A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF SELECTED PHILOSOPHIES OF EDUCATION FOR HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION

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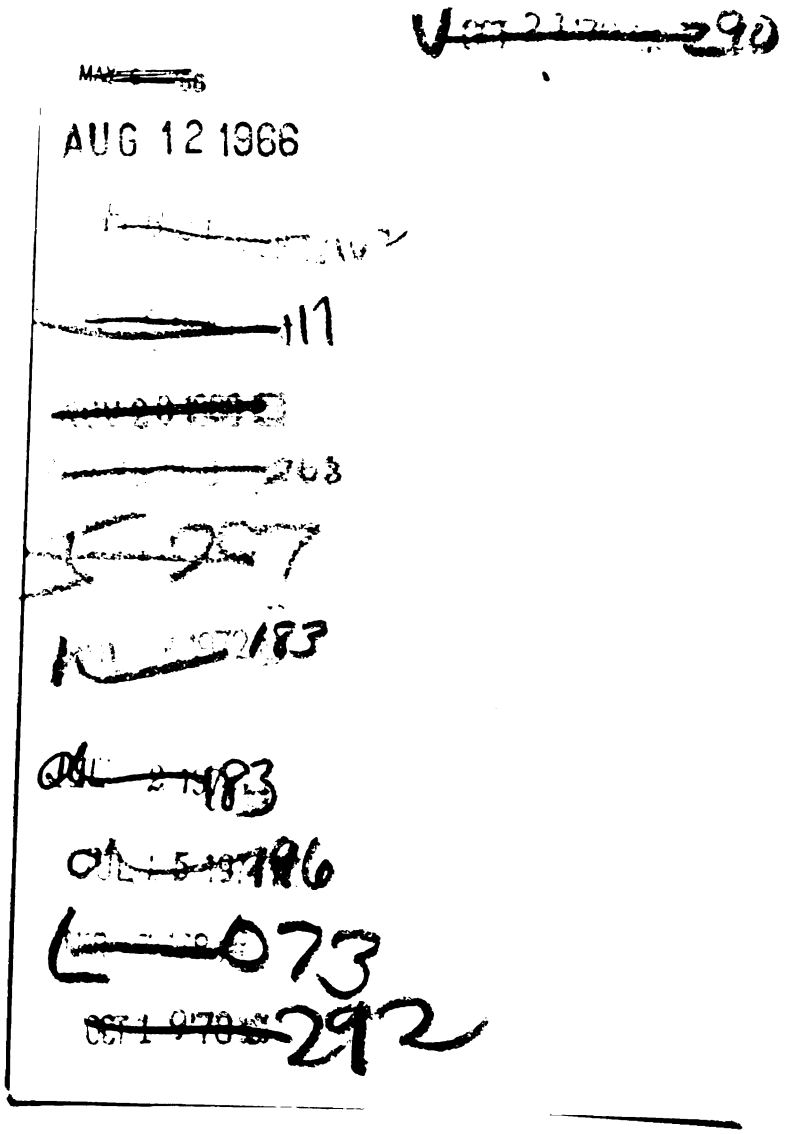
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ABSTRACT

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by Helen L. McConnell

Problem and Objectives

Home economics as a subject field has been strongly influenced by the pragmatic, Dewey-based philosophy of education of the twentieth century. Today, educators and laymen are re-examining the pragmatic philosophy and are considering possible alternative positions. There seems to be little universal agreement as to which broad viewpoint is to be preferred.

Home economics education, too, must consider which direction it should take. Can home economics make an equally worthwhile contribution within any of the proposed educational positions, or will some viewpoints be more favorable than others for achieving home economics objectives? Is the widely influential pragmatic orientation sound today? If not, what is a better choice? It seems desirable that educators in home economics evaluate the major alternatives and that they implement a clearly outlined point of view which adequately supports their subject field.

The primary objective of this study is to explore the implications for home economics education below the college level of each of four educational philosophies

having some support in contemporary American public education. In addition, a statement of principles is outlined which, in the writer's view, expresses a philosophy compatible with the general beliefs and objectives of home economics as a subject area. It is hoped that this study may provide a point of departure for home economics teachers and college students who are examining the philosophic bases for their work.

Procedure

The first step is to summarize the work of four authors representing viewpoints found in public schools today. The philosophers chosen, and the positions for which they write, are: Louise Antz--Idealism, William Bagley--Essentialism, John Dewey--Pragmatism, and Robert Hutchins--Humanism. Each summary includes a definition of education; major objectives and values held; the view taken of learners; curriculum, subject matter, and methods; and a general evaluation of the position.

Next, each position is interpreted to describe the nature of home economics education within that position.

The four versions of home economics education are then discussed in relation to currently recognized statements of home economics philosophy and objectives.

Finally, a basic educational position supportive of home economics is stated in the form of guidelines for philosophy in home economics education.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Although the Hutchins position would exclude home economics from the curriculum, each of the other three interpretations of home economics education makes some contribution to the central concerns of home economics. Rather consistently, Dewey's position gives greater breadth to home economics, comes closer to the ideas expressed by home economists, and appears to permit greater flexibility for future development. If teachers reaffirm the pragmatic orientation, there is the challenge to make more creative and effective interpretation, application, and appraisal of familiar, and sometimes misused, principles in new and changing situations.

The unsettled issues and ill-defined terms in home economics both weaken this study and appear to contribute to some of the general uncertainty in home economics education. Answers to "What is home economics?" and "What values do home economists want to implement?" represent somewhat arbitrary choices by the writer. It is suggested that home economists give some attention to the logical and linguistic methodology of contemporary philosophy in order that some of the basic issues in home economics may be clarified. Future studies might examine the central value concepts of home economics, the significant differences in the various definitions of home economics, or the meanings given to such terms as family-centered.

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by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background and Problem for Study

Home economics as a subject field has been strongly influenced by the pragmatic, Dewey-based educational philosophy of the twentieth century.

Educators and laymen are re-examining the pragmatic philosophy today. Some believe that the movement is past and that the "pedagogical mainstream" is changing.[1] Others support continuation of its fundamental values and principles with more effective interpretation and application of them.[2] Several alternative positions are offered by those who would abandon or radically change this position. There seems to be little universal agreement among educators--or laymen--as to which broad viewpoint is to be preferred.

Home economics, too, is deciding its future direction in education. "As home economics has responded in the past to changes in educational thinking . . . , so may its offerings in the future be expected to show the influence

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[1]Lawrence A. Cremin, The Transformation of the School (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962).

[2]William VanTil, "Is Progressive Education Obsolete?" Saturday Review (February 17, 1962), 56-57.

of further changes having significance for the field."[1] By which of the patterns in educational thinking should changes in home economics be guided today? Twenty-five years ago it was said that:

> No educational field should stand unchallenged today. Home economics should maintain its present position, be given a larger place, or take a more restricted one in keeping with the uniqueness and worth of the contribution it can make.[2]

This is still true. Can home economics make an equally worthwhile contribution within any of the proposed educational positions, or will some viewpoints be more favorable than others for achieving home economics objectives? It seems desirable that educators in home economics identify and evaluate the major alternatives available and that they follow a clearly outlined point of view which gives adequate support to the subject field.

The resulting problem for study is stated in this question: What does each of the major contemporary viewpoints imply for home economics as a subject area, and how consistent are these implications with the stated beliefs of the home economics profession today?

Significance of Problem

"The shape of actual transformation in the common school can be affected distinctively by initiative from

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[1] Ivol Spafford, A Functioning Program in Home Economics (New York: John Wiley, 1940), 20.

[2] Ibid., 7.

within,"[1] and "the opportunity for creative leadership confronting homemaking is great."[2] Today home economics educators must have a clear view of the changes desired and be willing and able to share leadership in effecting change. Both this long view of home economics education and the immediate problems of curriculum and teaching require continual decision-making by teachers. The quality of the contribution of home economics today and in the future depends in a large part on these decisions. Busy with day-to-day classroom details, have teachers developed and consciously evaluated a statement of basic philosophy which guides their decisions and actions? Is the widely influential pragmatic orientation sound today? If it is, under what conditions and interpretations? If not, what is a better choice? An analysis of contemporary educational theories as they relate to home economics education might prove to be a stimulation and a resource for teachers--and for future teachers still in college--who are undertaking the important task of examining their educational philosophies.

Objectives of Study

The primary objective of this study is to explore

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[1]Laurence D. Haskew and Inez W. Tumlin, "Vocational Education in the Curriculum of the Common School," Vocational Education, Sixty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 85.

[2]Ibid., 87.

the implications for home economics education of each of the selected educational philosophies having some support in contemporary American education.

The related objectives are (1) to outline a consistent statement of educational philosophy which, in the writer's view, expresses a position compatible with the general beliefs and objectives of home economics as a subject area, and (2) to provide a point of departure for home economics teachers and students who are considering the philosophic bases for their work.

Approach to be Used

Scientific and philosophic studies in education are complementary; both are necessary. Each type of study has its domain:

> The science of education will contribute knowledge gained through experimentation, through analyzing, measuring, counting, classifying, and comparing. Philosophy of education will aid in the discovery of the goals toward which all this effort should be expended.[1]

"Philosophy . . . may be said to seek general perspective";[2] science is more interested in specifics and parts. Philosophy tends to be qualitative and concerned with ends; science tends to be quantitative and focused on means.

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[1]Stella V. Henderson, Introduction to Philosophy of Education (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), 14.

[2]Israel Scheffler, The Language of Education (Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1960), 5.

Since the problem of this study relates to the choice of purposes for home economics education, and because it is examining broad orientations, the philosophic approach is properly selected in this instance.

Procedure for Dissertation

The first step will be to summarize major contemporary educational philosophies using as a basis the work of individual authors representing differing orientations.

Next, the significant features of home economics education will be described for programs interpreting each of the basic positions.

These representative programs will then be discussed in relation to currently recognized statements of home economics philosophy and objectives.

In conclusion, a basic education viewpoint supportive of home economics will be stated in the form of functional principles which can be used as guides in making decisions in home economics education.

Selection of Major Sources

Selection of educational philosophies

While numerous educational theories are set forth on paper, not all of these are fully developed and not all of them are expressed to any significant extent in actual practice. Four viewpoints have been selected which seem to be comprehensive in their applications and which are found in some measure in the policy and practice of public

schools in the United States. These four are: idealism, essentialism, pragmatism, and humanism.

Choice of authors

No two, or more, authors would interpret the same philosophy in the same way. Any attempt to write a composite statement representing all of the persons within any one position would necessitate making arbitrary choices as to which interpretations to use. It would be impossible to read and include all authors; therefore, the statement would have an unidentified bias. For this reason, one generally recognized spokesman has been selected and identified for each position, and major works of each author are used as sources.

Sources of home economics beliefs

Home Economics New Directions: A Statement of Philosophy and Objectives is a recent official publication of the American Home Economics Association. The proceedings of the Lake Placid Conferences on Home Economics present the founding philosophy of the organization and are felt by home economists to have considerable validity today. These two references are the major sources used in preparing the statement of beliefs held by the home economics profession.

CHAPTER II

SUMMARY STATEMENTS OF FOUR SELECTED PHILOSOPHIES OF EDUCATION

Introduction

Four authors have been selected to represent educational philosophies having some support today in the public schools of the United States. These persons, and the positions for which they write, are: Louise Antz--Idealism, William C. Bagley--Essentialism, John Dewey--Pragmatism, and Robert M. Hutchins--Humanism.

Bagley, Dewey and Hutchins wrote during many of the same years and their works are considered basic, or classic, statements for their respective viewpoints. While contemporary educators may present their own versions of these positions, the basic tenets of the pragmatic and realist philosophies remain essentially unchanged though ever open to new interpretations for education. Antz is a more recent contributor to educational philosophy and her work interprets a more modern concept of idealism than was generally used by earlier spokesmen for this system; to have chosen an idealist author who was a contemporary of the other three would have been to present a form of idealism not as likely to be found in education today.

Each educational philosophy is summarized to include

its definition of education; the objectives and values it holds; the way it views its learners; and its curriculum, subject matter, and methods. In addition, there is a section of comments and criticisms related to each position. A well grounded overall theory does not necessarily imply a worthwhile program in home economics; neither can every apparently effective program in home economics be traced back to a supporting philosophy which is consistently rewarding in all of its applications. Therefore, some evaluation of the general positions seems called for prior to drawing any conclusions about home economics education within these four orientations.

Educational Philosophy of Louise Antz

In describing her position in a line of philosophers descending intellectually from Plato, Louise Antz calls her view Theistic Idealism. Giving traditional idealist priority to mind, she presents an absolute, knowable mental reality which is imperfectly experienced and gradually known through the natural environment. Two relatively modern forms of idealism are present in her philosophy: organicism and personalism. The first sees the universe as having an indestructable wholeness which harmonizes opposing dimensions. The more recent development, personalism, finds human personality the key to comprehending existence. The personalistic influence in this statement of idealism puts the focus on responsible individuals developing in relation

to each other and to a personal God. Not all modern idealists hold positions identical to the one outlined here; Dr. Antz comments that "probably the greatest difference among them is the degree to which theism and personalism do or do not influence their thought."[1]

Definition of education

Education is the growth of the mind. Mind here refers not just to the intellectual nature of the human mind, but includes "the full self, for whom feeling, willing, creating, and decision-making are as integral as is logical thinking."[2] Therefore, education is considered to be the development of the total personality into a responsible, mature individual.

Purposes and values

The objective of education is to guide the growth of the learner in "self-realization" so that he consciously becomes more like his ideal self. The school aims to expose "each child to the best things of the culture, in all their variety, so that he is not deprived of the opportunity to find his 'own' and to decide eventually what to do with it."[3] The school is responsible, too, for helping the

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[1]Louise Antz, "Idealism as a Philosophy of Education," in Hobert W. Burns and Charles J. Brauner, Philosophy of Education (New York: The Ronald Press, 1962), 240.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid., 244.

student gain the special techniques which will enable him to continue his self-development, both during and after his period of formal education.

Value and being are "primal in the universe and are inseparable."[1] Individual "being-in-becoming" is therefore the focus of educational values: "each man is an end in himself. . . . "[2] Social values are of concern as they promote an environment in which individuals can grow; schools develop "loyalty toward the public good--local and world wide--for this good is the only thing which can protect the individual in his personal life, giving him a chance to be human."[3]

Diversity appears in the kind and ranking of specific educational values depending upon the perceptions of persons responsible for educational policy-making.

Individually, a person sees as valuable that which is coherent with his total present insight into his being; the criterion is "the quality of wholeness and mental satisfaction."[4]

The learner in the learning process

Experience is neither reality itself nor is it the test of knowledge; it is the medium which makes the learner

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[1] Ibid., 239.

[2] Ibid., 241.

[3] Ibid., 251.

[4] Ibid., 242.

conscious of intuitions from which he gradually develops his own concepts. This mental activity, or learning, is seen to follow a pattern: (1) "mind's chief activity is unifying, with analysis and synthesis the typical subordinate activities . . . ," (2) "mind's activity is marked by the selection of material . . . ," (3) "mind discovers and creates values . . . ," and (4) "the active subjective mind creates itself. . . . It identifies itself as self."[1] In this analysis of learning, a distinction has been made between the subjective mind, or the learner, and the objective mind which represents the ultimate truth which is to be achieved.

All subjective minds are alike in having certain basic gifts ("primal mental abilities") but they are "different in degree, and in their taste for the elements in the environment. It is easy to starve the mind by giving it too little to work with, or the wrong things."[2]

Since learning is an internal structuring of knowledge, "in the final analysis, mind as mind judges its own work."[3] However, the activity of the free mind does not suggest undisciplined response to the environment. The learner needs "both authority and freedom," but he should not be subject to "authoritarianism and permissivism."[4]

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[1] Ibid., 244.

[2] Ibid., 244.

[3] Ibid., 242.

[4] Ibid., 248.

Such discipline is necessary "to maintain the community, to develop the behavior most fruitful in social growth and in learning, and to strengthen the individual's direction of his own acts according to norms."[1]

Curriculum, subject matter, and methods

"Any aspect of the life of mind has a place in school."[2] The emphasis, however, is on the liberal--those subjects which broaden rather than limit opportunity to identify that which belongs to the "self." Priority is given to "subjects which widen the student's understanding of humankind" (e.g., history, fine arts, religion) and to subjects "which open up the world of nature."[3] "Knowing" a subject field includes knowing the "doing" of that field. "Basic mechanical skills, whether in the use of a language, the playing of an instrument, the managing of a home, or the mastery of a science" are necessary for "free, creative experience" and for further self-education.[4]

Choice of subject matter for a given school curriculum is to be guided by "regard for the abilities and needs of learners, the legitimate demands of society, and the kind of universe we live in."[5] There is no single widely

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[1] Ibid., 248.

[2] Ibid., 247.

[3] Ibid., 246.

[4] Ibid., 247.

[5] Ibid., 245.

prescribed curriculum. Since schools have a social responsibility to educate leaders, those students "able to take it" should have "more disciplined thinking, and richer, tougher subject matter."[1] At the same time, it is recognized that "the great majority of all students go into business and industry, or into homemaking,"[2] and that an appropriate curriculum is needed for these students.

"How the subjects are taught is as important as what is taught. The liberal arts are not liberal when taught as mere technical facts for passing examinations, or when not adapted to the student's capacities."[3] Methods "develop to fit needs and conditions,"[4] with no single method predominating. While the experimental method is not rejected as a source of ideas, it is believed that "there is important knowledge about man and his world which is not accessible to scientific method in the official sense," and that "intuitions are fully as important as are the findings of science."[5] Some form of dialectic procedure is perhaps the most characteristic classroom activity because it permits the bringing together and exchange of ideas for comparison, selection, and organization. Such a process is

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[1] Ibid., 251.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., 246.

[4] Ibid., 242.

[5] Ibid., 243.

essential to education and it clearly implies the necessity of a social learning situation.

The teacher, more than any particular method of teaching, is important in the learner's environment. "The good teacher is a person who opens up new worlds to learners and helps them with the skills and attitudes necessary for understanding, growth, and mastery."[1] To be able to do this, the teacher must have considerable knowledge of subject matter. In addition, he must be able to estimate--by both scientific and intuitive means--the needs and abilities of students. Since the learner relates to and learns from the teacher's personality, students will be more broadly educated through contact with a variety of teachers. Technical aids to teaching have a role in the classroom, but the teacher's personality is required for "channeling the child's skills and knowledge into imaginative and creative applications."[2]

Comments and criticisms

1. "Idealists do not believe that any verbal formulation of basic ethical and political principles is final. . . ."[3] However, idealists do believe that changeless values exist, and this belief seems to make them susceptible to accepting as true certain imperfect value-concepts

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[1] Ibid., 246.

[2] Ibid., 247.

[3] Ibid., 250.

held within relatively stable environments over a period of time. This acceptance can lead to: (a) concepts so vague or outdated that they seem sometimes to leave us without sufficiently clear-cut value commitments to guide behavior (e.g., some of the concepts referred to collectively as "the American way of life" or "democracy"), or (b) concepts which have become so inaccurate for some segments of our changing social structure that their broad application brings unsatisfactory results (e.g., the pervasive influence in education of middle-class value-systems established in a 19th century atmosphere). While the value perceptions of the idealist can--and should--change with personal and social maturity, the fact that these perceptions may become static in practice seems an undesirable consequence of a belief in the existence of timeless values. The community maintained by this educational philosophy seems more likely to be the existing society than a progressive one; the whole into which new insights must "fit" is apt to be the present state of affairs, or even, the "good old days."

2. Dr. Antz presents a scheme which makes the individual the decision-maker in determining his own identity. To create the necessary social order and discipline, individuals systematize and codify their own common understandings into social institutions. Persons are represented as having both the freedom and the responsibility valued in our society.

This viewpoint broadens the decision-making limits of the older, more absolutistic forms of idealism which tended toward determinism and surrendered independent identity in a conformity to, and inclusion in, a universal mind. However broad they may be, pre-established and untestable limits remain. Without questioning the necessity for some limits on human behavior, one could question the appropriateness of absolute standards. Dr. Antz says that the learner "discovers and creates values."[1] What does she mean by "create"? Is an individual and his society truly free to do critical and creative thinking when basic assumptions are not open to examination and revision? Within this philosophy, how can the underlying standards be taught except by authoritarian methods?

3. The subjective element in this philosophic position presents a problem in the formal evaluation of learning. Self-realization as the primary purpose of education emphasizes the active role of the learner in his own education, holds the integral development of individual personality as the major criterion of learning, and often makes evaluation appear to be necessarily intuitive and introspective. Dr. Antz states that "in the final analysis, mind as mind judges its own work."[2] Later, she adds that a dialectical experience ends in a sense of insight which "may

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[1] Ibid., 244.

[2] Ibid., 242.

be one that can be elaborated into a hypothesis" but may be such that "no expression at all is adequate to it, except a qualitative change in the very feel of life, and therefore in one's living."[1] Reliable objective measures of qualitative behavioral changes are rare; in the evaluation of individual achievement and of educational programs and practices, students and teachers either rely largely on subjective procedures or they ignore the real issue of individual differences in personality and impose uniform standards.

The second set of educational objectives--the skills, techniques, and facts which contribute to further education--are more readily observed and measured. Is there a possibility that teachers, pupils, and parents might give primary concern to these more easily identified outcomes and pay less attention to the total growth of the individual students? Provisions would need to be made--and constantly improved over present methods--for suitable recognition of all stated educational objectives.

4. The role of intuition does suggest a balancing factor for the sometimes overwhelming reliance on quantitative and analytic procedures. The recent explorations by educators in the area of creativity in learning indicate that there may be need to give further consideration to the intuitive, nonrational factors in learning.

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[1] Ibid., 243.

5. This idealistic position is described as "Theistic"; other contemporary idealists go further and acknowledge a Christian grounding. In a nation where public philosophy rejects state association with specific religious teachings, the religious assumption--expressed or not in actual practice--may be out of place in the guiding philosophy of public schools. If one holds to the traditional policy of separation of church and state, it is necessary to examine the questions raised by this philosophy.

6. Education cannot neglect the training of leaders; while "educators are not in control of the dynamics of power," they can "influence its operations in the long run through the habits and ideas they develop in the young."[1] Dr. Antz has not failed to recognize that "quite ordinary people," as well as leaders, exert power and must be educated to use it wisely. However, it seems possible that persons with the inclination to do so could interpret some of her statements regarding the education of leaders to give support to finding the education of leaders to be a more worthy goal than the education of other people, to regarding "excellence" as a quality achievable in some areas of work and study but not in others, or to considering some subject areas at any level of difficulty as inherently more challenging and meaningful than other areas. This interpretation may not have been intended by Dr. Antz; the central

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[1] Ibid., 250.

idea of respect for human personality suggests instead that leadership is just one of many qualities to be developed and that excellence may be achieved in many fields of endeavor.

7. One discussant of contemporary idealistic philosophies feels that they "are continuing a kind of holding action against pragmatism"[1] without taking any positive stand on their own. He points to the person as the significant focus of idealism which needs to be interpreted for education today. Some of his ideas are quoted in summary here because they seem to describe well a major strength of the idealistic point of view:

> . . . Knowledge and learning always will center in the learner in some way. . . . Whenever there is knowledge, it is someone's knowledge. It is not the vaguely objective achievement of the electronic computer alone. We can also contend that whenever there is learning, it is someone's learning, and not just the feed-back from people who have been enslaved by a persuasive lecturer, or the electronic teaching of the TV. . . . If knowledge and learning are the possession of a learner, then they are essentially human and personal.[2]

This insight into the nature of knowledge and learning leads to these conclusions regarding elements needing consideration in education today:

> . . . The humanizing and personalizing elements in the life of man, both present and past, are more fundamental values than man's achievements in nuclear science and space exploration. No deprecation of these achievements is implied, nor is it

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[1] J. Donald Butler, "Idealism in Education Today," School and Society, 87 (January 17, 1959), 9.

[2] Ibid., 10.

> intended to disregard the possibility that their conquest may be necessary to save us from the destruction which they threaten. Instead, this argument is that they must be turned to humane and personal ends to have essential value for us. Even if they do not destroy us, which, of course, is the great hazard, they can yet mechanize us and subvert man to something less than his true humanity.[1]

While all tenets of this form of idealism may not be acceptable in modern education, its subjective tone does offer balance for some of the social and intellectual goals stressed in other philosophies.

Educational Philosophy of William C. Bagley

William Bagley's biographer finds it "difficult, from the point of view of any of the educational philosophies current in the twentieth century, to classify Dr. Bagley."[2] Explaining this difficulty, the writer goes on to say that "he [Bagley] refused to be described as a 'traditionalist' . . . [and] proposed the name 'Stalwarts' for opponents of progressive education. . . . In the last years of his career he came to be denominated an 'essentialist', without regard for the fact that 'essentialism' is not a philosophy."[3] Bagley "refused to accept any particular philosophy as orthodox . . . because he believed strongly

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[1] Ibid.

[2] I. L. Kandel, William Chandler Bagley: Stalwart Educator (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1961), 78.

[3] Ibid.

that the advancement of education cannot depend on the direction of a monolithic doctrine."[1] In spite of his own preferences, Bagley today is generally considered to have written from the viewpoint of realism as it is expressed in contemporary education.

Definition of education

Education is "the process by means of which the individual acquires experiences that will function in rendering more efficient his future action."[2] "Formal education" is defined more specifically as "a process of instruction, training, inspiration, and indoctrination that is deliberately planned for, and consciously directed toward, the realization of a recognized purpose."[3]

Purposes and values

"Education's chief responsibility . . . is to transmit the spiritual heritage from generation to generation."[4] It must "insure as high a level of common culture as possible,--meanings, understandings, standards, and aspirations common to a large proportion of the democratic group,--to the end that the collective thinking and collective decisions

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[1] Ibid.

[2] William C. Bagley, The Educative Process (New York: Macmillan, 1908), 22.

[3] William C. Bagley, Education and Emergent Man (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1934), 39.

[4] Ibid., 119.

of the group may be done and made on the highest possible plane."[1] By definition, the orientation is future: knowledge of the best in past human experience will make possible a rational adaption to the unpredictable changes to come.

Bagley sees in society a slow, continuous evolution parallel to the biological evolution of man; the desirable is that which keeps step with, rather than interferes with, this forward movement of society.

Value--or rather, conduct which expresses value--can be measured objectively. An individual who is "socially efficient . . . is not a drag upon society . . . , interferes as little as possible with the efforts of others . . . , and lends his energy consciously and persistently to . . . [social] progress."[2] As measures of social value, "those social statistics which inform us of the welfare of the society" can be used.[3]

To illustrate specific values, Bagley makes repeated references to such "traits" as thoroughness, accuracy, persistence, and good workmanship. The nature of democracy (defined as a "political order based upon representative government and the Bill of Rights"),[4] demands that the

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[1] Ibid., 139.

[2] Bagley, Educative Process, 64.

[3] Bagley, Education and Emergent Man, 119.

[4] William C. Bagley, "An Essentialists Platform for the Advancement of American Education," Educational Administration and Supervision, 24 (April, 1938), 250.

society value "discipline" and "responsible freedom."[1] As examples of "permanent, or at least relatively permanent" values, he lists "respect for life, respect for law, consideration for the feelings of others, and plain every-day honesty. . . ."[2] The Essentialist position itself calls attention to adjustment, continuity, conservation, stability.

The learner in the learning process

This educational theory "finds its basis in the necessary dependence of the immature upon the mature for guidance, instruction, and discipline."[3] This dependence decreases with the development of "volitional maturity," which is Bagley's term for "the capacity to sustain and control effort even if the activity at the time is not pleasurable."[4]

The learner does not initiate the learning process; sensations of external events and conditions come to the mind where they are unified and made meaningful by a process called apperception.[5] It is the responsibility of the adult to select and provide suitable objects of knowledge.

Although not all learners progress at the same rate,

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[1] Ibid., 252.

[2] Bagley, Education and Emergent Man, 151.

[3] Bagley, "An Essentialists Platform," 256.

[4] Bagley, Education and Emergent Man, 65.

[5] Bagley, Educative Process, 66-67.

all normal children must meet prescribed standards for common learnings. Failure to require maximum effort from each learner is a factor in social inefficiency; "a democratic society has a vital, collective stake in the informed intelligence of every individual citizen."[1] "The hopelessly and unavoidably handicapped . . . --those who can never grow up mentally and those who never grow up volitionally-- . . . must be given special treatment."[2]

Curriculum, subject matter, and methods

"Knowledge may be background as well as instrumental; its value may be interpretative as well as utilitarian."[3] The danger which Bagley identifies in relation to subject matter is that too little may be acquired to serve the unknown demands of these background and interpretative functions.

Regardless of locality, the common core of meanings must be the same; reading, writing, speaking, computation, history and geography are fundamental. "Investigation, invention, and creative art have added to the heritage, and the list of recognized essentials has been extended and will be farther extended."[4] The extensions have already included health instruction, the elements of natural science,

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[1]Bagley, "An Essentialists Platform," 251.

[2]Bagley, Education and Emergent Man, 182-183.

[3]Ibid., 18.

[4]Bagley, "An Essentialists Platform," 253.

and both fine and industrial arts. With changes in patterns of living, some essential learnings which were once the responsibility of other institutions have been transferred to the school; "manual training and the household arts" are mentioned in this respect. As change continues, "analogous substitutes must be sought for other educative experiences which the simpler conditions of life naturally and normally provided."[1] Because the "sum-total" of knowledge "is literally staggering in its dimensions as compared with the learning-capacity of even the gifted individuals,"[2] choices must be made. Bagley suggests that "the criteria of selection should be the welfare and progress of society,"[3] and that, in general, it is "unwise to overload the programs of the lower schools and even of the earlier college years with materials from the inexact [social] sciences and at the expense of the exact and exacting."[4]

In giving priority to education which is "fundamental, adaptable, and cultural," Bagley does not ignore "the necessity of providing through vocational education for specialized efficiency in some one occupation."[5] He

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[1] Ibid., 255.

[2] Bagley, Education and Emergent Man, 154.

[3] Ibid., 119.

[4] Ibid., 159.

[5] William C. Bagley, "The Fundamental Distinction Between Liberal and Vocational Education," in National Education Association, Journal of Proceedings and Addresses (Ann Arbor, Mich.: 1914), 161.

states that " . . . all forms of education are most intimately connected and correlated. . . . We shall grant the necessity for intense specialization in vocational subjects; we should not grant for a moment the wisdom of making any vocational curriculum so intense that the liberal or the cultural should be neglected."[1] In addition, he cautions against overlooking "the influence which concrete vocational interests may have in making meaningful and vital the more general and abstract principles and processes with which liberal education deals. That correlations between vocational and liberal subjects may be worked out with great profit to both and without destroying the integrity of either I have no doubt."[2]

The key to method is system and sequence. Indirect learning is not inappropriate in some instances, especially in primary grades, but Bagley found "far too little direct, oral, expository teaching" in the schools of his time. Because of the dependence of knowing on sense perceptions, "objective teaching" giving "vivid pictures of realities" (e.g., field trips)[3] has a place after some understanding of principles. Deductive methods are usually to be preferred, with developmental methods used in supplementary ways.[4]

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[1] Ibid., 169.

[2] Ibid., 170.

[3] Bagley, Educative Process, 224.

[4] Ibid., 264.

In applying the systematic method so that students of varying abilities can all master a given body of subject matter, the key is the "artist-teacher." Bagley makes an analogy of teaching with fine arts. "It recognized the fundamental significance of such factors as insight, intuition, a sensitiveness to the learner's difficulties, a sympathetic understanding of his needs. It recognizes the importance, too, of a keen appreciation of the human heritage of knowledge, skill, ideal, standard; and especially of that portion of the heritage which it is the particular function of a given teacher to endow with life and meaning and to weave into the living experience of the learner. . . . The artist-teacher will avail himself of whatever technology may be available, but his work is essentially a fine art, not a technological art."[1]

Comments and criticisms

1. This philosophy sees American democracy as a political system which necessitates a fully "literate electorate" to keep it secure. A group of prominent Americans considering the country's future have defined democracy more broadly and, in this writer's opinion, more accurately. First, they find democracy "a method of arriving openly . . . at decisions in keeping with the reasonable wishes of the majority, and then pursuing these decisions with the fullest possible respect for the legitimate rights of the

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[1]Bagley, Education and Emergent Man, 195.

minority."[1] Secondly, it is "a system of government that acts, whenever it does act, to foster justice, preserve liberty, erase inequality, promote morality, and expand opportunity. . . ."[2] Finally, "our democracy has been a spirit that has pervaded the thoughts and directed the actions of governors and governed alike."[3] This recent definition does not deny the relevance of the essentialist's concern for rational intelligence; they do, however, describe democracy as a pervasive, more-than political aspect of our society. For a fully functioning society in this sense, education's task is greater than to prepare individuals to make future decisions based on a common core of knowledge from the past.

Democracy <u>is</u> a way of thinking and acting for all of American society. The young <u>are</u> a part of society. Democracy is present tense. Why do essentialists prepare students to participate in the future rather than to develop and use continuously, within the limitations of normal social regulations and of varying individual capacities, the traits of initiative and responsibility, the skills of group decision and control, and a sense of the true meanings of such words as individuality, liberty, and opportunity?

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[1]Clinton Rossiter, "The Democratic Process," in President's Commission on National Goals, <u>Goals for Americans</u> (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1960), 61.

[2]<u>Ibid</u>., 62.

[3]<u>Ibid</u>.

All of these learnings are complex; Bagley would have called them "emergents," that is, learnings which develop over a period of time. While certain long-range goals are both desirable and necessary, it also seems that education must consider the immature as present members of society.

2. Bagley identifies the American concept of democracy as the form of society which our education must serve. Why, then, in a number of instances, did he compare the American system of education to systems which he evaluated as more successful in other countries?[1] A social institution develops according to the values and goals of a given culture and must therefore be criticized and commended in terms of its functioning in that culture; only within a like culture might the system be equally successful.

3. Bagley was an outstanding critic of progressive education and, in particular, of its low standards of achievement, its lack of organization, and its lack of uniformity. The criticism had, and has, a degree of validity in too many instances. Since other critics are offering similar comments today, it might be well to look at some of Bagley's proposals. Most of his remedies for the "weaknesses" center around the ideas of system and uniformity.

System, as mentioned earlier, is the basic educational method. In teacher preparation, Bagley recommended "professionalized subject matter," that is, subject matter

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[1]Bagley, "An Essentialists Platform," 249, 251.

taught by a teacher-scholar who emphasized the natural structure and sequence of the content so that the teacher, in turn, could pass it on to students in a clear, orderly fashion. (Incidentally, Bagley can be credited for much hard work in raising standards for the amount and quality of preparation required of teachers.) Without quarreling with the fact that the learner must organize knowledge in some meaningful way and that he usually must be guided in doing so, one recalls also that modern learning theorists are saying that the beginner in a subject field is not able to find meaning in the same organization used by the advanced student in the same subject field. It seems that knowledge (also value, feelings, etc.) must be systematized by the student, rather than for him if it is to have full meaning. This matter of system might also be questioned in that its direct and authoritarian procedures could be expected to produce students who seek the "right" answers and do not ask the questions. Our definitions of a democratic society indicate that its welfare depends on a searching, critical attitude on the part of its citizens.

Uniformity appears to stress common background at the expense of unique attributes. While recognizing the need for some shared knowledge and understanding, this nation's cultural traditions have always been pluralistic. Since a viable culture relies on variety and innovation, the educator concerned only with uniformity must be on guard against stifling the creativity on which society depends.

4. Bagley, like Dewey, uses the criterion of social efficiency. Not only his criterion, but his standards of measurement are impersonal and objective. He describes the characteristics--all observable or measurable--of the socially efficient individual; he seems unconcerned as to the subjective, less easily assessed results of education. Socially, too, he measures progress by statistics. Most of the dozen quantitative factors which are listed also have qualitative aspects.[1] Longer life is listed as a sign of progress; the statistics will not show whether or not this customarily means more "life" rather than more "existence." "Increased attendance at art galleries . . . [and] an increase in the per capita consumption of solid literature and of the kinds of music judged by competent authorities to be good music"[2] are measures of progress. Does attendance and buying necessarily mean understanding and enjoyment or could this also reflect boredom, status seeking, or something else? Should not education also be concerned that the reader or listener become increasingly able to judge for himself that which is "good"? Measuring the qualitative and subjective presents problems not yet solved; however, Bagley seems to express little of the regret that many other educators feel in this area. Except for his concern with the "art" of teaching, Bagley's philosophy

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[1]Bagley, Education and Emergent Man, 119.

[2]Ibid., 182-183.

is almost entirely rational and objective. Education, however, is not really such a cold, impersonal process.

Educational Philosophy of John Dewey

By his own assertion, John Dewey's philosophy of education, as presented in Democracy and Education, is pragmatic: "the theory of the method of knowing which is advanced in these pages may be termed pragmatic. Its essential feature is to maintain the continuity of knowing with an activity which purposely modifies the environment."[1] This book is widely accepted as the classic model of pragmatic philosophy applied to education; it does not necessarily represent the thinking of all of Dewey's philosophic descendents who borrowed and redeveloped his ideas. It should perhaps be pointed out, also, that this one man's viewpoint and "progressive education" are not synonymous. Although "progressive" was a significant word in Dewey's work in education, it later designated a larger progressive movement which interpreted and misinterpreted his philosophy in ways which caused him to criticize some aspects of that movement. It is Dewey's philosophy as presented in Democracy and Education alone which is summarized here.

Definition of education

The "technical definition" of education is given

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[1]John Dewey, Democracy and Education (New York: Macmillan, 1916), 344.

as "that reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience and which increases ability to direct the course of subsequent experience."[1] Another wording of the definition calls education "a freeing of individual capacity in a progressive growth directed to social aims."[2]

Purposes and values

"The education process has no end beyond itself; it is its own end. . . ."[3] The overall purpose of the school's share of the education process is "to insure the continuance of education by organizing the powers that insure growth."[4] Social growth (social self-renewal or reconstruction) is the broad aim, while the statement of specific aims "is a matter of emphasis at a given time. . . . A given epoch or generation tends to emphasize in its conscious projections just the things which it has least of in actual fact. . . . The actual and implicit practice and the conscious or stated aims thus balance each other."[5] An "either-or" concept of aims is unacceptable; any number of comprehensive ends may exist without competition, since

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[1] Ibid., 76.

[2] Ibid., 98.

[3] Ibid., 50.

[4] Ibid., 51.

[5] Ibid., 112.

they mean simply different ways of looking at the same scene."[1]

In pragmatic theory, values are derived from experience and are relative to a given situation. "The only ultimate value which can be set up is just the process of living itself."[2] With education assigned the task of guiding the growth process in a "desirable" direction,[3] the standards of an "intentionally progressive" democratic society provide the direction desired. This democratic criterion gives priority to experiences which increase both the interests held in common by the group and the interaction and cooperation with other groups.[4] Although Dewey will give no more than "provisional validity" to any classification of values, he does list the following considerations suggesting the "kind of experience to which the work of the schools should contribute": efficiency, sociability, aesthetic taste, trained intellectual method, and sensitivity to the rights and claims of others.[5] Regarding the individual within this social frame of reference, he states that "a progressive society counts individual variations precious since it finds them the means of its own growth."[6]

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[1] Ibid., 110.

[2] Ibid., 240.

[3] Ibid., 23ff.

[4] Ibid., 83.

[5] Ibid., 243-44

[6] Ibid., 305.

The learner in the learning process

" . . . the self is not something ready-made, but something in continuous formation."[1] Learning is growing, becoming more mature. Because of differing degrees of maturity, modes of growth are different, but both the "normal child and the normal adult . . . are engaged in growing."[2]

Knowing is not external to the learner, but is an active process initiated by the learner; it is not mere physical adjustment, but a mental response to the meaning in the total experience. "Every new idea, every conception of things differing from that authorized by current belief, must have its origin in an individual."[3] Knowing comes about through a continual interaction with the environment whereby both the learner and the environment are changed. Therefore, it is the task of the teacher to recognize that education is indirect by means of the environment and to design environments which will direct the actions of the learner toward the desired ends.

Social efficiency recognizes individuality; it gives attention "to whatever is unique in the individual."[4] A democratic society "must see that intellectual opportunities are accessible to all on equable and easy terms."[5]

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[1] Ibid., 351.

[2] Ibid., 50.

[3] Ibid., 296.

[4] Ibid., 121.

[5] Ibid., 88.

It is "required that every individual should have opportunities to employ his own powers in activities that have meaning."[1] Such development of individual personalities acknowledges that each person has his own purposes and problems and is capable of doing his own thinking; it is aware "of variations of point of view, of appeal of objects, and of mode of attack from person to person."[2]

Curriculum, subject matter, and methods

Knowledge, in pragmatism, has its source in experience. In rejecting all dualisms, this philosophy sees subject matter and method as arbitrary divisions of unitary experience.

The concept of education as a dynamic, purposeful process is a key factor in Dewey's philosophy. The logical model of this process is that of reflective thinking or problem solving. It begins with experience which is continuous with past experience. Within this initiating experience, a significant problem and a tentative interpretation are identified. Pertinent information is obtained through observation, recorded past experience, and other means. Alternative solutions are perceived. One of these is selected and is tested in actual experience--revising the understanding of past experience, yielding new problems, and increasing ability to predict consequences of future

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[1] Ibid., 174.

[2] Ibid., 303.

actions. Ends once achieved become means for setting and achieving new ends. In that the method of "learning to learn" has been indicated as the overall purpose of education, the method of education can also be considered part of the content of education.

Subject matter is a tool in this thinking process; it is "identical with all the objects, ideas, and principles which enter as resources or obstacles to the continuous intentional pursuit of a course of action."[1] In deciding which experiences will provide the subject matter of greatest value, the social criterion is applied. Essentials are "things which are socially most fundamental . . . which have to do with the experiences which the widest groups share." Secondary experiences "represent the needs of specialized groups and technical pursuits."[2] Knowledge is desirable "because of what it does in liberating human intelligence and human sympathy. . . . Any subject which does not accomplish [this result] . . . is not . . . educational."[3] Later, in discussing vocational education, Dewey develops this statement further in saying that a high degree of specialization is undesirable because it limits rather than frees experience; he describes desirable experience in this area as that "which does not subject youth to the demands

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[1] Ibid., 138.

[2] Ibid., 191.

[3] Ibid., 230.

and standards of the present system, but which utilizes its scientific and social factors to develop a courageous intelligence, and to make intelligence practical and executive."[1] With reference to subject areas in general, Dewey says that "any subject is cultural in the degree in which it is apprehended in its widest possible range of meanings."[2] He points out that the "utilization of ordinary experiences to secure an advance into scientific material and method, while keeping the latter connected with familiar human interests, is easier today than it ever was before."[3] "The changes which are taking place in the content of social life tremendously facilitate selection of the sort of activities which will intellectualize the play and work of the school. . . . Even the occupations of the household, agriculture, and manufacturing . . . are instinct with applied science. . . . It is true that many of those who now engage in them are not aware of the intellectual content upon which their personal actions depend. But this fact only gives added reason why schooling should use these pursuits so as to enable the coming generation to acquire a comprehension now too generally lacking. . . ."[4]

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[1] Ibid., 319.

[2] Ibid., 287.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., 275.

Comments and criticisms

1. Education is an instrument of a given society; it seeks to make individuals mature members of that society. An optimistic society believing in growth needs an educational system which continually assesses the present and directs change forward. An educational system using the past as a point of reference for "good" tends to become static, failing to serve the growing needs of the society.

In assuming no ultimate values as enduring guides, pragmatism tests and re-evaluates its values in terms of the present. This tends to imply that the changed present is desirable--that all change is progress. This present orientation is, therefore, a common criticism of pragmatism. In choosing the democratic way of living as a frame of reference for his educational theory, Dewey has provided values which point a long-range direction and influence the evaluation of the present.

Properly functioning, a system of education using this theory is appropriate to the American society as long as democracy is its way of life, presumably indefinitely. Why, then, are some critics saying that the theory is outdated? One commentator suggests that, after a successful start, education following progressive lines of thinking "failed to keep pace with the continuing transformation of the American setting"; he adds that the new of one generation of educators became the conventional wisdom of the next and that "conventional wisdom is always in danger of

obsolescence."[1] Dewey himself saw this danger approaching and challenged educators to continuous reappraisal: "an educational philosophy which professes to be based on the idea of freedom may become as dogmatic as ever was the traditional education which is reacted against. For any theory and set of practices is dogmatic which is not based upon critical examination of its own underlying principles."[2]

2. Development of individual differences is a significant factor in Dewey's philosophy of education. Is it a good idea for a wrong reason? Is the emphasis on the social criterion too strong? This appears to assign intrinsic worth[3] to our democratic social arrangements and instrumental worth to people. Traditionally, the American people have placed intrinsic value on human worth and have cherished democracy as the social environment within which individual personality can best be developed to its fullest.

Sociologists and journalists viewing contemporary society are finding numerous instances in which persons seem to feel--or be treated--like "means" rather than "ends." A need is seen here for taking care in keeping a balance between the individual and social values in this philosophy

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[1]Cremin, 350.

[2]John Dewey, Experience and Education (New York: Collier Books, 1938), 22.

[3]Dewey makes a distinction between "absolute" or "ultimate" values and "intrinsic" values; he accepts the latter. International Encyclopedia of Unified Science, Vol. II, No. 4: Theory of Valuation (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), 26.

of education.

3. Dewey is generally credited with having given impetus to a shift from widespread use of excessively formal methods within all educational philosophies. Criticism has come when the more active and more generalized approach has been poorly used; it has been too easy to equate sheer activity with educative experience. Dewey recognized that this method of education is "more difficult to carry on than was ever the traditional system"; the method "taxes" the teacher and demands that he "become intimately acquainted with the conditions of the local community, physical, historical, economic, occupational, etc., in order to utilize them as educational resources."[1] Furthermore, "failure to give constant attention to development of the intellectual content of experiences and to obtain ever-increasing organization of facts and ideas may in the end merely strengthen the tendency toward a reactionary return to intellectual and moral authoritarianism."[2]

Inherent in Dewey's proposals was the need for a stronger program of teacher education giving attention to the expanding discipline of education as well as to subject matter. Today's concern for the "structure" of knowledge indicates some awareness that physical "doing" is not sufficient for worthwhile learning--another problem of balance

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[1]Dewey, Experience and Education, 40.

[2]Ibid., 86.

in education.

4. Honest evaluation of this philosophy has not been done in terms of its own principles. The experimental method would test ideas rigorously, continuously, and widely in actual experience. Dewey had tested his ideas in a laboratory school situation prior to writing Democracy and Education. Since then, other groups of educators in isolated and probably somewhat atypical schools have made rather consistent applications of the principles and have observed the results; a few larger studies have been made. Have enough schools adopted this philosophy completely enough and long enough to produce a reliable estimate of its effectiveness in the society for which it was designed? Most schools today show a blend of traditional and progressive--with many strains of each represented. Do we really know how to allocate praise and blame for our educational successes and failures?

Educational Philosophy of Robert M. Hutchins

The background for Robert Hutchins' educational theory has been described in this way:

> An impressive and thoroughly indigenous development in American educational thought is the return to the metaphysics of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas by a group of non-Catholic philosophers and thinkers. The outstanding spokesman of this group is Robert M. Hutchins, an heir to the liberal, Protestant tradition, and a product of the scientific and empirical methods of education. Hutchins has renounced the faith of his preceptors, and, independently of the theological attraction, he has

adopted the metaphysics of the Middle Ages.[1]

The metaphysical position referred to finds an objective reality in a body of first principles communicated through the writings of the great minds throughout history. These principles are known through human reason, a method which sets Hutchins apart from the realists who depend on sense data and scientific method as sources of knowledge.

Definition of education

Education is the "cultivation of the intellect."[2]

Purposes and values

"The aim of education is to connect man with man, to connect the present with the past, and to advance the thinking of the race."[3] "The aim of an educational system . . . is to improve man as man."[4]

"The object of the American educational system should be to help the American people become as intelligent as they can."[5]

The social goals of education are indirect, not

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[1]John Walton, "The Apostasy of Robert M. Hutchins," Educational Theory, III, No. 2 (April, 1953), 162.

[2]Robert M. Hutchins, The Higher Learning in America (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1936, reissued paperbound 1962), 67.

[3]Ibid., 71.

[4]Robert M. Hutchins, The Conflict in Education in a Democratic Society (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953), 68.

[5]Hutchins, Higher Learning, xiv.

explicit. "Society is to be improved, not by forcing a program of social reform down its throat, through the schools or otherwise, but by the improvement of the individuals who compose it."[1] An intellectually competent man will seek to change, rather than adapt to, his environment; groups of such men with common, rather than specialized, backgrounds will have a basis for communication and a shared common purpose in the changes sought.

The liberal goals of education are thus in conflict with vocational or specialized goals; any vocational emphasis in public education is considered a deterrent both to good intellectual education and to effective preparation for work.

Truth is to be pursued for its own sake, and truth is judged by reason or "correct thinking." The intellect is "the good for which all other goods are only means"; the standards of reason are "the same for all men in all societies."[2]

The intellectual virtues, or habits, are therefore of greater value than such things as "material prosperity, peace and civil order, justice, and the moral virtues."[3] The latter are considered merely instrumental or utilitarian in attaining "the highest Wisdom:" knowledge of the

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[1]Hutchins, Conflict, 69.

[2]Hutchins, Higher Learning, 67.

[3]Ibid., 67.

first principles of a rational existence.

The learner in the learning process

The distinguishing human ability is reason; the nature of this ability is the same for all persons although individuals may vary in the degree in which they possess it. Since the school's sole responsibility is the development of the intellect, other aspects of the student's personality and development are not relevant.

The learning process deals entirely with the acquisition of desirable intellectual habits. Learning is general--automatically and universally transferable: "An intellect properly disciplined, an intellect properly habituated, is an intellect able to operate well in all fields."[1] The habits to be learned are, of course, the same for all students.

Because prevailing economic conditions require that the young do not enter the labor market early, the public schools need to provide education for all young people up to about the age of twenty. Higher education should include only the relative few with unusually great mental potential.

All adults, however, are considered as potential learners. Hutchins accepts the principle that "subjects requiring experience can be learned only by the experienced"; this principle "leads to the conclusion that the most

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[1] Ibid., 63.

important branch of education is the education of adults."[1] He goes on to explain that, "I am not suggesting that he [the adult] should go to school all his life. But I am proposing that he should learn all his life; and I think he will find that informal association with others who have the same purpose in view will help him and them to achieve it."[2]

Curriculum, subject matter, and methods

"Education implies teaching. Teaching implies knowledge. Knowledge is truth. The truth is everywhere the same. Hence education should be everywhere the same."[3] A single pattern provides for suitable intellectual content and curricular organization without regard for time or place.

The keystone of the educational program is liberal education consisting of the "permanent studies": "the greatest books of the western world and the arts of reading, writing, thinking, and speaking, together with mathematics. . . ."[4] The emphasis is on the classics, or the books that are "contemporary in every age. . . ." These books are essential "because it is impossible to understand any subject or to comprehend the contemporary world without them. . . . They will also develop habits of reading and

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[1]Hutchins, Conflict, 75.

[2]Ibid., 85.

[3]Hutchins, Higher Learning, 66.

[4]Ibid., 85.

standards of taste and criticism that will enable the adult, after his formal education is over, to think and act intelligently about the thought and movements of contemporary life."[1]

This unit of liberal education would be the end of formal education for most students and would extend from about the beginning of the present junior year of high school through the sophomore year of college.

Prior to the period of liberal education, it appears that attention would be devoted to intellectual techniques--reading, writing, and figuring. Moral and spiritual development is the "sphere of the family and the church."[2] "Whatever can be learned outside the educational system should be learned outside it, because the educational system has enough to do teaching what can be learned only in the system."[3] For example, vocational and technical education is best left to industry. Hutchins refers to "tricks of the trade" which are learned in school and become outdated "because teachers get out of date and cannot keep up with current tricks, and because tricks can be learned only in the actual situation in which they can be employed."[4]

Following the period of liberal education, some

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[1] Ibid., 81.

[2] Hutchins, Conflict, 70.

[3] Ibid., 29.

[4] Hutchins, Higher Learning, 48.

students will continue to a three-year period in the university where they will study in three areas: metaphysics, the social sciences, and the natural sciences. While the student may emphasize one of these fields, his aim will not be vocational. After completion of university study, the student may choose a vocation which demands specialized competencies. In that case, he will go on to a research or technical institute or a professional school. Since " . . . 'practical' work interferes with the education of the student,"[1] these schools, although necessary to the vocations which they serve, are separate from the university. The professional schools would be rigidly limited in number and "those which have no intellectual content in their own right would disappear altogether, except as their activities might be thought worthy of preservation in research or technical institutes."[2] "The subject matter of a learned profession is intellectual."[3]

Dr. Hutchins seems to regard teaching methods more as "rules of the trade" added to a general education than as an area deserving special attention. "All there is to teaching can be learned through a good education and being a teacher."[4] "The prospective teacher's general education

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[1] Ibid., 61.

[2] Ibid., 112.

[3] Ibid., 52.

[4] Ibid., 56.

would be identical with that of the lawyer, doctor, and clergyman. With a good education in the liberal arts . . . he has learned the basic rules of pedagogy. . . . The liberal arts train the teacher in how to teach, that is, in how to organize, express, and communicate knowledge. In the university he should learn what to teach."[1]

The Socratic dialogue is given as the teaching model: "Criticism, discussion, question, debate--these are the truly human methods of instruction. Teaching . . . is a cooperative art. . . . Intellectual progress [takes place] . . . when teacher and pupil are working together to bring the pupil to the rational answer to the question before him."[2]

Although education is directed toward intelligent action, and while practical wisdom requires both intellectual operations and experience, experience is not considered a method of education. "We may leave experience to other institutions and influences and emphasize in education the contribution that it is supremely fitted to make, the intellectual training of the young. The life they [young people] lead when they are out of our hands will give them experience enough. . . . If we can teach them while they are being educated how to reason, they may be able to comprehend and assimilate their experience."[3]

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[1] Ibid., 115.

[2] Hutchins, Conflict, 69.

[3] Hutchins, Higher Learning, 69.

The possible educational value of some types of experience is not, however, entirely ruled out. As a channel for carrying information, and not as experience in the sense of an interacting situation, even experiences in some subject areas which lack intellectual content may serve as educational methods. For instance, "technology as such has no place in general education. If it can be justified at all, it can only be because we discover that certain principles can best be communicated through technical work."[1]

Unlike subject content, methods of teaching may vary. "Allowances for individual differences should be provided for by abolishing all requirements except the examinations and permitting the student to take them whenever in his opinion he is ready to do so."[2]

It is also recognized that there are some unsolved methodological problems. Dr. Hutchins comments that, "I concede the great difficulty of communicating the kind of education I favor to those who are unable or unwilling to get their education from books. I insist, however, . . . that the answer to it is not that some people should not have it, but that we should find out how to give it to those whom we do not know how to teach at present. . . . We should continue our efforts and experiments to find out how to give a general education to the handminded and the functionally

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[1] Ibid., 74.

[2] Ibid., 72.

illiterate."[1] Eventually, technology is expected to solve these problems. It is in the collection of data and the advancement of technology that empirical experimentation makes its contribution; the experimental method itself is not a reliable method for reaching the true goals of education.

Comments and criticisms

1. The ability to reason and make thoughtful choices has been widely and well justified as a desired outcome of education. For example, the Educational Policies Commission discusses The Central Purpose of American Education as: "The purpose which runs through and strengthens all other educational purposes--the common thread of education--is the development of the ability to think."[2] However, while giving some assent to Mr. Hutchins' plea for attention to the intellectual tasks of education, educators might at the same time find cause to quarrel with some of his ideas relative to (a) the nature of reason, and (b) the emphasis to be placed on this goal.

a. Hutchins' theory assumes that the intellect is composed of various unitary abilities each of which can be trained and habituated through mental exercise. While psychology has not yet been able to completely furnish adequate

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[1] Ibid., 61.

[2] Educational Policies Commission, The Central Purpose of American Education (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1961), 12.

support for any one coherent, comprehensive theory of learning, there is one point on which psychologists seem certain. It is difficult--if not impossible--to find a text in educational psychology which refers to faculty psychology and formal mental discipline as anything but "outdated," "discarded," "displaced," or "disproven." Empirical, logical, and common sense backing for these opinions seems firm enough that it is difficult to understand why a reasonable man would continue to use premises of the mental discipline theory.

Although psychologists recognize the many gaps in their knowledge of the thinking process, most seem to agree that: "No one can teach anyone 'how to think.'" It is possible, however, to guide individuals in increasing their competence in intellectual processes. Teachers "can aid individuals to recognize and be sensitive to certain pitfalls, fallacies, and sources of error."[1] Students can be encouraged to "examine the evidence which supports any belief, solution, or conclusion which is suggested for acceptance, together with the implication and further conclusions of the evidence."[2] It should be noted that not everyone has the same mental powers, but that "these

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[1]William H. Burton, Roland B. Kimball, and Richard L. Wing, Education for Effective Thinking (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1960), vi.

[2]Ibid., v.

qualities occur in a wide diversity of patterns in different individuals."[1] If one were to question the psychological basis of Hutchins' concept of reason, one would also be questioning other aspects of his theory. For example, if the learners' intellectual capacities are not the same, should their educational program be the same? If thinking results when the learner himself examines and makes decisions about ideas and principles, can education reach its intellectual goal through passively identifying and accepting traditional principles?

b. Does the school have a concern exclusively for intellectual development, or must it also show some concern for the personal, vocational, social, or moral issues about which students are thinking?

Hutchins seems to be using principles from the past to "improve man" who may someday in the future be able to realize the vision of a "world republic." It would seem that education should have some responsibility for helping youth learn about and make decisions in the world today--while relating the present to both the past and to the future. A spokesman for the humanities has stated a criticism which seems relevant to Hutchins' proposals:

> The default of humanistic education in the modern world has never been that it has failed to transmit the undefined vision of Christianity or of

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[1]Educational Policies Commission, 4.

> Greece. . . . Its default lies in the unspoken assumption that the purity of the transmitted ideal is sufficient to the needs of the hour. It is not. . . . To every generation the task remains of reworking its covenants or re-establishing their meaning and relevance for men who do and suffer, live and act, on the birth of a new world. An education that fails to respond to this task is the cruelest deception that a generation can work upon its young. For it leaves the creative resolution of the problem of inheritance to those who are least competent, because least equipped, to perform it.[1]

Since the theory of universal transfer of knowledge is not psychologically defensible, and since young people need help in finding the relevance of the "great ideas" in today's world, the school might well provide guidance in selected experiences which will add to the student's "practical wisdom." Thinking in relation to problems in the contemporary environment suggests that the development of reason may better be considered as a pervasive goal, but not necessarily the only goal, in education. The Commission report quoted earlier explains its term <u>central</u> purpose in this way: "We use the term not to mark other educational purposes as subordinate but rather to convey the idea that it is the thinking person who can bring all valid purposes into an integrated whole. Rationality is a means as well as an end. Education must be interfused with the process of thinking and the attitude of thoughtfulness."[2]

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[1]John F. Taylor, "Humanities in Land Grant Universities," <u>Saturday Review</u> (April 18, 1964), 65.

[2]Educational Policies Commission, Foreword.

2. These proposals point out that the American tradition is the Graeco-Hebraic tradition; they emphasize the reading of the greatest books of the western world. Liberal education aims at "the continuation of the dialogue that was the heart of western civilization. . . . [It makes] the student a participant in the Great Conversation that began with the dawn of history and continues to the present day."[1] East and West intermingle in all parts of the world today; in this country there are more and more citizens who think according to eastern traditions. Can any people today ignore the significant contributions made outside of their own predominant tradition? Would this not hinder communication as much as the subject area over-specialization which Hutchins deplores?

3. "Truth is everywhere the same. . . ." Education is the same at all times and in all places; it centers on the "permanent studies." Hutchins states these principles. Does he also contradict them? If subject matter is unchanging, why does his second edition of Higher Learning contain a change in his position on the necessity of a modern foreign language? Is this because the "permanent" studies actually do change over a period of time . . . and perhaps, also, in different places? Or does it reflect the difficulty an educator would have in judging what is most significant? Foreign language, as Hutchins sees it, is more

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[1]Hutchins, Conflict, 34.

than a tool in education; it is actually seen to convey basic principles about man and his communication.

A more important type of change is indicated in the justification of the organizing principle of this educational theory. Hutchins has gone back to the Middle Ages in search of a principle which will bring unity to the modern university. "The medieval university had a principle of unity. It was theology. . . . But these are other times. . . . Theology is based on revealed truth and on articles of faith. We are a faithless generation. . . . To look to theology to unify the modern university is futile and vain. If we omit from theology faith and revelation, we are substantially in the position of the Greeks. . . . Among the Greeks, then, metaphysics, rather than theology, is the ordering and proportioning principle."[1] Without arguing whether or not theology could be a relevant principle, we can see that changing times have brought about a change in values and in the source of wisdom. Is truth everywhere--at all times--the same? Whether it is truth that changes, or whether it is man's knowledge of truth that changes, to base an educational system on <u>the</u> truth seems to be uncertain business. A wiser conception of education would seem to be built upon the recognition that change is a vital, integral part of the world in which we live and that it is the task of educational planners to continually re-evaluate the direction

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[1]Hutchins, <u>Higher Learning</u>, 96-97.

of change and revise goals and practices to support and encourage desirable directions.

4. Even <u>if</u> absolute values and universal truths can be accurately identified, there are practical and unsolved problems involved in organizing and administering a common program of education.

One problem lies in an understanding of the nature of the learner. While all people do possess the uniquely human ability to think and express their conclusions in words and actions, persons also have other unique and common traits, and they can and do differ from one another because of varying combinations of these other traits. One characteristic does not alone determine what man can--and ought--to be. Therefore, in addition to some common education, there must be provision for developing the differences that are necessary in realizing the full potential of the individual and the society in which he lives. Since the interacting human characteristics are not all intellectual, the curriculum of the schools might better reflect a variety of complementary goals.

While Hutchins' program is theoretically designed to serve all young people, it is practically and effectively selective. He points out that we do not know how to teach this content to approximately one-third of our students; he also indicates that this number of teenage "drop-outs" cannot be absorbed into the labor force. What is to happen to these students? And what will happen to our society

because of them? Mr. Hutchins' "faith that the technological genius of America will solve the problem of communication"[1] does not seem to be a full and responsible answer to these questions.

5. Although reason is identified as the unique human trait and the purpose of all education, one might wonder how much respect Hutchins really has in widespread individual capacity to think. For instance, he says that "there is a hierarchy of values. The task of education is to help us understand it, establish it, and live by it."[2] Knowledge is transmitted by the great writers of the past. Reason is developed as a habit. All of this appears to imply that man can be trusted to make decisions only <u>after</u> he has been <u>told</u> what values he shall accept, and what principles he shall use as guides, and after his thinking processes have become established routines. Are men not capable of participation in increasingly complex experiences in which they discover and test, accept or reject, the values and principles by which they live?

6. <u>Higher Learning in America</u> was first published in 1936, was reissued in 1962 with only minor changes in the foreword, and is still being purchased and read. The criticisms of education are still relevant after twenty-five years. The problems which Hutchins sees <u>do</u> exist.

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[1] <u>Ibid</u>., 61.

[2] Hutchins, <u>Conflict</u>, 72.

Should this book become a classic? Educators who do not want to accept this philosophy of education might take it as a challenge to think through and implement their own viewpoints more effectively so that the same basic unsolved issues will not remain another twenty-five years hence.

CHAPTER III

HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION WITHIN EACH OF FOUR PHILOSOPHIES OF EDUCATION

Introduction

Education is an applied or practical field, and educational theories intend that certain types of action will follow. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the beliefs and practices in home economics education which seem to be justifiable applications of each of the four educational philosophies of the preceding chapter, namely, the philosophies of Louise Antz, William C. Bagley, John Dewey, and Robert M. Hutchins.

Interpretation of theory is hazardous business; it would appear that the only person who can apply a philosophy of education with authority is the person who originated it. Philosophies of education, and their problems of interpretation, have been compared to "slogan systems." The logical considerations given to slogans are helpful in understanding the nature of misinterpretation and some of the standards for judging practical applications of educational philosophies:

> The occasion for misinterpretation arises when proposals are offered that go beyond those found in the theory itself. The interpreter develops additional practical proposals not given by the original author of the theory. In this sense the practitioner is extending the interpretation of the author's slogans. Since there is no strict

> rule dictating these extensions, how can we say that they are rightly or wrongly made? . . . .
>
> In deciding whether a person has properly interpreted some slogans in a slogan system, we take into account two aspects of the system. First, if the original theorist gave any interpretation to this slogan at all, we judge whether the later interpreter is giving the same kind of interpretation. Secondly, we judge the interpretation of one slogan against the backdrop of other slogans . . . in the system.[1]

The four theorists selected vary in the kind and amount of interpretation which they give to home economics education. Hutchins is precise: no home economics. Dewey has spelled out an elementary curriculum, including home economics, with considerable detail; he offers numerous principles for secondary and vocational education. In addition to Dewey's own writing, other more recent references contain suggestions to consider in outlining a home economics program with this orientation. Bagley is less specific about details in home economics, but the opinions which he does give in this area, plus his more general statements about education, are so unequivocal and so seemingly free of possible alternatives in his thinking, that one feels somewhat safe--and perhaps not justifiably so--in applying this philosophy. Here, too, current writers of similar beliefs are helpful in pointing toward likely interpretations. Antz states her philosophy in more general

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[1]B. Paul Komisar and James E. McClellan, "The Logic of Slogans," in B. Othanel Smith and Robert M. Ennis (eds.), Language and Concepts in Education (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1961), 208-209.

terms than the others and gives fewer practical examples; her work, the one published article readily available, gives less coverage to the many facets and practical details of education. Furthermore, there is indication that there may be quite different alternate applications (at least three are apparent) which would be unlikely to exist together. Interpretation for home economics of this philosophy, or of other forms of idealism, has had relatively little attention in other references. Therefore, of the four programs, the one suggested by Antz's philosophy is the most highly speculative and the most likely to contain improper extensions of theory.

It is not intended that the various proposals in these home economics programs represent a direct one-to-one relationship with specific beliefs in the basic positions; it is desired that each program will be reasonably accurate in expressing the total philosophy which it represents. Clearly, it is impossible to specify all of the proposals which any one philosophy might contain for home economics. Rather, it is hoped that the reader can gain some insight into the general nature and distinctive features of each program.

The supplementary authors quoted have not always given a clear label to their own educational philosophy and, therefore, should not necessarily be identified as exponents of the total viewpoint within which they are quoted. Their statements seem to illustrate ways in which

relevant ideas might be expressed by contemporary interpreters of the four philosophies. However, this writer has no intention of quoting out of context and believes that the statements are used with fairness.

Home economics education has been limited here to public school programs at the elementary, secondary and adult levels. References relating to higher education appear only when they offer proposals or represent points of view pervasive at other levels.

These four programs are presented at this time in descriptive terms only. In the next chapter, following a statement of the general beliefs of the home economics profession, the programs will be compared and evaluated using as criterion their potential effectiveness in expressing home economics philosophy.

Home Economics Education within the Educational Philosophy of Louise Antz

In this theory of self-realization, the focus is the spiritual self in preference to the physical and social aspects of personality. The growing mind for which the school is responsible is composed largely of intellectual abilities. Since the learner takes an active part in his own development, basic mechanical skills are held necessary for creative experience and self-expression. However, subject matter priority goes to the arts and humanities; broad, liberal fields are preferred to applied or specialized fields.

It is entirely possible that such a viewpoint might

take this stand:

> Schools should not waste valuable time on the practical arts, the development of social skills, or problems of personal adjustment. Other agencies such as the church, home, and the YWCA and YMCA can do these important jobs.[1]

If included in the curriculum, home economics would be defined as practical arts. However, a family life definition is a second possibility if the personal-social aspects of home economics are recognized as contributing to the overall educational goal of self-realization.

Purposes and values

Purposes of home economics education would vary with the position awarded to home economics in the total curriculum. One should note, too, that home and family life is not unimportant as an area in which education is needed; it is just that social and manual skills are not considered a prime task of the schools.

The practical arts focus would see its objective as the development of manual skills and the ability to use them in creative ways. The rationale for such a purpose might be something like this:

> All the gadgets in the world will not make a good kitchen, for a good kitchen means that dining is regarded as a fine art . . . labor-saving things in the modern kitchen are to be approved, provided

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[1]Robert S. Fox, "Balance and the Problem of Purpose in Education," Balance in the Curriculum, Yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (Washington, D.C.: The Association, a department of the National Education Association, 1961), 51.

> they are not substituted for the end product, which is good food, deliciously prepared and served in an atmosphere of gaiety. It is a part of the charm of old cultures, to which we might well return, to play up such occasions, for they rank among the best means ever devised to encourage thought and to strengthen the ties of friendship.[1]

Another writer refers to the "minor arts . . . ceramics, textiles, and the related arts":

> These arts contribute as much and as directly to the development of richness of personality as do the more conventional humanistic and scientific studies. . . .[2]

Related to education for family life, objectives might seek to develop (1) awareness of the significance of the family as a social institution, and (2) understanding of the rights and responsibilities of all individuals in the family. Supporters of these objectives believe that:

> The ideal home is a reasonably self-contained cell of parents and children, to which all else--relatives, neighbors, communications, and community councils--must turn to find a measure of their own social worth. It gives character and meaning to the larger social circles that surround it.[3]

They may also believe that:

> Unless men as well as women can be given the conviction that personal cultivation and career are secondary to making a success of the family, and indeed that both are bleak satisfactions apart from a warm hearth, we shall not have found wisdom.[4]

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[1]George D. Stoddard, On the Education of Women (New York: Macmillan Company, 1950), 80.

[2]Lynn White, Jr., Educating Our Daughters (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), 67.

[3]Stoddard, 64.

[4]White, 76.

Another aspect of such an objective is this:

> What students do need is an opportunity to explore with the instructor the personal and social consequences of alternate current folkways in relation to the basic moral values of our society. Imperfect as is our knowledge concerning human relations, we can still help the student to clarify standards in areas of life where social changes have created confusion and a moral vacuum.[1]

Within the perspective of education for family life, some interpretations--especially at senior high and college levels--would be particularly concerned that girls and women develop a positive image of themselves as homemakers. It has been said that perhaps "America's deepest spiritual malady is lack of respect among its women both for themselves as persons and for themselves as a group."[2]

By the time girls are graduated from college, such outcomes as these are desirable:

> What is required is the conviction that full-time homemaking is one of the several equally reputable careers for college women.[3] [and]
>
> . . . if we could only make women understand that no job in the world can equal in importance or challenge the job of rearing children to be fine human beings, no one would need to worry about the self-respect of the housewife-mother.[4]

The goal for the future homemaker is seen here:

> The eternal problem for the homemaker is to discover

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[1]Mirra Komarovsky, Women in the Modern World (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1953), 221.

[2]White, 27.

[3]Komarovsky, 287.

[4]Ibid., 291.

> the art of living among small tasks, to get a sense of direction, to combine fragments into a meaningful whole.[1]

Throughout these objectives, one is aware that skills are valued as means and that human development is primary. Focusing on the family, home economics would stress the role of the family in nurturing individual personality.

Education for wage-earning in home economics is an improbable aim for the high school in this philosophy, although for a few students too young to leave school and mentally incapable of further pursuit of academic subjects, some technical skills might be seen as a practical necessity that the individual might be prepared to make some economic contribution.

Students taught

It has already been indicated that both men and women might be a part of this home economics program.

This idealist philosophy urges "keeping subject matter liberal rather than specialized for as long a time as the student's abilities, financial resources, and interests allow."[2] Under the theory that applied and skill fields are easier, one might expect to find most secondary students in home economics entering courses at the point where they have difficulty meeting minimum standards for achievement in liberal fields. Perhaps, too, girls not

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[1]Stoddard, 75.

[2]Antz, 245.

financially able to attend college may be found in home economics classes preparing for their more immediate role as homemakers.

Curriculum, subject matter, and methods

The practical arts may sometimes be found in the elementary grades where children are guided to develop some proficiency in skills--sewing, cooking, embroidery, weaving, and so forth--so that they will be able to execute ideas more effectively. These arts might be a part of some other subject interest. They might, instead, be separate periods of instruction--perhaps conducted by a home economics teacher--in the several areas.

If home economics were offered at the junior high level, one might predict that it would be one of the "special" courses sampled in an exploratory program planned to give students an opportunity to discover individual tastes and interests and to help develop some appreciation of the values in everyday experience. Such experiences would not be equivalent to academic subjects. It would not be surprising to find a separate section and even a different marking system for these subjects on report cards; some schools might make them required, but non-credit.

While the liberal studies are broad and seek to "expose each child to the best things of the culture,"[1] it is the aim of specialization to help the student develop

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[1]Antz, 245.

in "his chosen undertakings beyond the mere beginner's level."[1] For students who must begin specialization in high school, home economics becomes a series of carefully structured, subject-centered courses covering the various areas of home economics: foods and nutrition, clothing and textiles, interior decoration, child development, and so forth. Students would be expected to study considerable basic information in each area, to practice essential skills, and to gain general understanding related to the role of the homemaker.

For students who have time and interest to take an elective in addition to major subjects, courses would likely be subject-centered, too--but not the same courses taught for specialization. Electives seek to maintain a broad approach, drawing upon the arts and humanities. For example, in studying child care, when one talks about "genetic factors, growth, nutrition, ability, environment, education, and survival prospects," one will soon get involved in "all the cultures and all the abstractions the world offers."[2]

Another example, directly concerned with college courses but suggesting a type of approach considered appropriate to high school, describes clothing as an area which can "develop not only manual skills but also intelligence

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[1] Ibid., 244.

[2] Stoddard, 57.

and taste." It would include the study of textile fabrics, their design and their use in the decorative arts; it would demonstrate that "the history of dress is at least as revealing of the course of thought and emotion as is the history of poetry. . . ."[1]

Family life education, and the values it seeks to teach, is an area shared by many disciplines. Its teaching may be the responsibility of home economics; it is also possible that other subjects take responsibility for some or all instruction, leaving the practical arts as the domain of home economics.

Adults with an adequate liberal education and a command of the techniques for furthering their own education are expected to find the necessary practical information from such sources as magazines and newspapers, television, clubs, and social agencies. Courses and workshops may be organized as part of a local non-credit adult program teaching specialized skills or knowledge in which women may feel deficient.

At all levels, experience is a necessary background for learning. Students bring much experience to class with them; in addition, teachers structure activities which will bring out suitable ideas. This suggests laboratory work in such areas as foods and clothing, observation and work with small children, family case studies, and so forth;

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[1]White, 81.

all students may not necessarily be required to have the same experience. Group discussion, not the broader sphere of experience, is the key to real learning. Intellectual content is more important than process. A skillful teacher attends less to the dynamics of the group situation and more to the questions through which she stimulates students to share their experiences, to compare and evaluate ideas, and to gain insight into the meaning of their experience. To do this, a home economics teacher might teach in only one or two areas in home economics so that she might know these areas in depth. To be able to lead students in recognizing the broad implications of their experience, the teacher should have a broad, liberal background herself. She would also need a carefully thought-through personal and educational philosophy in order to be able to present suitable standards for student learning.

Since full realization of individual potential is the primary value of this educational theory, students would be expected to meet high standards of achievement in relation to the teacher's estimate of their abilities. Many kinds of evaluation would be necessary and would consider many factors in addition to skill performance and information retention. In interior design, for instance, the uniqueness--within appropriate limits--of arrangement would be weighed along with the evidence of factual knowledge of color and design. Or, a distinctive and effective decoration on a blouse might balance a slightly crooked seam.

A teacher would not be afraid to supplement objective evaluation procedures with subjective judgment.

Home Economics Education within the Educational Philosophy of William C. Bagley

Within an Essentialist's school, students are instructed in a stable body of common knowledge. They are expected to acquire the habits and attitudes which will enable them to make the adjustments required of adult citizens in maintaining a democratic society.

Home economics is not a part of this common core of fundamental subjects. Bagley does, however, include home economics as an acceptable extension; it represents one of the areas of recognized practical significance in which training has been neglected by other institutions in a complex modern society. The place of home economics in the total curriculum has been expressed more specifically by modern writers of similar educational convictions:

> There are many kinds of practical training, non-intellectual in character, which a school or college may nevertheless properly offer as complements to its central program of liberal education. Home economics, shopwork, typewriting, and bookkeeping represent skills of such general value that no student is likely to find them inapplicable to the life he eventually leads. They remain technical skills, not intellectual disciplines, but no valid reason can be given why the school or college should not offer supplementary instruction in them.[1]

Such instruction should be given "where time permits" and

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[1]Arthur Bestor, The Restoration of Learning (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), 81-82.

"preferably without academic credit."[1]

Another author states a similar view:

> I believe that those who want to learn manual skills, be it woodworking or cooking, should be given the opportunity as long as these remain more or less in the realm of play-activities and are properly subordinated to serious academic study.[2]

Defined in this context, home economics would be a technical field of science applied to the efficient maintenance of the home. Since standards of taste are also involved in some of these areas of learning, home economics would also have a minor element of applied art.

Purposes and values

Home economics teachers would wish their students to adopt desirable standards for the home, to develop basic housekeeping skills, and to acquire information useful in homemaking. The overall goal would be the training of efficient homemakers. Also, the more highly specialized vocational training might include preparation for some areas of home-related employment. Both types of occupational goals are in addition to general education and distinguishable from the common elements of education.

Stress would be on efficiency--scientifically determined "best" ways to use resources. Technical skills are key factors.

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[1] Ibid., 51.

[2] Mortimer Smith, And Madly Teach (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1949), 11.

In a philosophy which holds to objective values, teachers would take positive, prescriptive positions on the "right" and "wrong" of the goals and practices found in the home.

In some instances, manual skills might also be of value to the individual as cultural or leisure time activities. Bagley does admit some such areas in his plan of general education over and above the "essentials."

Students taught

Students select home economics as a subordinate area of study--if the school has first chosen to offer this as an "extra" worthy of the effort and cost. Some essentialists are fearful that teachers may permit slow learners to take home economics rather than to require of these students the persistence and discipline--and perhaps longer time--necessary for them to meet minimum academic requirements; in truth, this may happen in some instances.

The vocational homemaking objective appears to assume that students will be girls at the high school level and women in the adult classes.

Curriculum, subject matter, and methods

Limited to teenagers and adults and ranked as a non-essential subject, the home economics program would be a simple one.

Independent, specialized courses in high school seem more likely than composite or sequential courses which

take too much of the student's time. Specialized courses lend themselves more readily to precisely organized subject matter and to more thorough acquisition of factual material and skills. Avocational objectives might be realized through exploratory, survey-type courses in the junior high or by special interest groups meeting as an adjunct to the regular curriculum. A club of this type might engage in a skill or craft such as cooking, sewing, knitting, or weaving.

Courses offered would be in science-based areas such as foods and nutrition, clothing and textiles, household care and equipment, family health and safety. According to Bagley, "When the human element enters, uncertainty enters."[1] Therefore, areas dealing with interpersonal relationships cannot contain enough reliable knowledge to make their study worthwhile. Adult courses would attempt to help women to keep up to date on expanding information by providing facts about new textile fibers, demonstration of appliances, recent developments in nutrition, and so forth.

A systematic body of subject matter--commonly accepted by all home economics teachers--would be taught in each area. Direct instruction by the teacher is the usual method. If convinced of greater efficiency in imparting information, teachers might use such techniques as programmed instruction. They would, however, wait for sufficient

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[1]Bagley, "An Essentialists Platform," 248.

empirical evidence of success before adopting current fads. Student projects and other active experiences are to demonstrate and reinforce principles after they have been taught. For example, students would submit textiles to testing procedures to see in actual fact the characteristics the teacher has described; testing would not be a significant method for initial discovery of identifying characteristics. In the elementary grades, some home-related activities might serve a similar function in verifying principles in other subject areas; such activity would be without reference to the total context of the activity and would not be considered as home economics.

Skills are a major concern. To master them demands repeated practice and drill and use of the larger portion of class time. Students would work at the same project selected by the teacher. Members of a clothing class might not only make a similar garment--a blouse, for instance--but they might also be expected to use the same pattern to allow for more carefully organized instruction and to be sure that specified techniques were mastered.[1] "Home practices" would be encouraged to develop greater proficiency

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[1]Teachers seeking the same learning outcomes--in this case, sewing skills--for all students have usually tended to achieve these through assigning the same project to each person in the class. This method facilitates systematic instruction focused on desired skills. It avoids the possible delay and confusion resulting from the secondary problems presented when students are permitted to select varied projects which include the primary skills. However,

in the skills taught in the classroom; there would be less emphasis on the more complex, student-directed "home experience."

Evaluation is based on objective, observable evidence. Long-term effectiveness of home economics might be judged by a general improvement in the standard of living:

> Food is of better quality; clothing and shelter are more comfortable and more attractive; habits of personal cleanliness and decency are taken for granted; health hazards decrease; there is less ugliness and more beauty.[1]

Evaluation techniques would focus on scientifically measurable aspects of learning--exact standards of performance for skills, amount of factual knowledge retained, and so forth. Students are ranked in relation to one another with regard to final learning outcomes; amount of growth or variations in ability are not taken into account.

Teachers must have a thorough command of subject knowledge, and they must be able to present it in an

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it must be noted that this method of teaching is not necessarily a part of the essentialist position. It is entirely possible that students might gain common learnings through differing activities.

This observation implies that a range of teaching techniques may be acceptable within any given educational philosophy. If certain methods have become widely associated with specific philosophies, it is perhaps because some methods have been found to be more efficient and adaptable than others in reaching specified outcomes. Purposes, not methods, are determining characteristics of educational philosophies.

[1]Bagley, Education and Emergent Man, 27.

organized and skillful fashion which claims the student's attention and effort. A teacher of a specialized area of home economics might be expected to have studied her particular specialization in some depth. Teachers would be highly proficient in skills so that they could establish desirable standards and work habits for students to imitate. Homemakers, or other resource persons, invited to the class would need to exhibit similar expertness.

Home Economics Education within the Educational Philosophy of John Dewey

Dewey's philosophy of education is concerned with the total growth of each individual, and it seeks to achieve social aims through active participation of the learner in a social environment. Not only within Dewey's theory, but also within the practice of his laboratory school, one finds a place for home economics. Since experiences with the home and with work are widely shared by most persons, these experiences pass the criterion for admittance as fundamental areas to which the school may give attention.

Also, Dewey felt that the school should exemplify and simplify social life and that school life should grow out of home life. The familiar activities of the home should be seen in such a way that "the child will gradually learn the meaning of them, and be capable of playing his own part in relation to them."[1]

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[1]John Dewey, "My Pedagogic Creed" (originally published 1897), in Education Today, ed. Joseph Ratnor (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1940), 7.

Remembering that Dewey believed in the usefulness of knowledge and in education as a method of social progress, one feels that he might have defined home economics as a field of study which integrates knowledge from other basic studies in solving problems related to the improving of home and family life. In giving home economics a place in the curriculum, he might have agreed with one of his contemporaries, a home economist, who said that some of the "greatest opportunities to promote social welfare and social progress lie . . . in the better use of social resources, the better organization and direction of our domestic affairs."[1]

Purposes and values

The comprehensiveness of aims in this philosophy suggests that home economics may have multiple purposes, all of them related to the larger aims of a dynamic democratic society.

Because the goals of home economics education are often considered as goals of vocational education or of general education, this apparent dichotomy is an appropriate area in which to illustrate the possible interpretation of the and/or point of view and of the interrelatedness

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[1]Ellen H. Richards, "The Present Status and the Future Development of Domestic Science Courses in the High School," The Place of Vocational Subjects in the High-School Curriculum, Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Scientific Study of Education, Part II (Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1905), 50.

of goals.

A general social aim for a group of activities which include "household arts" has been stated by Dewey in this way:

> The aim is not the economic value of the products, but the development of social power and insight. It is this liberation from narrow utilities, this openness to the possibilities of the human spirit, that makes these practical activities in the school allies of art and centers of science and history.[1]

He indicates that growth--including mental, emotional and social growth--in relation to home life and to work is a widely shared social concern:

> . . . each person has of necessity a variety of callings, in each of which he should be intelligently effective. . . . He must, at some period of his life, be a member of a family; he must have friends and companions; he must either support himself or be supported by others. . . .[2]

A statement discussing home economics education in contemporary society finds similar support for general education aims for home economics:

> The United States is, in truth, a family centered culture . . . the majority of persons do live in homes in some variation of family groups. . . . Education for homemaking, therefore, is a near universal need.[3]

Another modern conception of the aims of home economics as

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[1]John Dewey, The School and Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1915, rev. 1943), 16.

[2]Dewey, Democracy and Education, 307.

[3]Bernice M. Moore, "Families in America," Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 48 (December, 1964), 5.

general education comes from a writer who labels himself a member of the "progressive . . . Dewey school" and says that home economics must help to "develop young people who, in terms of their attitude for the family as an institution in America, think of it as the generating, creative force for new ideas which can enhance American society. . . ." He finds widespread need to give attention to the "values which cluster around the family values having to do with the preservation of human life," and he adds that the related "sociological, psychological, and economic questions . . . must be dealt with in the American school and the American college."[1]

A vocation, according to Dewey, "signifies any form of continuous activity which renders service to others and engages personal powers in behalf of the accomplishment of results."[2] Vocational education is more than education for wage-earning; it also includes a general aim that "each shall see within his daily work all there is in it of large and human significance."[3] The vocation of homemaker seems to fall within this concept of vocational education.

True to his belief that educational aims change according to existing social needs, Dewey did see a challenge

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[1]Harold Taylor, "The Education of Daughters," Journal of Home Economics, 55 (November, 1963), 677.

[2]Dewey, Democracy and Education, 319.

[3]Dewey, School and Society, 22.

to education in the need for social readjustment brought on by the industrial changes of his time. It is likely that, faced with contemporary problems of manpower and employment, he would admit employment objectives for home economics *if* such aims could be realized in ways that would not tend to narrow learning and terminate further growth. He pointed out that "there is danger that vocational education will be interpreted in theory and practice as . . . technical efficiency in specialized future pursuits."[1] "There is a great difference between a proficiency limited to immediate work, and a competency extended to insight into its social bearings; between efficiency in carrying out the plans of others and in one forming one's own."[2]

The following statement suggests the ways--alternate and concurrent--in which home economics in this philosophy would contribute to multiple vocational aims today:

> Home economics education may be "vocational" in one of two senses. First, it may prepare students for the vocation of homemaking through the development of those understandings, abilities, and attitudes which contribute toward effectiveness in the homemaking role. Second . . . it may prepare them for wage-earning. This latter purpose may be achieved in three ways: (a) by preparing girls for entering those service occupations that are related to home economics; (b) by helping girls learn to carry the dual role of homemaker and wage-earner with success and satisfaction; and (c) by helping students achieve employability--through

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[1] Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 316.

[2] *Ibid.*, 317.

> the improvement of personal appearance, through developing skill in human relations and in the management of resources, and through the development of those attitudes desired by employers.[1]

It should be pointed out that, as expressed in this philosophy, the several general and vocational aims may be so interrelated that it is difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish them. For instance:

> Occupation-labeled courses [including homemaking] frequently are prime vehicles for achieving such outcomes as proficiency in communication, ability to handle quantitative relationships, command of problem-solving processes, and many other "prime essentials of schooling."[2]

Goals in home economics education may also be interrelated in this way:

> General adult education and vocational education should not be sharply divided, for many will undoubtedly be able to turn what begins as an avocational interest into the foundation for an occupational skill.[3]

The objectives of home economics are not always the same in all places at all times. As has been illustrated earlier, social and economic environment--both locally and in the larger community--will influence both the

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[1]John P. Walsh and William Selden, "Vocational Education in the Secondary School," Vocational Education, Sixty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 98.

[2]Haskew and Tumlin, 69.

[3]Eli Ginzberg, "Social and Economic Trends," Vocational Education, Sixty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 38.

selection of aims and the priority of aims. Because school populations are not everywhere the same, the home economics program of any single school will be based on objectives planned to meet the significant needs and interests of various groups of students in that school.

Growth is the only formal standard of value contained in the pragmatic philosophy; home economics education within this philosophy determines its specific objectives in relation to the broad values of the democratic society and also to the values of the families served.

Students taught

In that learning is a lifelong process, persons of all ages may be potential students in home economics; as the individual role within the family changes, as society demands new knowledge and behavior of the family group, the maturing person develops new--and sometimes unexpected--purposes for learning.

Home economics teachers will expect their students to be varied in ways other than age. "If it is accepted that the gifted, like the less able, will be faced with practical problems one will conclude that the education of both groups should deal with these."[1] Persons of many cultural and economic backgrounds may be included; teachers

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[1]Johnie Christian, "Home Economics Issues," Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 47 (November, 1963), 62.

may need to plan for groups of "newly married couples, parents with young children, ... and the physically handicapped."[1] "While the woman may be more directly concerned with certain aspects of family life, the men, too, are concerned with foods, clothing, leisure-time activities, housing, income management, child growth and development, health, and family relations."[2]

Curriculum, subject matter, and methods

Seeing danger in "introducing the child too abruptly to a number of special studies, of reading, writing, geography, etc., out of relation to the child's own social activities, Dewey calls the "so-called expressive or constructive activities" [cooking, sewing, manual training, etc.] the "center of correlation. . . . They are not special studies which are to be introduced over and above a lot of others in the way of relaxation or relief or as additional accomplishments. . . ."[3] The elementary curriculum of Dewey's laboratory school was organized in this manner:

> Starting with the activities familiar and natural to little children (fundamental and familiar activities of the home), the school conceived itself as an institution intermediate between the home and the larger school organization or the community, growing naturally out of one and into the other. All activity having to do with such basic and continuing needs of life as shelter, clothing, and

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[1]George G. Dozier, "A Principal's View," Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 47 (November, 1963), 71.

[2]Ibid., 70.

[3]Dewey, "Creed," 10.

> food became the central focus of a developing curriculum. With this unifying factor, all life, whether of the home, school, or larger community, was seen as one and the same continuous, changing social life.[1]

Following these same principles, home economics in the early grades would also be an integrated program today:

> Personal and home-living experiences provide an excellent medium through which the child may gain a mastery of language, writing, arithmetic, and other means of expression as well as an understanding of economics, scientific principles, and the ability to think critically. Home-living and personal experiences, if woven into the daily general school ones, give unity and continuity to new learnings as the child moves from the known to the unknown.[2]

Such experiences in the child's curriculum become "integrating forces in his developing personality, enlarging his knowledge of many phases of living, and helping him to understand his part as a contributor to his school and home life."[3]

Some of the home economics content of such activities is identified here:

> The elementary years offer opportunity to extend the child's concepts of the world's material contributions to family life and of the value of the family to society, as the child is exploring the outer world while still home-centered in his interests. Through experience with many tools and

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[1]Katherine C. Mayhew and Anna C. Edwards, The Dewey School (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1936), 24.

[2]Elizabeth Stevenson, Home and Family Life Education in the Elementary Schools (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1946), 28.

[3]Ibid., 13.

> materials related to daily life, individual originality may be developed and certain homemaking skills learned.[1]

Dewey's laboratory school was a "closely knit social organization of children, parents, teachers."[2] Schools following his thinking today also say that:

> A program would require that contacts between the school and home be continuous, and that the school work with the children's parents and with community agencies to encourage the growth of the child in desirable ways, to discover child and family needs as they arise, and to help people solve their problems.[3]

In the Dewey school, specialized teachers were seen to be necessary even at the elementary level:

> When manual training, art, science, and literature are to be taught, it is a physical and mental impossibility that one person should be competent in all these lines of work. Superficial work is bound to be done in some one of them. . . . The undue separation, which often follows teaching by specialists, is a result of lack of supervision, cooperation, and control by a unified plan.[4]

At the early levels, "technique was not stressed with the younger children. With them the chief interest was in the process."[5] Dewey felt that

> If children can retain their natural investigating tendencies unimpaired, gradually organizing them into definite methods of work, when they reach the proper age, they can master the required amount

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[1] Ibid., 30.

[2] Mayhew, 18.

[3] Stevenson, 30.

[4] Mayhew, 36.

[5] Ibid., 265.

of facts and generalizations easily and effectively.[1]

Home economics, like other subject areas, would not emerge as a separate subject of study until the secondary level. While Dewey has shown clearly in his own school's program the nature of home economics as general education and the organizational pattern for elementary grades, he has not applied his theory as precisely to programs for adolescents and adults.

At the junior high level, one is sure that his fear of early and narrow specialization and his requirement that education relate to the immediate concerns of the learners would keep home economics a subject contributing to the general education of boys and girls. The work would cover many phases of home life without specialization in one or two areas. Since Dewey seems not to have started separate subject study much before ninth grade, a program following his ideas might prefer home economics as part of core courses or broad fields approaches. One recent proposal suggests that "home and family life" might be "the central focus of the core organization."[2]

Accepting multiple aims and recognizing varying student needs, high school and adult programs would have

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[1]Dewey in Mayhew, 34.

[2]Arlene C. Otto, New Designs in Homemaking Programs in Junior High Schools (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1958), 18.

no single uniform curricular pattern. One might find two or three years of sequential work including the various subject areas of home economics.

> This program could center on a concern for the large problems of homemaking, beginning with a mature awareness of the values which families and individuals want in home and family life and how values provide criteria for all the family does. There would be time enough to see, appreciate, and understand family living and family situations in all their interrelationships, to develop skill in handling the larger problems of homemaking, to interrelate previous learning from many sources, and to focus on real problems.[1]

One might also find--and perhaps even in the same school--shorter, single courses in specialized areas. Schools might offer some courses which integrate home economics with other subjects. One principal advises that:

> In some areas there is a dual relationship with other subject areas. The administrator may use this relationship to strengthen the instructional program. Cooperative teaching--a modification of team teaching--could greatly invigorate the course content and make the learning experiences more meaningful and interesting.[2]

Extra-class activities are considered part of the total curriculum; class-related home and community experiences are also an integral part of a program. Vocational aims enter at the high school level when students have more clearly developed future goals. In addition to organized classes, adult education might be conducted through such media as television and by such indirect means as the teacher's home visits in relation to the work of teenage students.

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[1]Spafford, 249.

[2]Dozier, 71.

In all parts of the home economics program, teachers would plan learning experiences believing that:

> If you expect to help pupils to become skillful in solving their home problems and making wise decisions, you will . . . guide them into situations as nearly like those they find at home as you can; you will stimulate them to think through these problems, solve them for themselves, and test their solutions in some sound way. This is the essence of the problem-solving method.[1]

Within this general method, teachers select teaching techniques suitable to the social and individual learning desired. Classroom experiences involve students at all stages, including the planning. Direct experiences, when possible and practical, are preferred. Otherwise, field trips, films, exhibits, demonstrations and similar activities may provide approximation of activity in actual situations. In all home economics teaching, situations must be very similar to home and life situations:

> We believe that social customs should be developed in connection with actual social events, that foods should be taught on a meal basis, that child development should be studied through experiences with children. Home economics teaching will succeed best in an environment similar to that of the homes of the pupils. . . . This means homelike equipment in laboratories and homelike atmosphere in the classroom, since a real home cannot be used.[2]

The relationship between home and school may be strengthened by involving parents in suitable ways as resource persons in class experiences.

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[1]Maude Williamson and Mary Lyle, Homemaking Education in the High School (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1961), 105.

[2]Ibid., 98.

If the problem solving approach is viewed realistically against the total family setting, then students must develop knowledge, attitudes, and skills relevant to all phases of family living. The subject areas of home economics would include such areas as:

> Home management and family economics
> Family and social relationships, and personal development
> Child development, care and guidance
> Food and nutrition
> Housing and home furnishings
> Clothing and textiles
> Home care of the sick and the aged
> Art related to the home

This subject matter content is not the same as the food, clothing, and shelter recognized by Dewey; the viewpoint illustrated--that knowledge develops from experience and changes with new experiences--is Dewey's. The intervening years have added insight into the concerns of the home and family, expanding the scope of subject matter.

In solving problems, the learner himself uses and structures knowledge from home economics and from related fields:

> To help pupils understand concepts and generalizations likely to be useful in home living, the teacher provides opportunities for experiences involving the same general idea so that relationships become apparent and conclusions can be drawn. The level at which an individual pupil can arrive at these concepts and generalizations depends on the number of facts at his disposal, his past and present experiences, his maturity, and his ability to do reflective and somewhat more abstract thinking. . . . The most successful teachers are those who decide to concentrate on developing with pupils the most important concepts and generalizations in modern home living, rather than those who try to include all the facts or skills that might

conceivably be useful to pupils.[1]

When skills are taught, underlying principles must be taught with them.

> It is also necessary to repeat the tasks so that each of the steps is accurately learned. A high degree of skill can be attained only with much time for practice, and much of this practice will have to take place in the home rather than in the school.[2]

Evaluation of learning is an integral and continuous part of the general method of learning. It includes the active participation of all persons involved, and it employs sufficiently varied techniques to secure evidence relevant to all objectives and to the many facets of the student's growth.

Curricula would undergo continual evaluation and revision reflecting new objectives and new knowledge. Final decisions would be in the local community where "the home economics teacher must be continuously reappraising what is important to families."[3] The program which would best express Dewey's philosophy today would be the one which best expresses the present needs and the desired future growth of the community--local, state, national, international. One writer has chosen the shifts from "rural to urban to suburban living" as a demonstration of the effects

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[1]Beulah I. Coon, Home Economics Instruction in the Secondary Schools (New York: Center for Applied Research in Education, 1964), 64-65.

[2]Ibid., 10.

[3]Ibid., 10.

of modern times on home economics education and to illustrate the kinds of emphasis to be found in a "progressive" home economics program today:

> Although many of the manual skills that were formerly needed in the home no longer need be emphasized, the home economics program must prepare pupils for decisions involved in buying and using mechanized equipment; in buying and preparing canned, frozen, or precooked packaged foods, the nutritive value of which is difficult to determine; in selecting ready-to-wear clothing; . . . and in choosing among commercial laundering, drycleaning, and many other kinds of services. Preparation should include the new types of relationships which have developed as a result of smaller living space and isolation of generations and cultural groups. Community resources must be assessed and individuals prepared to make use of them if adequate public services and acceptable essential commercial services are available to families. These types of problems in management, consumer education, and family, personal, and family-community relations replace most of those of former days.[1]

Home Economics Education within the Educational Philosophy of Robert M. Hutchins

Hutchins' plan for education seeks the "cultivation of the intellect." Schools are concerned with first principles, with truth for its own sake. The use of knowledge either for general living or for vocational purposes is not the domain of the school; an applied subject such as home economics has no place in the curriculum.

If one were to observe in the classroom an activity which appeared relevant to the area of home economics, one would need to recall that Hutchins occasionally would justify

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[1] Ibid., 28-29.

"experience" as a way of communicating certain first principles; the personal-social content of the situation would be insignificant. The nature of the classroom experience would make no more difference to the intellectual content conveyed than the color of a textbook cover would make to its content.

Perhaps the technical and research institutes or the professional schools would include the concerns of the home and the family in their activities. However, the work of these institutions appears to be outside the educational system proper; their applications of knowledge interest true educators no more than do the applications made by business or industry.

CHAPTER IV

COMPARISON OF POSITIONS IN HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION TO HOME ECONOMICS PHILOSOPHY

Introduction

Like education, home economics is an applied field in which beliefs anticipate practical consequences. Predicting these consequences is just as difficult in home economics.

First, the statements of beliefs in home economics represent an organization which has not yet reached real consensus among its members; therefore, the philosophy presented here may well be biased by this writer who selected the statements about home economics to be included.

Secondly, having arrived at a statement of home economics philosophy, one must then recognize that the problems of interpreting educational theory which were mentioned in the preceding chapter are also relevant factors in judging effective implementation of home economics beliefs in educational programs.

In this chapter, following a statement of the basic beliefs of home economics, major tenets of that position will be restated together with parallel practices from each of the four interpretations of home economics education.

In doing this, the writer hopes to demonstrate the degree to which each educational philosophy would or would not support home economics education.

Statements of Home Economics Philosophy

Home Economics New Directions: A Statement of Philosophy and Objectives is being used here as the basic source of statements representing the field of home economics. Finished in 1959, this publication was prepared in observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the American Home Economics Association. Although a fifteen member committee was responsible for the writing, there was widespread opportunity for other groups of home economists to discuss and contribute to tentative drafts. While some home economists will take issue with parts of the final statement, it is published and circulated by the organization as an official and generally accepted position paper.

The first formal expression of home economics beliefs is found in the proceedings of the Lake Placid Conferences on Home Economics, a series of ten annual meetings leading to the formation of the American Home Economics Association in 1909. These proceedings will be a second major source of statements since it is believed by present members that "the underlying philosophy and basic tenets of the founders still apply and must guide new directions for the profession."[1]

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[1]Home Economics New Directions: A Statement of

In some instances, other official documents and comments by recognized leaders in the field are used to supplement, clarify, or connect the ideas published in these two major documents which are separated by fifty years of professional experience and cultural change.

Definition of home economics

At the Fourth Lake Placid Conference, held in 1902, the following "tentative definition" of home economics was presented:

1. 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 is the study specially of the relation between these two factors.

2. In a narrow sense the term is given to the study of the empirical sciences with special reference to the practical problems of housework, cooking, etc.

In forming a complete definition, however, it may be possible to consider home economics as a philosophical subject, i.e., a study of relation, while subjects on which it depends, i.e., economics, sociology, chemistry, hygiene, and others, are empirical in their nature and concerned with events and phenomena.[1]

New Directions offers this definition:

Home economics is the field of knowledge and service primarily concerned with strengthening family life through:

Philosophy and Objectives (Washington, D.C.: American Home Economics Association, 1959), 3.

[1]Lake Placid Conference on Home Economics, Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Conference (Lake Placid, N.Y., 1902), 70-71.

- educating the individual for family living
- improving the services and goods used by families
- conducting research to discover the changing needs of individuals and families and the means of satisfying these needs
- furthering community, national, and world conditions favorable to family living.[1]

Purposes and values

In the constitution of the American Home Economics Association, home economists state their purpose "to cooperate in the attainment of the well-being of individuals and families, the improvement of homes, and the preservation of values significant in home life."

In contributing to the "well-being" of individuals and families, home economists hope to help in developing the competencies necessary to:

- establish values which give meaning to personal, family, and community living; select goals appropriate to these values
- create a home and community environment conducive to the healthy growth and development of all members of the family at all stages of the family cycle
- achieve good interpersonal relationships within the home and within the community
- nurture the young and foster their physical, mental, and social growth and development
- make and carry out intelligent decisions regarding the use of personal, family, and community resources

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[1] New Directions, 4.

- establish long-range goals for financial security and work toward their achievement
- plan consumption of goods and services--including food, clothing, and housing--in ways that promote values and goals established by the family
- purchase consumer goods and services appropriate to an overall consumption plan and wise use of economic resources
- perform the tasks of maintaining a home in such a way that they will contribute effectively to furthering individual and family goals
- enrich personal and family life through the arts and humanities and through refreshing and creative use of leisure
- take an intelligent part in legislative and other social action programs which directly affect the welfare of individuals and families
- develop mutual understanding and appreciation of differing cultures and ways of life, and cooperate with people of other cultures who are striving to raise levels of living.[1]

As a group, home economists today do not identify in writing a single clear and widely held value orientation. With this fact in mind, statements will be quoted here which appear to represent the "good," "improved," "ideal," "should," and "effective" to which home economists refer so often. An attempt will then be made to summarize the values expressed, although to presume to do this is admittedly a perilous activity for any one writer.

A report included in the proceedings of the third conference suggests that home economics may serve to implement a variety of social "goods"--at least, this is said

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[1] New Directions, 9.

to be true in the area of education, one of the major fields of home economics service. The committee reporting concluded that there could be "no definite course in home economics applicable to all institutions" because institutions express different values and purposes and home economics might be found in institutions dedicated to "education as a preparation for livelihood," to "culture for service or the sake of society and the home as an integral part of society," or to science as "the pursuit of truth simply for its own sake."[1]

At the same conference, Caroline Hunt presented her paper, "Revaluations," in which she stated that the "final test" in home economics is self-expression, or freedom. This freedom she defines as "(1) health, or freedom from bodily imperfections and weaknesses, (2) efficiency, or freedom from unnecessary impediments, (3) opportunity, or freedom of choice."[2] Anything material is of value when it "adds to life more in serving some useful purpose than it takes away in time, money, and strength . . .";[3] the human body is placed "at the head of our scale of values in material things."[4] Instrumental value is attached to "the technic without which it is frequently impossible to

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[1]Third Lake Placid Conference, 1901, 108.

[2]Ibid., 79.

[3]Ibid., 84.

[4]Ibid.

secure those things upon which we place our highest values."[1] Time brings "changes in the relation of values."[2] "Good" home economics practice is distinguished from "bad" in this way:

> If we have unnecessarily complicated a single life by perpetuating useless conventions or by carrying the values of one age over into the next, just so far we have failed. If we have simplified one life and released in it energy for its own expression, just so far have we succeeded.[3]

The sixth conference in 1904 includes the familiar creed of Ellen H. Richards, a leader in these conferences and the first president of the American Home Economics Association:

> Home Economics Stands For
>
> The ideal home life of to-day unhampered by the traditions of the past.
>
> The utilization of all the resources of modern science to improve the home life.
>
> The freedom of the home from the dominance of things and their due subordination to ideals.
>
> The simplicity in material surroundings which will most free the spirit for the more important and permanent interests of the home and society.[4]

In her talks at Lake Placid and throughout her other speeches and writing, Mrs. Richards referred to a concern

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[1] Ibid., 89.

[2] Ibid., 82.

[3] Ibid., 89.

[4] Sixth Lake Placid Conference, 1904, 15.

for "the fourth R, right living," or she used a term "Euthenics" meaning "better living." With regard to this objective, she said that "domestic science" is "scientific truth made to do service for better family living. This applied science . . . shall lead to successful results in human efficiency."[1] Continuing to discuss efficiency as a criterion for the accomplishment of "right living," she said that "the greatest opportunities to promote social welfare and social progress lie . . . in the better use of social resources, the better organization and direction of our domestic affairs."[2] Also, "If . . . labor is and ever will be toward higher standards of living," then there is a need for this applied science to develop "a solid foundation upon which to build standards which shall lead to greater personal and civic efficiency."[3] In her book, The Art of Right Living, she considers "the factors which go to make up the efficient human individual": nutrition, sleep, work, environment, aim or purpose, health, and others. The power to work is called "man's capital" and satisfaction is found in the "sense of effectiveness, and consciousness

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[1]Ellen H. Richards, "The Present Status and Future Development of Domestic Science Courses in the High-School," The Place of Vocational Subjects in the High-School Curriculum, Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Scientific Study of Education, Part II (Bloomington, Ill.: Pantagraph Printing and Stationery Company, 1905), 49.

[2]Ibid., 51.

[3]Ibid.

of power to do what the mind has willed."[1]

At several points in the Lake Placid proceedings, one finds comments to the effect that home economics should make its judgments in relation to the general social system.[2]

Later in home economics history, a syllabus adopted in 1913 indicates that "family" application was a criterion for deciding the boundaries of home economics content: "Home economics, as a distinctive subject of instruction, is the study of the economic, sanitary, and esthetic aspects of food, clothing, and shelter as connected with their selection, preparation, and use by the family in the home or by other groups of people."[3]

In 1935, an AHEA president suggested some of the values present in home economics. The field's "philosophy" is "based on use. The best that anyone can do in defining home economics is to tell what it stands for or to state that it is a complex."[4] It belongs to the group of applied or professional subjects whose basic philosophy "uses the solving of human problems as criterion"; the particular area of human problems with which home economics is concerned

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[1]Ellen H. Richards, The Art of Right Living (Boston: Whitcomb and Barrows, 1915), 33.

[2]E.g., Fourth Annual Conference, 1902, 22.

[3]Syllabus of Home Economics (Baltimore, Md.: American Home Economics Association, 1913), 4.

[4]Effie I. Riatt, "The Nature and Function of Home Economics," Journal of Home Economics, 27 (May, 1936), 267.

relates to the "home and the lives within."[1] "Our subject is a functional one. Mere mastery of skills, acquiring of subject matter and even improvement in selective judgment, unless these carry over into actual life situations, warrant criticism. . . ."[2]

New Directions finds the central focus of home economics to be "improving the lives of families and individuals."[3] It talks about managing resources "so that values and goals of the individual, the family, or of society may be attained."[4] "The emphasis that it [home economics] gives to various aspects of living are determined by the needs of individuals and families in the social environment of their time."[5] Home economics "can be effective only as it alleviates the stresses and promotes the satisfactions brought about by new situations."[6] "People will always find satisfaction in living to the extent that they can deal with their needs and with the circumstances of their times."[7] Some additional clues as to the values held by home economics may be found among the qualities indicated

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[1] Ibid., 267.

[2] Ibid., 270.

[3] New Directions, 4.

[4] Ibid., 5.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid., 8.

[7] Ibid.

as desirable for a professional home economist. One reads of the need for "genuine concern for the family as a basic unit in society," "creativeness in extending, in applying, or in disseminating knowledge to improve personal and family living," and "capacity to distinguish in the new between that which is significant and that which lacks true value for better living."[1] Some years earlier, a leader in home economics education said that a home economist is "a person interested first of all in human values, individual and social. She needs to know how to use her field to achieve these values."[2]

All of these quotations about values taken together with consideration of the definitions and purposes of home economics seem indicative of several elements of the field's value-system. The following summary statements are written with recognition of their limited validity in that they do not represent "official" viewpoint:

1. The fundamental value-orientation is a core of human values inherent in the concept of family as a basic unit in the American democratic society and as the environment for individual human growth. These include a recognition of the intrinsic worth of human personality with its need to develop in all of its aspects and its potential competence in dealing with the problems of living. There

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[1] Ibid., 14.

[2] Spafford, 41.

is also a social component in this frame of reference with the family--collectively and individually--contributing to the realization of the values significant in a given society at a particular time. Personal and social values are interacting elements of the value focus.

2. The applied nature of the field and the functional definitions of home economics bring action and process to the fore. In doing this, both ends and means become important. Therefore, instrumental values--material resources, knowledge, skills--merit careful attention. Without this emphasis, there could be no "application" and therefore no home economics. Efficiency becomes a frequent watchword when things actually happen in practice, not just in theory.

3. Home economics integrates complementary values without necessarily needing to make either-or choices. For example: "knowledge and service," "personal and social efficiency," the "ideal and the practical," "man's physical environment and his nature as a social being," knowledge from the "sciences and the arts." Interrelatedness of factors is a characteristic of home economics.

4. As a society-serving profession dealing with the family as a social group, home economics takes its values and its priorities from the society within which it operates. It expresses (in this country, at least) the relatively stable values of the American democratic society; it also expresses some of the uncertainty present in a rapidly

changing society where persons and social groups may not always be sure of their roles.

Persons served by home economics

Because all persons are and will be part of some kind of "home" situation, and since home related needs and interests vary with such factors as the individual's age and with socio-economic conditions, it is likely that most individuals in our society are served directly or indirectly by home economics. The profession has identified a need "to serve more individuals and families and serve them more effectively,"[1] thus recognizing its widespread potential area of influence.

Probably, for many people, the most familiar area of direct contact with home economics is in the field of education. A 1901 report on elementary and secondary school programs that "boys as well as girls should understand hygiene and food values and their practical applications. If they do not share the household economic work with the girls, some provision should certainly be made for this in their study, bearing in mind the responsibilities they assume later on as fathers, householders, or members of civic councils."[2] The fourth Lake Placid conference discussed higher education, saying that "men and women are alike concerned in understanding the processes, activities,

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[1] New Directions, 11.

[2] Third Lake Placid Conference, 1901, 15.

obligations and opportunities which make the home and the family effective parts of the social fabric."[1] Today, home economics education sets a goal to develop "an educational program that will reach men, women, boys and girls of varying abilities and from different cultural, social, and economic groups."[2]

Content and methodology in home economics

Content in a field of study generally includes cognitive concepts, values and attitudes, and skills. The value-orientation of home economics has already been discussed. "Hand work and thought work"[3] have both been recognized as significant in home economics, and the following discussion of the scope of home economics and of its relation to other subject areas is intended to refer chiefly to the cognitive content of the field.

Scope.--At the fifth Lake Placid conference, participants describing the preparation of a teacher of "household economics" said that "she must deal for the next half century with a subject which has not yet been so organized that it appears in its complete and essential relations to other subjects or that it presents a systematic and coherent body of knowledge."[4] This problem still exists, making an

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[1]Fourth Lake Placid Conference, 1902, 22.

[2]New Directions, 11.

[3]Third Lake Placid Conference, 1901, 4.

[4]Fifth Lake Placid Conference, 1903, 9.

exact and unanimous statement of the unique content of home economics still missing from print. One can, however, see developmental trends which indicate not only the actual subject areas included, but also the ways in which knowledge has expanded.

The "Syllabus of Home Economics" published by the American Home Economics Association in 1913 "proposed that the subject of Home Economics be divided into four main divisions, (1) food, (2) clothing, (3) shelter, and (4) household and institution management."[1] This syllabus is "a classified list of topics from which courses can be made up."[2]

Beginning in 1935 and continuing through 1941, the Journal of Home Economics carried reports of committees working on a revision of the syllabus. The up-dating seemed necessary because "new parts of the home economics field have been opened up, new classifications have become necessary, and relative values have shifted, so that the original syllabus is now interesting as a historical landmark rather than as a map for further progress. The value of a logical outline of subject matter remains the same, however--is perhaps even greater now that our concern with the so-called psychological approach, teaching devices, and the like, sometimes makes us a bit impatient about the

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[1] "Syllabus . . . 1913," 5.

[2] Ibid., 7.

exact relations between different ideas and items in our program. . . ."[1] The content divisions represented the five major subject matter divisions of AHEA: (1) the family and its relationships, (2) the house, its equipment and management, (3) family economics, (4) food and nutrition, and (5) textiles and clothing.

New Directions sees home economics concerned today with these aspects of family living:

- family relationships and child development
- consumption and other economic aspects of personal and family living
- nutritional needs and the selection, preservation, preparation, and use of food
- design, selection, construction, and care of clothing, and its psychological and social significance
- textiles for the family and equipment and furnishings for the household
- art as an integral part of everyday life
- management in the use of resources so that values and goals of the individual, the family, or of society may be attained.[2]

Starting in July, 1961, at French Lick, Indiana, home economists again went to work on the task of identifying subject matter. The project was initiated by the Home Economics Division of the Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, and the unfinished assignment

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[1]"The Syllabus of Home Economics" (editorial), Journal of Home Economics, 29 (January, 1935), 39.

[2]New Directions, 4-5.

attempts to "define the cognitive content of the field through identification of key concepts and principles pertinent and significant in each of the subject matter segments of the field."[1] The "concept approach" was selected as a "systematic, problem-solving approach"[2] envisioned as a "possible way of identifying, organizing, structuring and unifying the significant subject matter content of the field."[3]

Relation of home economics to other subject fields.--The first definition of home economics formulated at the fourth Lake Placid conference called this a field of study of relations depending on subjects such as economics, sociology, chemistry, and hygiene.[4]

Also in the fourth conference, we find one of these subjects singled out for special attention: "A study of sociology is necessary to the right understanding of the relation of the home to the whole social structure."[5]

The Syllabus of 1913 describes home economics as "a complex." In it "the contributing subjects are grouped around the ideas of food, clothing, and shelter. Among

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[1] Home Economics Seminar. A Report of the Seminar held July 24-28, 1961, at French Lick, Indiana (Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan; no date), 3.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Fourth Lake Placid Conference, 1902, 71.

[5] Ibid., 54.

the contributing groups are art, history, anthropology, sociology, esthetics, economics, physiology, hygiene, mathematics, chemistry, physics, and biology. As is the case with other complex subjects, the line of division between home economics and the contributing subjects is not well defined, the central subject merging imperceptibly into the contributing subjects."[1]

According to New Directions, "home economics synthesizes knowledge drawn from its own research, from the physical, biological, and social sciences and the arts and applies this knowledge to improving the lives of families and individuals."[2]

Several comments relative to the root disciplines were made at the French Lick seminar. A speaker on the role of concepts says this:

> Vocational fields involve applications of knowledge to the solution of specific problems. A vocational field may develop its own concepts, principles, and values, but to a large extent these are dependent upon, emergent from, and adaptations of those arising in the basic fields of knowledge upon which the profession depends.[3]

It is the task of the home economist to establish the meaningful relationships among these disciplines for understanding the problem at hand.

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[1]"Syllabus . . . 1913," 7.

[2]New Directions, 4.

[3]Paul L. Dressel, "The Role of Concepts in Planning Home Economics Curriculum," in Home Economics Seminar, 16.

The seminar further considered root disciplines as one of the peculiar problems associated with identification of content in an applied field:

> The concept of an applied field of knowledge implies that it is rooted in or built upon some segment of the basic disciplines. Home economics is an applied field. It draws upon fundamental knowledge in the basic sciences--physical, biological, and social--as well as in the arts and humanities. Any applied field draws from research findings of its root disciplines, uses the same research methods, and builds upon basic principles and concepts. This does not imply that the relationship of applied fields of knowledge is only parasitic or at best symbiotic, nor that an applied field does not have its own concepts, its own definable content. In an applied field, concepts of the basic fields are used but also new concepts with orientation to the special field will develop; new principles will arise; analysis leading to new synthesis of knowledge will emerge.[1]

Perhaps the most recent group identification and ranking of root disciplines is found in the following statement:

> In a recent survey of home economics administrators regarding their personal recognition of basic disciplines fundamental to the profession directly related to family concerns, eight disciplines were revealed in the following order: psychology, sociology, art, economics, chemistry (general, organic, biochemistry), physics, biology, and mathematics.[2]

Methodology in home economics.--It has been mentioned earlier that the fact of an applied field makes problem-solving a basic method of approach. Problem solutions,

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[1] Ibid., 22.

[2] Survey conducted by Program Committee of Home Economics Division, American Association of Land-Grant Colleges and State Universities, Chicago, Illinois, 1963.

rather than specific factual details, receive greater attention.

An applied field in its research uses the same research methods as its root disciplines. This relationship has been described thus:

> A basic theoretical framework of some discipline must be applied to the practical problem in order to cast it in a researchable form. The tools and techniques of that discipline can then be deployed in an attack on the facet of the problem for which they have relevance.
>
> Practical problems, of course, are not limited to a single facet of knowledge. They must, therefore, be approached in a variety of ways from diverse disciplines. Each approach will yield additional knowledge. Attempting to approach a practical problem, in total, leads to a confusion in methods, a sterile design devoid of a sound theoretical base, inaccurate measurement of variables, and, hence, a paucity of information upon which to build new research.[1]

Comparison of Educational Programs with Home Economics Beliefs

From its founding, home economics has been seen as contributing to the aims of several types of educational institutions.[2] The previous chapter has illustrated how home economics might be interpreted differently within various institutions--or, within the various philosophies which guide educational institutions. It is the contention of this writer that some philosophic orientations, better

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[1]Francena Nolan, "The Contribution of Sociology to Home Economics," in The FIELD of Home Economics--What It Is (Washington, D.C.: American Home Economics Association, 1964), 55.

[2]Third Lake Placid Conference, 1901, 108.

than others, will permit home economics to realize its own aims and to make a worthy contribution to education.

To see how--and if--this may be true, several recurrent concepts have been selected from the home economics beliefs. After identifying the meaning which these ideas seem to hold for home economists, parallel ideas will be summarized from each of the programs of home economics education already described. Since no home economics position was developed within Hutchins' philosophy of education, illustrations for this position cannot be included.

Family as a central focus

Home economics.--Strong families contribute both to the total development of individuals and to the welfare of the larger society. Home economics is concerned with the many facets of family living; knowledge and skills from all areas of home economics and from many related disciplines all merge in application to family-centered interests.

Antz.--Homemaking skills, as practical arts, provide some opportunity for artistic expression, but they are too specialized for inclusion in liberal education. The study of the family through the humanities and social sciences develops insight into human values important to the individual and society.

Bagley.--Homemaking skills and home-related applications of science are necessary technical competencies which may be taught as specialized subjects. They are extensions added to the essential school program when other

agencies fail to meet their responsibilities in these areas.

Dewey.--Family life is a widely shared social experience; it contributes both to individual development and to the general social welfare. Therefore, the school finds family-related experiences an important medium for learning. Activities relate to broad units of experience and thus structure in meaningful ways content from many branches of knowledge. Skills, attitudes, and cognitive knowledge are interrelated elements of family concerns.

Human values

Home economics.--In focusing on the home and family, home economics centers on the intrinsic values of human personality and social relationships. The family has a major role in influencing personal development; at the same time, individuals contribute to the total performance of the family in society. Each person in every family merits the help he needs in developing his potential as an individual; at the same time, he is expected to develop skill in social relationships appropriate to the family and the larger society.

Antz.--Individual personality is the primary value; social institutions exist for the benefit of the individual. Classroom procedures utilize group discussion to facilitate an exchange and comparison of ideas; social interaction and group dynamics are not matters for study. Preferring liberal education for able students, schools make education for homemaking an "extra" or a practical subject

for the less able students.

Bagley.--Social efficiency--meeting the objectively measured needs of society--is the key value in education. Common traits of individuals are valued over differences. Through disciplined instruction, all normal students can master considerable amounts of necessary and "exact" knowledge without resorting to unreliable (social science based) knowledge or unchallenging skills. Collective thinking and decisions made as adults foster individual adaption.

Dewey.--The educational environment is a social one; students practice in the school the democratic procedures of American society. Democratic values extend to all areas of living, including the family, and the meaning of these values is developed through classroom experience. Social efficiency means the best possible use of all human and material resources to realize agreed upon social goals. It is to this end that all socially acceptable individual differences are valued and developed. Failure to assist each member of each family--directly or indirectly--to realize his potential as a family member is failure to achieve the family's full strength.

Integration

Home economics.--The family focus has illustrated this concept in relation to the functional use of subject matter in home economics. Integration applies, also, to values: choices or compromises are not necessarily required when opposing values seem to conflict. Relative emphasis

may change, but conflicts need not always be resolved.

Antz.--Through the dialectic method, idealists seek to resolve conflicts, to unify opposing ideas. It would be difficult to visualize home economics as being simultaneously general and vocational in educational purposes.

Bagley.--A philosophy which emphasizes consistency and stability finds difficulty in recognizing conflicting or changing values; values are objective, right or wrong, either-or.

Dewey.--Comprehensive aims make possible several interpretations of home economics education to serve a variety of individual and social needs.

Process

Home economics.--Families must be able to meet needs in ever-changing situations. An applied field recognizes that persons must know how to act--how to find creative uses for knowledge and skill in new contexts, how to participate in individual and family decisions, how to establish and maintain a healthy home and community environment. Progress in achieving goals balances the importance of selecting worthwhile ends.

Antz.--Learning is subject-centered; action involves the learner in making decisions about the meaning of experiences rather than in directing the course of his experiences.

Bagley.--Students acquire a pre-structured body of subject matter which they can apply as adults in solving

problems of living; they seek to adapt to a given environment. Skills are those which girls will use as homemakers and are developed to a high level of performance. Activities are directed by the teacher to demonstrate known principles.

Dewey.--Problem-solving is the method of learning; the end of education is "learning how to learn." Learning advances continuously by focusing on areas of home life which are relevant to each stage of individual development so that skill in the process increases with the complexity of life situations. Knowledge is structured by the learner into generalizations which will provide insight into attacking new problems. Principles underlying skills are taught so that skills can be used--or not used--intelligently. Students participate in all phases of the problem-solving process.

In summary

Each interpretation of home economics education makes some contribution to the central home economics concepts used for comparison; rather consistently, however, the pragmatic position outlined by Dewey interprets the concepts more fully and seems to come closer to the ideas expressed by home economists.

While Antz, Bagley, and Dewey all find the family a basic social unit which needs attention from some educative agency, Dewey alone accepts family life as an important responsibility of the school. Antz finds in the arts

and humanities the principles underlying home economics; Bagley accepts a science base, scorning the social sciences. Both of these stress skills; intellectual content does not necessarily need a family-like classroom context. Of the three, the program based on Dewey's theory describes a more nearly unified field depending on a broader base of functional knowledge and focusing interrelated learnings on the family.

The evaluation of the three positions in relation to their recognition of human--individual and social--values is similar to the criticisms of the three basic educational philosophies. Home economics calls for equivalent attention to personal and social concerns and to mental, social, and physical development. Bagley would "waste" the unique characteristics of individuals in deference to social commonality. Dewey has been interpreted in some schools to lose sight of the individual in the social emphasis; Antz's idealism swings to the other direction in neglecting the interpersonal considerations and in focusing almost entirely on intellectual growth. In recognizing that home economics has a potential contribution to all persons, Dewey takes leadership.

The flexibility of aims possible within the pragmatic interpretation of home economics makes it best able to relate to the current concerns of a changing society so that families can give attention to present problems.

In supporting a commitment to action and improved

living, in encouraging individual initiative and insight into the problems of a changing environment, in developing knowledge and skills in ways that are broadly useful and open to revision, and in putting ends and means in proper perspective, Dewey gives greatest support to the attentiveness of home economics to process.

Without going into further detail in comparisons, one is aware that the four interpretations of home economics education are related to the objectives of home economics in a way similar to the relationship of the four basic educational philosophies to the total American society. Home economics, as a field focused on the family as a social institution, does express the values of society as a whole. Therefore, for further evaluation of the support given by each of these orientations to the purposes of home economics, one might return to read the comments and criticisms included in the descriptions of the basic viewpoints.

At this point, some persons might say that traditionally "good" home economics education has most generally expressed pragmatic education ideas. Of what value is this rediscovery? First, it affirms a direction which is currently questionable in some minds. Secondly, it demonstrates how this position has been conducive to greater breadth in home economics and how it is flexible enough to permit further growth in light of new, or newly emphasized, dimensions of family living. Finally, it should be an incentive to remember an observation made earlier: Dewey's theories

have not been fully and carefully tried and tested. Perhaps it is time for a more careful reading and a more conscientious interpretation and application with cautious appraisal and revision in the instances where this viewpoint may not be fully adequate.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The beginning of this dissertation noted that the major development of home economics has occurred under the influence of a pragmatic philosophy of education. Since the pragmatic philosophy is undergoing critical examination today, and since home economists are at the same time reviewing their place in education, the time seems right for examining the major contemporary alternatives to pragmatism and for drawing some conclusions as to whether one educational philosophy might be more conducive than others to the future development of home economics.

The possible usefulness of this study is based on the belief that individual teachers share in determining the pattern which education follows. While the exact nature of the relationship between educational philosophy and educational practice has not been precisely defined, the two are assumed to be related and it appears that "the link between theory and practice is the practitioner."[1] Educational philosophy provides a frame of reference, or a set

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[1]George L. Newsome, Jr., "In What Sense Is Theory a Guide to Practice in Education?" Educational Theory, 14 (January, 1964), 36.

of systematically related principles, which guide practitioners who "may, in varying degrees, utilize knowledge, make decisions, set aims or objectives, and devise ways and means of performing tasks."[1] Decisions and performance risk being haphazard or even harmful without the direction of consciously acknowledged guidelines. If the alternative philosophies of education do differ in their implications for home economics education, then consistent, effective education in home economics requires that teachers study the options which are presented to them and then attempt to identify and make explicit educational beliefs which will guide action and support the maximum contribution of home economics to education. The intent of this work is to provide a resource for home economics educators undertaking this clarification of beliefs.

From among the various educational philosophies expressed in the public schools of this country, four of the principal ones were selected for study. Because many persons have written for each position, and each one interprets the basic philosophy somewhat differently, an accurate combined statement for each philosophy did not seem possible. Instead, one author was chosen to represent each philosophic position. The authors and the positions described are: Louise Antz--idealism, William C. Bagley--essentialism, John Dewey--pragmatism, and Robert M. Hutchins--humanism. For each viewpoint, statements of major tenets were followed

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[1] Ibid.

by some discussion of significant strengths and weaknesses with regard to the overall appropriateness of the philosophy in the American society. Each position was shown to include both assets and limitations. In general, however, it seemed that the potential of the pragmatic position has never been fully exploited and that it may still offer greater freedom for growth and for more complete realization of both individual and social goals in education.

Home economics education within each of these philosophies of education would differ in important ways. The idealist highlights self-realization as a mental phenomenon; liberal education is preferred, with arts and humanities given priority in the curriculum. Home economics, if offered, is a practical or applied art stressing individual creative skills and, perhaps, values as expressed in family life. Bagley's essentialism finds homemaking skills necessary to all girls, but would rather spend school time on the common core of fundamental subjects which must be passed on from one generation to another. As an elective, home economics would be an applied science--objective, prescriptive, centered on skills and subject matter, and without reference to social sciences. The pragmatism of Dewey is oriented to continual social growth. The home and family, as commonly shared social experiences, are subjects for school attention. The problem-solving method integrates subject matter from all areas of home economics and many other related subject areas; it is concerned with both

method and content in learning. Aims and curricular patterns vary widely--in time and in place--to accommodate the widest feasible range of individual differences and social needs. Hutchins gives attention only to the development of rational faculties and to first principles of truth as transmitted in the classic literature of the Western world. Home economics, as an applied field of knowledge, does not enter his curriculum.

To facilitate discussion of these four interpretations of home economics education in relation to their effectiveness in achieving home economics purposes, the statements about home economics were summarized into four concepts: family as a central focus, human values, integration, and process. After defining the meaning which home economics appears to attach to each of these concepts, comparisons were made of relevant statements from each of the educational positions as applied to home economics.

Seeing parallel statements from several interpretations of home economics education, one observes that Dewey's pragmatism still gives strongest support to the purposes of home economics. Pragmatism, or some adaption of it, permits greater breadth and flexibility in developing home economics programs consistent with the beliefs of home economists. It is also apparent that there is a parallel between the suitability of a given educational philosophy to the overall aims of society, and the support given by that philosophy to home economics, a field focused on the family

as one social institution.

This exploration of educational philosophy with regard to home economics education may have several results. Persons who read it may become more aware of the kind and significance of the implications which differing educational philosophies hold for practice in home economics; rethinking of individual beliefs may become more important. Questioners of the pragmatic position may find the assurance and incentive needed to study it further and to increase the effectiveness with which it is implemented. Home economics educators at all levels of education may see that the crucial decisions determining the future of home economics education must be consciously made on the basis of thoughtful choice rather than made thoughtlessly or on the basis of expediency. Home economists--and students in home economics--may find here a method of approach and a point of departure for beginning their own exploration of philosophy in home economics education, perhaps to arrive at entirely different conclusions, but at least stimulated to think about philosophy.

Guidelines for Philosophy in Home Economics Education

If one accepts Dewey's pragmatism as a general model of educational philosophy still valid for home economics, the following statements could serve as guidelines for developing and clarifying a philosophy of home economics education.

The philosophy which promotes the objectives of home economics will:

1. concern itself with the present and future needs of all persons.

2. find individuals and their varied potentials intrinsically valuable.

3. encourage the study and practice of democratic social relationships.

4. make possible multiple contributions by home economics to education.

5. be open-ended, permitting re-evaluation and growth without pre-established limits.

6. adopt problem-solving methodology, actively involving learners in all phases of the process.

7. acknowledge the source of knowledge in experience and the necessity that the learner structure knowledge broadly in order that it may find application in future experience.

8. find need for varied learning outcomes: cognitive knowledge, attitudes and values, skills.

9. recognize the interrelatedness of experiences--within the varied areas of home economics, within the several subject areas of the total school program, and between in-school and out-of-school experiences.

Directions Implied

The most obvious implication of these criteria is that home economics educators need to redouble their effort

to find creative and effective ways to actually do those things which they have long said they ought to do. While supportive of home economics, and still generally compatible with the overall aims of American society, the pragmatic position today has to meet the challenge of past mistakes, misinterpretations, and the frequently voiced opinion that it has been too slow or unsuccessful in meeting certain widespread social and political needs.

Any classic philosophy must be interpreted to meet present needs of students and society: "The detail which implements any given metaphysical formula is affected in particular by the personal attitudes and preferences of the individual [or subject area] making the application and in general by historical elements of experiences which are quite independent of any metaphysical position whatsoever."[1] Teachers must decide how the pragmatic view ought to be interpreted in home economics today.

For example, there is the challenge that vocational subjects--including homemaking--have become institutionalized within the common school and that:

> stated objectives have reached almost creedal status in their persistence. . . . The cases for curriculum design and actual methodologies are firmly established and authoritative. And the categorizations of fields is almost classic and relatively

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[1]Edward H. Reisner, "Philosophy and Science in the Western World: A Historical Overview," Philosophies of Education, Forty-first Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I (Bloomington, Ill.: Public School Publishing Co., 1942), 34.

> unyielding . . . and each category has developed a high sense of identity, or proprietorship, and of definition of role, and has an established operational protocol.
>
> This institutionalism is being subjected to the stress of contention and the challenge of new developments. . . . In view of some persons, traditional objectives relating to attitudes, ways of thinking, problem-solving abilities, and communication skills are empty because they are not reflected in actual teaching performance. In brief, the creedal objectives of the institution of vocational education are at issue.[1]

What ought to be the objectives of vocational home economics today? What role should home economics take in relation to other subject areas in the schools?

In Dewey's thinking, home economics had its major role as general education. This sometimes seems to be neglected today. With the present concern for the vocational function of home economics, should the place of home economics as general education also be re-examined?

"Family-centered" has long been a watchword in home economics education. If it is still valid, how can it best be implemented today? Is--and should it be--this focus as relevant for the programs in home economics which lead to gainful employment as it is for the programs concerned chiefly with general education or vocational homemaking?

Comparison of curricula and methods within several philosophic orientations makes one aware of another possible area for examining practice. Similar activities could be seen at some times in classrooms directed by each of the

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[1]Haskew and Tumlin, 73-74.

four philosophies. Clearly, there is more than doing involved in learning. Are purposes and guidance such that students recognize the desired learnings over and above sheer participation in activity? The effectiveness of home economics education depends in great measure on teachers who have thought through fundamental questions in relation to education and who know why they are teaching as they are in addition to knowing what and who and how they are teaching.

Since differences do exist in the implications for home economics of various philosophies of education, and since teachers are the implementers of philosophy, it becomes the responsibility of each teacher to consider the differences and to work toward a coherent and satisfying philosophy of home economics education. "A philosophy comes to us by means of effort and the searching examination of our experiences. Consequently, it cannot be handed from one person to another."[1]

Suggested Further Study

A study such as this one is weakened by the fact that there are many unsettled issues and ill-defined terms in home economics; this may also be a significant factor in the lack of clear perception of purposes in home economics education generally.

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[1]Kenneth W. Brown, "Establishment of a Philosophy: A Key to Excellence," The Industrial Arts Teacher, 22 (November-December, 1962), 10.

In 1957 it was said that:

> There is a type of knowledge in home economics . . . that has not yet progressed far beyond that of the pioneers. This is the area . . . having to do with questions of values, of purposes, of methods, in short, of philosophy. . . . Our superiority over the early leaders in the realm of . . . scientific knowledge is unquestioned. But our wisdom on what might be called the big questions . . . is not much greater.[1]

The 1959 Home Economics New Directions represents some progress in this direction, although it is probably more strongly influenced by opinions than by systematic study of issues and how they ought to be resolved. An educator attempting to be objective in finding suitable support for implementing the purposes of home economics must still base that attempt on somewhat personal and arbitrary answers to "What is home economics?" and "What values do home economists really want to implement?"

More adequate answers to questions of philosophy might well utilize research approaches not commonly used in home economics. Borrowing methodology from related basic disciplines, home economists tend toward scientific and, less frequently, historical methods. As another recognized root discipline for home economics, contemporary philosophy offers a "wide range of logical, linguistic and semantic tools" applicable to the "study of the root ideas

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[1]Caroline Budewig, "Origin and Development of the Home Economics Idea." Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation (Nashville, Tenn.: George Peabody College for Teachers, 1957), 36.

and arguments of various domains."[1] These might be used to explore such questions as:

1. What are the central value concepts of home economics? One home economist has said that:

> An analysis of the subject matter now included in home economics shows no central value-orientation really operating. However, there are still some home economists operating on the original value-orientation: promoting self-fulfillment of the individual through sound home and family life.[2]

Is this statement true? What should be the central concepts today?

2. Within the context of home economics, what consistent meaning--if any--can be assumed for such terms as family-centered, efficiency, homemaking as a vocation?

3. What are the distinctions--real or imagined--among the terms family life education, homemaking education, and home economics education?

4. What significant differences exist among the several historic or current definitions of home economics?

5. What distinctions are intended by the conceptions of "home economics as a single field," "as a unified field" made up of a limited number of specialties and a "unifying core," and as a "collection of specialties, having minimal relationships with each other?"[3] Rather than

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[1]Scheffler, 7.

[2]Marjorie Brown, "Home Economists and Professional Values," in The FIELD of Home Economics, 29.

[3]Jeanette A. Lee and Paul L. Dressel, Liberal

one, are there actually several philosophies of home economics just as there are several philosophies of education?

The present study has used the sometimes questioned approach of assuming that the traditional systems of philosophy have practical applications to education and, in turn, to home economics education. Enough persons in educational philosophy defend this approach to make it reasonable to believe it could be pursued further for some kinds of additional insight into home economics education. Studies which might follow this could include:

1. As the educational derivatives of other newer systems of philosophy become more completely developed and widely applied, the implications of these for home economics education can be explored. For example, increased attention is being given to existentialism in education; this may soon merit examination by home economics.

2. Interpretations for these four basic philosophies have been limited to home economics at the elementary, secondary, and adult levels. How would home economics in higher education develop within each of these educational philosophies? Would the conclusions as to the source of greatest support be the same?

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