tasks are broken down into steps, kitchens are redesigned and time studies introduced to reduce the time and energy used in doing daily household chores. The housewife is told to draw up daily, weekly, and monthly work schedules, since, "Standardized work anywhere relaxes the nervous strain" (p. 85). All aspects of housework should come under the sway of efficiency principles: house cleaning, food planning and preparation, laundry work, family finances, and purchasing.

The introduction of scientific management into the household was not the first or the only attempt to systematize housework and put it on a scientific basis. The beginning of the analysis and systematizing of household work may well be traced to Catharine Beecher (1852), who emphasized system and order in her writings.

As a subject for study, the profession of homemaking could be systematized using an esoteric language. The American School of Home Economics divided it into the following subjects for its correspondence courses (Le Bosquet, 1904):

> Chemistry of the Household
> Household Bacteriology
> House Sanitation
> Foods and Dietetics
> Principles of Cookery
> The house -- its plan, decoration, and care
> Personal Hygiene
> Home Care of the Sick
> Textiles and Clothing
> Study of Child Life
> Care of Children (pp. 53-54).

Wood, Lindquist and Studley (1932) also analyze the responsibilities of the homemaker and classify them in an elaborate chart. Responsibilities are divided into, "Those involving manipulative skills," and "Those involving managerial abilities." Under the former heading are included, among other tasks, food preparation and service, clothing construction and repair, and care of children. Each task is broken down further into component parts. For example, childcare involves bathing, dressing, and feeding; managerial tasks include such responsibilities as "Purchasing and Business Management," and "Direction of household operation" with its components -- "efficient oversight of plant, "Scheduling and dispatching of work," and "Efficient oversight of workers."

Mary Pattison devotes a chapter of her book, Principles of Domestic Engineering (1915) to "Time and Motion Study." She gives detailed instructions on how to conduct such studies in one's own home. Pattison acknowledges that each completed task will be different for each individual household, but "the separate parts, or standard units of these tasks, is (sic) the same" (p. 107).

Another aspect of the analysis and systematizing of housework is the development of elaborate record keeping systems. The promotion of such systems usually accompanies references to homemaking as a business operation. Thus, for example, Bradford (1921) states,

> The business of housekeeping needs its records, not only those dealing directly with finances. . . , but those showing such facts as the quantities of staple supplies bought each season and the amount remaining on hand (p. 175).

Bradford goes on to provide an elaborate list of subjects to include in a classification of household records, and a system resembling that of an office, of using index cards to keep records.

In a similar manner, Carruth (1920) suggests using an extensive card-filing system in conjunction with the checkbook to put housekeeping on a businesslike basis. She states,

> Why not, then, at least begin to put up a businesslike appearance by using them both? And using them as a part of a "system of household accounting" certainly has the true ring of administrative efficiency! (p. 37).

Terrill (1907) provides classification systems for household expenditures. She divides household expenditures into Rent, Operating Expenses, Food, Clothing, and Higher Life, and suggests a classification system for household expenses (taken from Alcott Stockwell's "The Keeping of Household Accounts" in the April, May, and June 1904 issues of The Home Science Magazine).

Though the author stresses that the classifications are only suggestions, and that they should not be slavishly followed, but rather adapted to suit one's own particular needs, such systems nevertheless suggest a way of life -- one that includes certain kinds of expenditures -- as

normal. The classification Terrill (1907) gives reads as follows:

1. Housekeeping
   a. Provisions
   b. Ice
   c. Fuel
   d. Rent
   e. Dometic (sic) Service
   f. Miscellaneous

2. House-furnishing
   a. General (including all furniture)
   b. Kitchen and Dining-Room

3. Library Supplies
   a. Books and Periodicals
   b. Stationery and Postage

4. Miscellaneous
   a. Sundries (expressage, flower for house, thread, etc.)
   b. Other (fire insurance, moving, telephone service, etc.)

5. Gifts (p. 58)

Terrill (1907) gives a similar classification system for personal expenses (pp. 58-59).

Budgeting and record keeping introduce business principles into the household. These procedures were to be on a scientific basis. An example of the effort to give scientific weight to budgeting schemes is Engel's laws on the tendencies in the changes of expenditures in different categories of the budget. Richards (1899), Terrill (1907), and Abel (1927) quote these laws. They read as follows (Terrill, 1907):

> 1. The proportion between expenditure and nutriment grows in geometric progression in adverse ration to well-being; in other words, the higher the income, the smaller is the per cent of cost of subsistance.

2. Clothing assumes and keeps a distinctly constant proportion in the whole.
3. Lodging, warming and lighting have an invariable proportion whatever the income.
4. The more the income increases the greater is the proportion of the different expenses which express the degree of well-being (p. 19).

The introduction of scientific management principles and its vocabulary, other efforts to systematize home making, and the introduction of elaborate record keeping and budgeting systems into the home are all instances of defining homemaking as an activity that requires particular abstract cognitive strategies. Another aspect of the development of new content for homemaking is the effort to determine norms and standards on the basis of science. The budget guidelines and record keeping systems introduced above are instances of the development of norms and standards for homemaking. Thus, the discourse suggests that expenditures should be classified in order to facilitate comparison of a large number of families "studying the avenues of expense to determine in what way the maximum of health, physical, mental and moral is reached" (Terrill, 1907, p. 14). Some additional examples can be cited.

Home economics assumed responsibility for setting standards and developing norms. Hunt (1910) sees "domestic science as a means of setting standards and of helping every member of the community to live up to them. . ." (p. 270).

Following a similar line of reasoning, Abel (1903) states that home economics,

> stands for the application to life in the home of the results of exact knowledge in many fields; it seeks to establish standards in hygienic living, to decide what is the cleanly and orderly and beautiful house, what is healthful in dress and in food; to find, in short, what are the material conditions that afford the proper setting for ideal home life . . . (p. 29).

An editorial in the Journal of Home Economics (1911a) states:

> It is idle to say that the average housewife without special training for the task can undertake this establishment of standards and comparative costs; it is her part to fill out intelligently schedules that should be presented to her by the expert. The home should boldly call for help from those who study labor conditions in far less important fields (p. 197).

Another example of setting standards is given in Hyams' description (1900) of the work of the Louisa M. Alcott clubs in Boston. She argues that it is the duty of "cultured men and women" to help the poor, by arousing "within these people a desire for right living." This is to be done by training young children in the preparation of food, dish washing, table setting and serving, sweeping and dusting, as well as the "proper use of knife and fork." She concludes,

> While it may be impossible for them at present, owing to poverty stricken conditions, to make practical use of all they learn, we are teaching for the future of the world, and when the opportunity does present itself they will be able to embrace it intelligently (p. 17).

In a paper presented some years later (1905) Hyams summarizes the purpose of the work as follows:

> The endeavor is always to connect actual conditions with others more desirable, and, whenever necessary, to raise the ideal by such subtle steps as to avoid offense; to acquaint the child with sanitary, esthetic and economic principles in detailed relations with the finish, furnishings, and care of her own home (p. 60).

Successful homemaking is thus redefined according to standards set by the experts. One is to measure one's achievements according to their standards.

Finally, redefinition of homemaking in terms of science and according to principles of efficiency helps to create a demand for training. Homemaking is defined as a vocation that requires training, and to be a successful homemaker, one should undergo training. The call for women to be educated for homemaking is sounded repeatedly:

> Women enter this vocation (i.e. homemaking) with various degrees of skill and efficiency which must be supplemented by training if they are to carry on the work of the home in such a way that the ideals of our family life are to be preserved and we are to rear a happy, healthy American people (Richardson, 1920, p. 300).
>
> The woman must be trained for her business (Hickok, 1916, p. 442).
>
> The housewife needs expert teachers in her own home, and help in studying out her conditions (Journal of Home Economics, 1911a, p. 197).
>
> The housewife needs access to expert advice in order to adjust to modern conditions and standards (Abel, 1927, p. 103).

Wood (1926) argues that standardized training will contribute to making homemaking a profession which delivers specialized and superior services. She continues,

> Like other occupations, too, there must be secured a standard of training for homemaking in the future by which members of the profession may measure. . . . It does not necessarily mean that every homemaker will be equally well trained any more than that every doctor or lawyer is, but rather that there will be certain minimum standards which every professionally-minded homemaker will strive to attain (p. 67).

Training for homemaking is of a particular kind, namely

scientific training. One author writes,

> The fullest, most completely rounded education is none too good for one who is called upon to use and impart so varied information as is the housewife. The study of science is especially practical for one who aspires to master all the things that come within the range of her work. A knowledge of chemistry is necessary to an understanding of food composition, of cooking, cleaning, etc. For the mother, modern psychology is an indispensable study, if she is to understand her child and wisely guide its development (Terrill, 1907, pp. 6-7).

Efforts to develop new content for homemaking involve relations of power, based on cognitive strategies. Particular kinds of micropower relations develop between professionals and homemakers, it would seem, where traditional knowledge is undermined, and where a new language of homemaking is adopted. The standards of health, efficiency, cleanliness, and thrift set by the experts also create micropower relations. To the extent that women internalize those standards, and strive to maintain them, power is at work. Home economists stated explicitly that women should internalize the language of the discourse. For example, Richards (1911) was of the opinion that women should accept technological progress, and believe what the experts told them.

According to Hunt (1959) Richards believed that,

> women had to develop an attitude of mind which would lead them to develop an interest in science and to call in the help of experts with questions like "Can I do better than I am doing?", "Is there any device which I might use?" "Is my food the best possible?", "Have I chosen the right colors and the best materials for clothing?", "Am I making the best use of my time?" (p. 161).

These kinds of relations established through the discourse can be understood in terms of normalization. To the extent that women internalize the new language of scientific homemaking, accept the standards set by home economists, and accept their authority, these relations could contribute to the intensification of the division between intellectual and manual labor.

Homemaking as Women's Primary Vocation

In a number of ways the discourse seeks to define homemaking as women's primary vocation. Previously (Chapter I, pp. 15-18) the sexual division of labor was defined in terms of relations of power. Relations of relative autonomy and dependence between men and women were defined in terms of patterns of distinction, specialization, interdependence, exclusion, restriction, and isolation. Examples from the home economics literature indicate how such patterns were created or reinforced through the discourse of homemaking. It is argued that this is one way in which the discourse contributes to the sexual division of labor.

The discourse designates homemaking as the vocation in which women specialize in an increasingly interdependent world. In the language of the discourse the family has become a specialized unit which focuses on socialization and consumption. The family is said to have given up much of its educational function to other institutions (Lake Placid Conferences on Home Economics, 1905). It also "gives up" its

productive functions. The home becomes "a place of consumption, not of production" (Richards, 1899, p. 23). Women's specialization corresponds to the specialization of the family in society rather than to the diversification that marks men's jobs in the market place. In a society increasingly marked by greater specialization on the basis of skill and training, gender remains the basis of women's specialization.

The notion of specialization is evident in the concepts used to define women's role in the family. In the discourse, the wife and mother is the center of the family. She rules the home (Abel, 1911). Or, as Spencer (1911) states,

> And women are in the storm centre of this profound reorganization of the family and of household labor. They must be, for they are the centre of this centre (p. 51).

Because the woman is the head of the household, successful family life is her responsibility. An attitude of acceptance of her part in the division of labor in the family, and the ability to carry out her functions -- particularly the function of adding to the income through management and thrift, are "probably the most important of all the factors in successful family life" (Abel, 1927, p. 243).

The importance and dignity of homemaking are impressed upon women:

> a woman, who has charge of a large household, should regard her duties as dignified, important, and difficult (Beecher, 1852, p. 150).

> every woman should imbibe, from early youth, the impression, that she is training for the discharge of the most important, the most difficult, and the most sacred and interesting duties that can possibly employ the highest intellect (Beecher, 1852, p. 157).
>
> She who is the mother and housekeeper in a large family is the sovereign of an empire, demanding more varied cares and involving more difficult duties, than are really exacted of her who wears a crown and professedly regulates the interests of the greatest nation on earth (Beecher & Stowe, 1975, p. 222).

The homemaker is also the manager of the household. The home is established as a distinct sphere, and women are associated with that sphere. The discourse assigns to women a measure of autonomy within the domestic sphere.

Women's specialization in homemaking and their association with the home involve instances of separation, restriction and exclusion. It separates women and men into different categories. This is stated in a variety of ways in the discourse. For example, West (1920) states that women and men have different places in the "evolution of civilization" (p. 243). In his introduction to a Manual compiled by Van Rensselaer, Rose and Canon (1921), Liberty Hyde Bailey states, "The woman's work and the man's work together make the welfare of any people secure" (p. v).

Such specialization not only separates women from men, it also separates women from one another, because homemaking continues to take place in isolated houses.

Relative to men, women are restricted to certain environments, e.g. the home, and the neighborhood, and careers

associated with homemaking and mothering, such as teaching and nursing.

The discourse includes such statements as the following:

> She does her part in life best when she stays at home and does her own work. . . (Wade, 1901, p. 102).
>
> . . . of all the activities in which a woman may be engaged. . . , she is best adapted to be employed in the maintenance of her home -- this is the function for which by nature she is constituted, which is capable of giving her the largest measure of happiness in return, which is the field in which she can be of the greatest service in the community, aad (sic) which has possiblities for culture beyond that of any other employment (Warbasse, 1911, p. 59).

Women also are restricted to certain kinds of relations with the market, namely as buyers, or spenders of the income (Abel, 1927, Terrill, 1907). Women's political role is restricted to the protection of their domain -- the home. Thus for example, the discourse calls upon middle class women to engage in a "public work for the home," that is, working for the enactment of laws to ensure pure air, clean water, and unadulterated food.

Hunt (1907) states,

> intelligent educated women are entering upon public work, not as a substitute for that work which is done in the interest of home life, but as a necessary means under present conditions of realizing those ideals for which the home stands (p. 12).
>
> It is not because women think that they need other work than that for the home that they have entered upon these new forms of activity, but because they see that under present conditions they can not without adding public to private work accomplish the tasks which always have been theirs and always will be (p. 15).

Similarly, Buell (1907) states

> Every question which makes for the uplift of the individual, physically, mentally, morally and spiritually, every question of public betterment, we now include as necessary factors in making the successful home. We have reacht (sic) an altruistic plane where we do not ask is this particular effort going to benefit your home or mine? If it benefits any home, it is a part of our responsibility (p. 93).

Thus women's role as homemaker is given a kind of moral dimension. Women begin to see that they have influence outside their own homes:

> She is gaining an understanding that no home prospers or perishes to itself alone; that the doors of all homes open on the highway of a common happiness, and that economic values are human values (Lathrop, 1916, p. 8).

While this moral responsibility seems to give women a wider social role, it still restricts them to matters that pertain to the household. Such restriction could mean that women are excluded from most professions, managerial positions in business enterprises and political leadership. For example, to the extent that women internalize the language of the discourse, such exclusion and restriction would seem inevitable, even natural to them.

The instances of separation and specialization, and patterns of restriction, isolation, and exclusion serve to uphold and intensify gender distinctions and give rise to relations of relative autonomy and dependence between men and women.

The discourse claims that while clearly distinct, men's work and women's work are complementary and of equal worth,

as Bailey's statement cited on p. 116 suggests. However, the language of complementarity and equality obscures the fact that women's specialization in consumption increases her economic vulnerability, and makes her more dependent on her husband's income.

To establish homemaking as an important and satisfying task the discourse develops a set of concepts and practices that maintain the characteristics of men's work as the norm. Thus it reinforces the superiority of men's work over women's work. This attitude is reflected, for example, in the description Frederick (1923) gives of her introduction to scientific management by her husband and other efficiency engineers. She states,

> In every instance I saw how these efficiency principles were saving time, and effort, and money, wherever applied. The more I saw and read, the more certain I felt that they could save time and effort and money in my business -- the home (p. 14).

In other words, homemaking would have status when it is done the way men do their work, using the principles of science and business.

The home economic literature illustrates how the discourse reproduces patterns of specialization, restriction and exclusion and accepts a "male model" of work as the norm and standard for women's work. In these ways, the discourse contributes to the sexual division of labor.

Interrelated Power Dimensions

The analysis of the homemaking discourse has indicated that the activities of home economists contributed to reproducing the sexual division of labor as well as the division between intellectual and manual labor. Sets of power relations interrelate in a number of ways. Discursive analysis throws light on these interrelations.

The development of a body of scientific knowledge regarding homemaking relied on, and created, new patterns of dependence in relations between men and women, and intensified the division between intellectual and manual labor.

The norms and standards based on science contribute in the first place to the intensification of the division between intellectual and manual labor. But the promotion of a scientific language of homemaking also relates to gender divisions in society. Because most scientists have been men, at least some concepts and strategies used in science may be regarded as "male concepts," reflecting their interests and concerns, rather than those of women. To the extent that such interests behind concepts and approaches were not taken into account by those who developed the discourse of homemaking, the potential for male bias in the language of the discourse existed. Such an argument is advanced by Ruddick (1982) who states that because "most thinkers have been men, most disciplines are partly shaped by 'male' concepts, styles and strategies." She concludes,

> To the extent that the disciplines are shaped by "male" thought, mothers and other women may feel alienated by the practices and thinking of their own disciplines (p. 92n).

Not only in the profession of home economics in which women are in the majority, but also in the home, the discourse may have accepted without questioning a language and a way of thinking that originated with men, and served male interests rather than the interests of women.

Another way to look at the interrelated aspects of power is to focus on the transformation of the domestic sphere through the discourse of homemaking. While the discourse speaks of the privacy of the home, and the importance of maintaining the individual family home, it also defines the family's tasks in relation to society outside the family. At a basic level, this is evident in the oft-repeated statements in the discourse that the family must give up its independence, that women must recognize the "social" dimension of their homemaking activities, and that the family must be seen for what it is: a part of a larger social unity.

The discourse also contributes to the "socialization" of the household through the kinds of interventions described earlier. The efforts to redefine homemaking, to develop norms and standards for it, to develop courses and write books that women would read, and to gain direct access to the home represent interventions in the home. These interventions serve to intensify the division between intellectual and manual labor.

The interventions of professionals also influence the sexual division of labor. On the one hand the discourse seeks, through various strategies, to create the home as a matriarchal unit: although the father retains the status of being head of the family, the woman is its core, the center, the head of the home. Thus the home is established as women's sphere of influence. From one perspective this could be understood as a challenge, albeit limited, to male authority. At least, it seems to bring about a change in the power relations in the family. Women could, for example, gain power in the sexual division of labor, through alliance with experts, as they implement the methods and standards advanced by the professionals, for example with regard to childrearing and budgeting.

Nevertheless, whatever autonomy the family had before, it is undermined with the entry of professionals into the home. It becomes, in a sense, a contested sphere, less private than before. And, women's ability to exercise power depends, at least in part, on their adherence to norms and standards set by experts. Thus women's ability to exercise power in the family is influenced by their relations with experts, which also involve power.

In sum, power relations in the sexual division of labor are shaped through the relations that are part of the intensification of the division between intellectual and manual labor. Traditional patriarchal power is changed to include a "normalized sexual division of labor." Likewise, the "new"

homemaking is shaped by the standards and norms set by experts on the basis of scientific disciplines whose language may be at least partly informed by "male" interests, rather than women's concerns.

Power relations in the discourse of homemaking also interact with other relations, particularly the exercise of state power, and class hegemony.

An important dimension of the sexual division of labor reproduced in the discourse of homemaking is the economic dependence of women on men. To the extent that women internalized the notion that homemaking was their primary vocation, that their work was complementary to men's work, and of equal value, their economic dependence on men could have been obscured. However, such economic relations not only benefitted men, more than women, but also had wider economic implications. These cannot be examined in detail here, but it is instructive to note that Illich (1981), using an analysis that resembles Foucault's in some respects, sees the development of homemaking as a distinctive set of activities around the organization of consumption, the development of a mechanism indispensable to the functioning of advanced capitalist society. Illich calls women's unpaid housework "shadow work" and argues that it is a prototype of other kinds of work in society -- unpaid, yet necessary for the continuation of the economic system.

The discourse maintains class distinctions by assigning particular tasks to middle class women, making them the

voice of the poor, and giving them a kind of moral responsibility as guardians, not only of their own families, but also of the poor. For example, Hyams (1900) argued that it was the duty of "cultured men and women" to help the poor by arousing "within these people a desire for right living" (p. 18).

Another instance of efforts to maintain class distinctions is the hierarchical language used to differentiate home economics education at various levels, from elementary school to college. For example, this is reflected in nomenclature proposals put forward at the Sixth Lake Placid Conference (1904). The following titles were suggested:

> Handwork in elementary schools
> Domestic Science in the secondary schools
> Economics in normal and professional schools
> Euthenics in colleges and universities (p. 64).

These titles reflect an hierarchical arrangement with a craft orientation at the lowest levels and a scientific and professional orientation at the highest levels. Strasser (1977) argues that it represents an attempt at maintaining class distinctions.

The discourse also reinforces class distinctions in the different ways experts interact with poor and middle class families. The experts gain more or less direct access to families who fail to live up to minimum standards, for example, through home visits and demonstrations, to teach thrift, budgeting, accounting, and food preparation. In an

Italian district in Chicago, for example, a model flat was outfitted, and children, working single women, and mothers were taught the American way of furnishing and cleaning a home, and how to prepare American foods simply and cheaply. The program also involved home visits by the experts (Ransom & Wilkins, 1916).

In another setting the home economists gained access to immigrant families through their children, as Hyams' (1900) description of the work of the Louisa M. Alcott clubs in Boston indicates. In a later report, Hyams (1905) stresses the important part that home visits played in the work. The purpose of the visits were to study home conditions. This investigation was done, she states,

> thru (sic) a great many personal visits -- always dropping in unexpectedly, and often remaining for a meal -- and also thru (sic) the children, who are askt (sic) to keep notes for a week at a time of the three meals each day, and to get from their mothers as accurately as possible the amount and cost of food bought (p. 56).

In middle class families power relations are less obvious. One could say that, in part, the homemaker averts the expert's direct entry into the family by her efforts to maintain the standards set by the experts. Thus there still exists a power relation between the expert and the individual homemaker. Furthermore, power relations also exist where the homemaker recognizes her need for training, and attends classes, or reads the books written by the experts, and in this way, internalizes, at least in part, a particular set

of norms and standards regarding homemaking.

A similar kind of analysis is made by Donzelot in The Policing of Families (1979), a study of the development of the social work profession in France. Donzelot proposes that the modern family has been transformed to function as a mechanism for the deployment of micropower relations in many spheres. To illustrate how the family operates as a mechanism of social regulation, and is transformed to fit its social role, Donzelot introduces the idea of the "floating" of family values and social norms against each other. Through this process, which operates in different ways in middle-class and poor families, family autonomy, emotional intensity and economic stability are either decreased or channeled to fit the social norm. However, the social norm is also somewhat flexible. If this was not the case, family values might be totally destroyed, making the family too directly dependent on the state. Conversely, families might withdraw from society, and become too independent. In both cases the purpose of regulation would be defeated.

Among the poor, where family autonomy may be counter-productive from society's perspective, independence has to be checked. If it is done too harshly, however, it may create excessive dependence on the state. Consequently, a complex system of guardianship is introduced. Donzelot traces the activities and transformations of the social work profession as the agents of tutelage. He examines the changed

relationships between the judicial, psychological and educative components of the profession as the demands of society changed, and shows how the professionals carved out for themselves positions of relative power.

In the bourgeois family, regulation works differently. The family can maintain its independence -- which it values highly -- by making sure that it fulfills society's expectations for its children. Thus it prevents the direct intervention of the state in its internal operation. Yet, in their efforts to meet expectations, parents seek the help of experts in childrearing, attend classes, and visit the psychoanalyst themselves. As in the case of poor families, the helping professions attain a certain intermediary position of power between the middle-class family and the state.

Donzelot indicates a kind of intermediary position for professionals between the family and the state. It would seem that in the discourse of homemaking the intensification of the division of intellectual and manual labor involved the development of a number of state-affiliated organizations through which professionals could be mediators between the family and the state. For example Abel (1927) lists the variety of agencies active in home economics, including government agencies, the extension system, vocational education programs, and demonstrations and exhibits -- the latter to reach even those homemakers who are not interested in attending classes or reading books. She gives a detailed list of

the governmental programs in home economics, including the Bureau of Home Economics in the United States Department of Agriculture, the Home Economics Division of the United States Bureau of Education and Federal Board of Vocational Education, the United States Public Health Service, State Departments of Education, Boards of Health, and Departments and Colleges of Agriculture.

Abel (1927) concludes,

> Thanks to the growth of the Home Economics movement, there is now an admirable body of trained professional workers, teachers and administrators who are organized under various governmental and other agencies, and to them we look to take a leading part in the new education for home making (p. 141).

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter developed a discursive analysis based on the work of Foucault. Examples from the home economics literature were used to sketch the dimensions of a discourse of homemaking. Power relations in the discourse were then examined. The analysis focused on the role of home economics in relation to the sexual division of labor, and the intensification of the division between intellectual and manual labor.

The exploratory analysis carried out in this chapter suggests that home economists were involved in a variety of power relations that shaped the sexual division of labor, and intensified the division between intellectual and manual

labor. Micropower relations were formed in the practices that were a part of giving new content to homemaking. Power relations were created and maintained through methods used to gather information, and systematize homemaking practices, such as record keeping, observations, budgeting, and classification systems. Micropower relations also existed where standards for homemaking were developed and put into practice. The analysis also indicated that the discourse of homemaking gave rise to a normalized sexual division of labor, to the extent that relations between men and women were shaped by knowledge relations. These power relations were shown to be linked to other power relations, thus serving to reproduce class relations and to maintain, and in some sense extend, the power of the state.

Substantively, discursive analysis seems to overcome the limitations of conventional historical studies of home economics because it identifies the kinds of power relations in which home economists participated. Likewise, at the conceptual and theoretical level, discursive analysis seems to overcome the limitations identified in existing studies of the history of home economics. As the following brief discussion indicates, it is a non-functionalist and non-reductive approach that recognizes the social dimensions of intellectual activity and analyses these in terms of power relations. Discursive analysis provides a way to examine specific power relations and, to some extent at least, allows for the

interaction of power relations.

Foucault's strategy of discursive analysis provides a way to examine the activities of home economists in non-functionalist terms. Foucault rejects all attempts to understand society as an organic unit, or as having enduring, transhistorical needs. Thus, from Foucault's perspective, professional activity is not merely a response to social "needs." Discursive analysis seeks to show that professional activity shapes social relations in particular ways, and that power is involved in the social practices of professionals. Thus social change is not seen simply as the result of abstract social forces, but as a process that involves social practices, including discursive practices. The exploratory analysis indicated that home economists' responses to problems they perceived in society involved shaping social relations.

Secondly, discursive analysis provides an approach to understanding the social dimensions of intellectual activity. The exploratory analysis indicated that the discourse shaped social relations through the cognitive strategies it used, even as it developed and implemented theoretical knowledge. Thus, for example, the strategies of record keeping, budgeting, and accounting introduced into the household generated knowledge, defined how homemakers were to understand their roles, and created new relations between the professionals and homemakers. Likewise, the observations made during visits to poor families provided information which were

used in the development of theoretical knowledge, while the visits also imposed new standards on the family, and served to maintain a hierarchical relationship between experts and the poor.

In the third place, discursive analysis provides a way to understand the social content of professional activity in terms of power. The analysis of the discourse of homemaking showed how power operates in the discourse to shape both the sexual division of labor, and the division between intellectual and manual labor.

Finally, an analysis in terms of micropowers and normalization provides a way to focus on the specific power dimensions of theoretical activity. It is a non-reductive account of power, because it does not understand relations between intellectuals and their clients in terms of the exercise of the power of the state, or corporations, for example.

Nevertheless, while it focuses on specific relations, for example, between home economists and women, the discourse allows one to study the interrelation of their activities with other groups participating in the discourse. The analysis of the homemaking discourse attempted to link the powerrelations in the discourse with other forms of power, for example, the exercise of the power of the state, and the power operating in class relations.

It must be noted, however, that the relationships

between discursive and non-discursive practices, and between micropowers, and the more "global" kinds of power, are not clearly drawn by Foucault. A similar ambiguity remains in Foucault's work regarding the way in which power as exercised in the discourse can be overcome. This shortcoming makes a consideration of the implications of the present study for home economics problematic, because it cannot be done with reference to an alternative posed by Foucault.

The exploratory analysis of the discourse of homemaking indicates that Foucault's work provides concepts and strategies that meet the requirements for a theoretical framework set out in the previous chapter. Discursive analysis may thus prove fruitful for studying the role of home economics in social reproduction. The final chapter explores the potential use of such a framework further, and suggests some implications of the present study for the home economics profession.

Chapter Six

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The central problem underlying the present study was the question of power in the home economics profession. Has home economics served to reproduce class relations? Has the field contributed to women's oppression? Has it, in its efforts to serve families, helped to increase state power over everyday life?

The last two decades have witnessed growing critique of the role of professionals in society. Recent historical and sociological studies implicated home economics in power struggles of various kinds. A number of these studies were reviewed in Chapter I. In different ways they argue that home economics has played a role in maintaining oppressive gender relations and class relations (Hartmann, 1974; Strasser, 1977). Furthermore, professionals generally, and home economists in particular, have been accused of contributing to the extension of state power over everyday life (Zaretsky, 1982; Lasch, 1979; Ehrenreich & English, 1978).

Home economists have engaged in examination of the philosophy of the field and its goals in the last decade. The present study maintained that, unless reflections on the philosophy of the field are complemented with concrete studies

of its actual social role, the formulation of realistic goals for the profession will remain abstract, and the implementation of those goals problematic.

The intent of the study, therefore, was to contribute a critical dimension to the current self-examination of the home economics profession, by examining how the political nature of the activities of professionals have been understood, and exploring conceptual issues related to the analysis of power in home economics. The study focused on two sets of relations in which home economics have been involved, namely, the sexual division of labor, and the division between intellectual and manual labor.

The study rejected a functionalist approach to understanding the social role of home economics, because such an approach obscures the power dimension in their activities, as Chapters II and III indicated.

Likewise, it found the approaches used in existing critical studies of home economics inadequate. Those studies indicated that home economics contributed to the reproduction of patriarchy and capitalism, for example. However, they were not enlightening about the particular nature of power relations of which home economics was a part, or the complex interaction of those relations with the global powers represented in the class and gender systems of the society.

The present study, therefore, proposed that before the

role of home economics in social reproduction can be explained, it would be necessary to analyze specific power relation in which home economists took part. Chapter IV began to develop the analytical tools necessary for such a task. It outlined the requirements for carrying out such an analysis and then introduced theoretical strategies developed by Michel Foucault in his historical studies of knowledge and power. Foucault's work provides strategies for analyzing specific power relations and a conceptualization of the interrelation of knowledge and power that appeared useful for the kind of analysis of home economics the present study proposed.

An exploratory analysis of the discourse of homemaking in Chapter V demonstrated the fruitfulness of using the analytical categories Foucault introduces, for studying power relations in home economics.

The analysis demonstrated that home economics has historically been involved in power relations of various sorts. In particular, it has contributed to shaping the sexual division of labor, and intensifying the division between intellectual and manual labor. The study suggested, furthermore, that the particular power relations in which home economists have been involved can be linked to more "global" forms of power. However, the form these links have taken in different historical periods need to be examined in future research.

Limitations of the Study

Because of its exploratory nature, the present study focused on only one discourse of which home economics has been a part. Other discourses, such as the discourse of sexuality, also could be analyzed to examine the role of home economics in shaping social relations.

Only a partial analysis of the discourse of homemaking was attempted. A limited range of objects, concepts, statements, and cognitive strategies were identified. To develop the discursive analysis further, other objects, for example "motherhood" and "the family," may be introduced, along with the concepts, statements, and cognitive strategies employed to create these objects.

The evidence used in this study to examine the homemaking discourse was of such a nature that the analysis and conclusions drawn from it must remain somewhat speculative. The examples used to develop the discursive analysis were drawn from a narrowly defined range of sources. The analysis was limited to home economics literature as the source for examples to sketch the dimensions of the discourse. Because discursive analysis cuts across disciplinary boundaries, and includes both general knowledge, and more specific theoretical knowledge, a more complete discursive analysis would require examining the activities of other disciplines, for example sociology and social work, and materials that reflect the language of homemakers themselves.

The discursive analysis carried out in the present study remained rather abstract. To contextualize the discourse of homemaking, the analysis must incorporate some consideration of events and activities outside the discourse. A more historically concrete analysis would also seek to recognize historical shifts, trends, and changes within the discourse, such as changes in the prominence of certain objects and concepts, or the development of new cognitive strategies.

Suggestions for Future Research

In addition to the proposals to develop a more complete analysis of the discourse of homemaking, particular areas of research are suggested.

To trace the origin of the homemaking discourse, the relations between early leaders of the movement, and those social groups to whom matters concerning the household and family were important, could be explored. Such groups would include the church, families, and schools, for example. One could explore where and how the need for training in homemaking arose. For example, did parents demand training for their daughters? What was being said in sermons, newspapers, and magazines regarding women's roles? How did these statements correspond to the efforts of certain individuals and groups to gain authority to make statements about homemaking?

To study the social impact of the homemaking discourse,

the extent to which the language of the discourse was internalized could be examined. For example, how did women internalize the scientific concepts, styles of work and attitudes toward homemaking proposed by the professionals? A related question concerns the kinds of resistance professionals encountered in their efforts to transform homemaking.

Another dimension of the homemaking discourse to be studied is the alliance between home economists and other professional groups and women's associations, and how power operated in and through those alliances.

To contextualize the discursive analysis, and relate discursive and non-discursive practices, the practices of home economists and others to shape homemaking practices could be studied in relation to specific developments in the labor market. For example, one could examine whether and how the power relations of the discourse assisted the development of other kinds of power relations. For example, did the relations that developed between experts and women in the discourse prepare women for other kinds of relations, such as dependence on advertising?

Implications for Home Economics

The exploratory analysis suggested that the social role of home economics has been more complex than conventionally understood. While home economists sought to serve families, give dignity to women's work, and relieve the drudgery of

housework, their activities also served to undermine women's autonomy and the relative privacy of the family. To some extent, therefore, home economists have played a role in the general evolution of multiple forms of control over the reproduction of everyday life that characterizes modern society (Busacca & Ryan, 1982).

Home economists need to recognize that their professional activities are not politically neutral, but actually involve the exercise of power. It seems clear that in the present decade professional activity related to the family will increasingly take place in the midst of intense political struggles. The uncertainty over economic prospects, particularly the future of social services, will have implications for home economics. Home economists carry out their professional activities in the midst of continued feminist critique of traditional patterns in family life, and the development of a powerful conservative voice intent on reestablishing traditional family values. Battles over child care, inflation, unemployment, and cutbacks in social programs all affect home economics.

Home economists will have to clarify their own position in these power struggles. This will require, among other things, continued study of the historical role of the field in terms of power.

One of the weaknesses of the present study is that it did not examine changes over time in the power relations it

identified. It may be, for example, that home economists were more critical of existing social arrangements at certain times than at others. Recent studies in women's history seem to suggest that early home economics leaders played such roles (Blair, 1980; Hayden, 1981; Sklar, 1973; Wright, 1980 & 1981). Studying the practices of those home economists, and the factors that contributed to the development of a critical or conformist stance at various time, would help present-day home economists to understand their own position better, and to make informed decisions about their role in society.

Home economics has historically dealt with matters of everyday life -- clothing, food, shelter, interpersonal relations -- in a "non-therapeutic," or preventive mode, normally through educational channels. While the study indicates that power occurs in the kinds of relations these practices entail, it would seem that home economists are in a position to provide knowledge and skills that could contribute to decreasing the separation between intellectuals and non-intellectuals in society. For example, making available basic information about nutrition and hygiene could counteract an excessive dependence on medical expertise. Home economists need to consider what taking on such roles would mean in terms of institutional affiliations, professional status, and funding sources.

Finally, in considering their role in social reproduction, home economists also need to address questions like the following:

-- Whose interests are being served by practices of home economists?

-- Who defines the needs home economists "serve?"

-- How do links between professionals and other institutions, e.g. state agencies, universities, and schools, influence the political choices open to the professional?

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