The challenge of constantly changing times : from home economics to human ecology at the University of Wisconsin--Madison, 1903-2003. 2003

The Challenge of Constantly Changing Times

From Home Economics to Human Ecology at the University of Wisconsin–Madison 1903–2003

The Challenge of Constantly Changing Times

Contributors

Rima D. Apple, Professor, University of Wisconsin–Madison in the School of Human Ecology and the Women's Studies Program, has published extensively on the history of home economics, the history of motherhood, and the history of women's health, focusing particularly on the relationships between lay women and experts. She is now completing a history of scientific motherhood in the United States.

Joyce Coleman has researched the history of home economics at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, co-authoring "'As members of the social whole': A history of social reform as a focus of home economics, 1895–1940" (*Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, forthcoming) with Rima D. Apple. She recently received her master's from the Department of the History of Science at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and is currently completing a master's in computer science.

Susan R. King, after raising a family, attended the University of Wisconsin–Stout, where she received her B.S. in 1998 and her master's in 2000 in apparel design and textiles. She is currently a graduate student in the University of Wisconsin–Madison School of Human Ecology.

Andrea Kolasinski Marcinkus is completing her Ph.D. in Design Studies in the University of Wisconsin–Madison School of Human Ecology. She has taught introduction to design, portfolio preparation, and textile design handpainting techniques at UW–Madison as well as numerous informal textile technique workshops throughout the state. Marcinkus is studying the cultural role of nature crafts by middle and upper class nineteenth-century American women.

Judith E. Pasch is a lecturer and Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Consumer Science at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, School of Human Ecology. She is now studying the history of the University of Wisconsin Practice Cottage. Upon graduation she will continue teaching while researching consumer economic history.

Greta Marie Zenner has an M.Phil. in the History and Philosophy of Science from Cambridge University (UK) and an M.A. in the History of Science from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. She currently works with the NSF-funded Internships in Public Science Education program at the UW and is a summer health and science columnist at *The Capitol Times*, a local Madison newspaper. In the future, she hopes to continue working in science communication and the public understanding of science and pursuing additional research in the history of home economics.

The Challenge of Constantly Changing Times

From Home Economics to
Human Ecology at the
University of Wisconsin–Madison,
1903–2003

By

Rima D. Apple

with

Joyce Coleman
Susan R. King
Andrea Kolasinski Marcinkus
Judith E. Pasch
Greta Marie Zenner

Parallel Press
University of Wisconsin–Madison Libraries
728 State Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

http://parallelpress.library.wisc.edu

Printed in the United States of America
ISBN: 1-893311-39-2

The Parallel Press, an imprint of the
University of Wisconsin–Madison Libraries,
publishes print-on-demand books that parallel online publications.
In keeping with the Wisconsin Idea, this publication is part of an
ongoing commitment by the libraries to make
scholarly works available worldwide.

Design: Daniel L. Joe

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations

Illustration F.1: School of Human Ecology, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2003. Source: Daniel L. Joe.

Foreword

The School of Human Ecology's centennial celebrations provide a window in time through which to not only reflect on our past but also gaze to the future. Our first 100 years have set the stage for our vision of the next century. It illumines the School's progressive foundation and demonstrates how a philosophy supportive of Wisconsin women both in careers and at home expanded into a mission to improve the quality of life for individuals, families and communities around the globe.

The occasion of our centennial offers us pause to reflect on Human Ecology's legacy, a celebration of its accomplishments, and a sharing of its stories experienced in meeting challenges and initiating positive change. Reflecting on a shared past is like following a compass on a trek through the wilderness; you can realign your steps to the direction you intend to go after getting off-track to skirt an impenetrable briar patch—or an enrollment challenge, space restrictions, or budget crisis. This book is like a compass, recording our basic and ongoing aims and pointing true north.

Looking forward, what does the landscape look like? What will the School's second century bring?

One answer can be found in the work of a new generation of faculty who are bringing new ideas in education, research, creative endeavor, and outreach. A few examples of current extramural or federally funded research include:

❖ "Bullying, Victimization, and Delinquency among Maltreated Children," a study identifying possible factors that allow some abused or neglected children to grow into well-adjusted, productive adults. Learning how some children overcome abuse and neglect, going on to lead productive lives, can help more children succeed despite maltreatment.

❖ "Risk and Resilience in Children of Incarcerated Mothers," a study examining indicators that affect the development of children whose mothers are incarcerated. Poverty, changes in caregivers, and prenatal substance exposures, are among the risk factors being studied.
❖ "Vulnerability to Crisis in Urban Lucknow: The Role of Assets in Mitigating Risk," a research project on the vulnerability to crisis among families in impoverished urban areas of northern India will lead to new knowledge of what enables some individuals and families to succeed despite illness, unemployment, natural disasters, and other catastrophes. Understanding how some people cope with adverse circumstances will help others deal with similar challenges.
❖ "Children's Perceptions and Experiences of Teaching and Learning," a study examining social and affective aspects of learning for African American children. Its purpose is to address the gap in academic achievement between African American and white children in schools.

More senior faculty continue to expand their scholarship into new areas and forge new partnerships offering greater opportunities to students and providing high quality services to organizations, communities, and families.
❖ The Family Impact Seminars, developed in Wisconsin to inform public officials on current family-related issues, are being disseminated to a dozen additional states and the District of Columbia.
❖ The "Wisconsin Covering Kids and Families Initiative" aims to increase the number of children and adults in federal and state health-care coverage programs. At least 30,000 adults and 70,000 low-income children are without health-care insurance, according to current state estimates.
❖ The "Midlife in the United States" survey, exploring factors affecting the health and well-being of adults. This study follows over time the behavioral, sociological, psychological, and biological

well-being of more than 7,000 people between the ages of 35 and 85 years living throughout the United States.

❖ In a new partnership with Oakwood Village Retirement Communities in Madison, interior design students evaluate new facilities and complete other course projects and internships that benefit Oakwood and provide professional experience to design majors.

❖ An initiative with Lectra incorporated its U4ia textile and design software into the curriculum. Lectra donated this cutting-edge software, valued at one million dollars, and facilitated its use in the classroom. The software enhances learning and benefits students in their future workplaces.

Our vision is that Human Ecology's second century will be ushered in with a facility expansion and renovation. A recent feasibility study and tentative building plans integrate our 1914 historic building into a much larger facility, incorporating and enlarging the Preschool, Gallery of Design, and Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection, as well as classroom, conference, and student spaces. We believe that the time is right for Human Ecology programs to have facilities worthy of our rich history and exciting future. Like the new developments in research, outreach, and teaching, this new facility will be built upon a rich past and a solid foundation.

Our centennial theme, "Live Your Legacy," challenges us to achieve new levels of excellence while holding true to our mission. By the end of Human Ecology's second century in 2103, its facilities might appear unfamiliar and its technology, courses, and research will surely be different. But if time travel were possible, you would undoubtedly see our community of scholars continuing to lead with distinction in our mission to enhance the quality of human life.

Robin A. Douthitt, Dean
School of Human Ecology

Acknowledgments

As with any such project, this book owes its existence to the many people who have supported it over several years. It is my pleasure to publicly acknowledge their support and thank them for their assistance. First I must thank Dean Robin A. Douthitt. It is from her vision that the idea developed for a book as a celebration of the centennial of the School of Human Ecology. Throughout the last several years, she has been unstinting with her support, both financial and otherwise. The funding for much of the research has come from the Ruth Dickie History of Women in Home Economics Fund. I am most grateful to the late Ruth Dickie for her enthusiasm for the history of women in science and in home economics and for her foresight in establishing a fund that enabled us to complete this history. I also thank Ann Neviaser for underwriting the publication of this book.

The research for this volume has been enriched with the work of other scholars. Though many are cited in the text, I would like to single out a few for special recognition. First of all is the late Professor Beatrice Petrich. For many years Bea assembled historical materials and then compiled a brief history of the School up to 1939. These materials are now housed in the University of Wisconsin Archives and are available to scholars. Marjorie Pfeifer has been a wealth of knowledge about student affairs. In addition, her collection of School catalogs, which enabled a better assessment of curricular and social changes in the School, has been invaluable. I am also indebted to the students of Consumer Science 501: Archival Research in the History of Home Economics, held in spring 2002. This class–Susan R. King, Andrea Kolasinski, Judith E. Pasch, Hunter Tjugum, and Greta Marie Zenner, and Joyce E. Coleman, teaching assistant— was truly a collaborative effort among students and instructors. The students' enthusiasm for the history of the

School, their digging in the archival and published sources, and their excitement at their finds all strengthened the resolve to produce a publication that would present a history of the people involved in the School's development. This project owes a huge debt of gratitude to Joyce E. Coleman. For the past several years, she has sifted through the University of Wisconsin Archives, identifying and organizing the material on home economics. Her diligent research and critical analytic skills provided the basis for many of the historical presentations we have developed, including the website documenting the history of the School of Human Ecology and the writing of this publication. In addition, persons too numerous to mention shared with us their memories of the School, faculty and former faculty, students and former students, staff and former staff. I am most grateful for their assistance.

Doris Green, University of Wisconsin-Madison, School of Human Ecology, and Daniel L. Joe and Elisabeth Owens, University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries, ensured that the book production was smooth and efficient.

Friends and relatives were highly tolerant of endless discussions about the book. Several commented on the manuscript. I especially appreciate the patience and the helpful suggestions of Michael W. Apple, Wendy Way, and Diane Worzala. Needless to say, they are not responsible for any errors that might remain in the manuscript.

In many ways, this project has been a labor of love. To rediscover the exciting roots of our School, to connect with past faculty, staff, and students, and to see the world through their eyes, has been both stimulating and challenging. A book this size can only hint at the richness of the School's history.

Illustration I.1: Students studying in the corner of the Practice Cottage, c. 1923. Source: University of Wisconsin-Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 202, Folder 9: "Practice Cottage."

Introduction

"The field of home economics faces the challenge of constantly changing times," Frances Zuill, director of the School of Home Economics and associate dean of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, announced at a meeting of School alumnae in 1960.[1] Zuill's observation describes both the field of home economics and the historical rationale for its development; it is a perceptive portrait of the discipline across the nation and, most especially, on the Madison campus. From its establishment in 1903 as a department in the College of Letters and Sciences, through its long relationship with the College of Agriculture, to its current status as an independent School of Human Ecology, the discipline has maintained its leading academic role while remaining responsive to the needs of society. These demands have resulted in an ever-evolving curriculum, a student body growing in numbers and diversity, and dedicated faculty and staff coping with financial and administrative problems that at times inhibited their goals. The story of the evolution of the University of Wisconsin–Madison School of Human Ecology is a complex and varied tale reflecting not only changes within the University but also changes within the discipline and indeed within the nation itself.

This history of the first 100 years of the School of Human Ecology at the University of Wisconsin–Madison traces the challenges and the changing times. Three women–Caroline L. Hunt, Abby L. Marlatt, and Frances Zuill—dominated the leadership of the School for more than half a century. They represent the first generation of home economists in this country, women who believed that home economics education would enable women–any woman, every woman—to more successfully and productively fulfill their lives. Such education, they insisted, encompassed a wide range of courses in the physical, biological, and social sciences and the humanities From the earliest years of their administrations, these leaders were committed

to educating college women, and, through the Wisconsin Idea, they also reached into the homes of women throughout the state. For them, the nuclear family was the focal point of society; a strong, healthy family resulted in a strong, healthy society. And, home economics-trained women would create strong, healthy families and strong, healthy communities. Though the first three home economics leaders at the University of Wisconsin applauded women in professional roles outside the home, they expected that the majority of their students would find their careers in homemaking. Hunt, Marlatt, and Zuill defined the scope of home economics on the Madison campus and nationally; they left an indelible mark on the School's history. Subsequent leaders, representing later generations of home economists, shifted the School's emphasis to preparation for careers outside the home. They continued to stress the importance of family, but increasingly they expected their graduates to pursue careers outside of marriages, careers that sometimes ended at marriage, but not always. As this history demonstrates, this shift in emphasis should not obscure the very strong continuities that underlie the School's history.

This book investigates the early years of the School in greater detail than the later years, for two reasons. First, the activities and events of the early years established the foundation upon which the School has grown; it is important to study and acknowledge this foundation. Second, the history of the early years is rapidly slipping away. Many records have been lost; though in research for this book, much has also been rediscovered. We have attempted to capture the people and events of those earlier years while fading sources are available. This should not be taken as a slight on our recent past, rather as a recognition that this study points to the more voluminous records of the later period that will provide rich resources for future historians, resources that may not be available for the earlier years.

For a similar reason, this book emphasizes the environment of the School—the student body, faculty and staff, and curricular

developments—in more depth than the significant research activities of School personnel. Undoubtedly, research has been an integral element of the School since its inception. We provide only few examples detailing the long-standing and vital research tradition in the School because data documenting these activities are relatively easier to locate. Faculty curriculum vitae, biographical files, and news clipping are housed in the University Archives; especially for the recent past, publications and other public records are generally available. It is more difficult to uncover the changing ambience of the School, the shifting concerns of administrators, and the issues students faced. It is this sense of the School that this history seeks to capture.

To highlight the people and the challenges they faced over the past 100 years in the development of the School, this book is divided in to two major sections. Part 1 describes the history of the School's first century in five chronologically presented chapters. The vision of Caroline L. Hunt, the first director of home economics on the Madison campus, and the obstacles she faced are discussed in chapter 1. Abby L. Marlatt headed home economics in Madison from 1909 to 1939. The critical challenges the School faced during this period are the subject of chapter 2. Marlatt was followed by Frances Zuill. Though her tenure was shorter than Marlatt's, it was during Zuill's years that significant transformations in the School began, from a single-sex to co-educational program and to a greater focus on professional preparation. These changes are the subject of chapter 3. The social and cultural upheavals of the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s affected the School, its students, faculty, and curriculum in many ways, which are analyzed in chapter 4. The final chapter of Part 1, chapter 5, details some of the more recent events that have developed from the School's history of challenges and changes and that suggest possible paths for the School's future.

Part 2 details a set of case studies that focus on two particular aspects of the School's history: student life and research. In

chapter 6, Judith E. Pasch studies the crucial role of the practice cottage in the early curriculum of the School and the life of the students. She analyzes the social, cultural, and pedagogic factors that brought about the cottage's demise. Chapter 7 brings to life the development and activities of student organizations in the School. Susan R. King dramatically reveals the importance of these clubs in students' lives. Research, an important element in the School's development, is the subject of Greta Marie Zenner in chapter 8. With her focus on Helen Tracy Parsons, the renowned nutritionist and professor of nutrition in the School, Zenner details the problems and possibilities of women in science in the period. One of the major resources of the School today is the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection. In chapter 9, Andrea Kolasinski Marcinkus reveals the history of the woman who bequeathed it to the School and its significance for the School, the University, and nationally.

Following these, the Appendices provide some lists for quick reference. Appendix A traces out the tenures of the School's administrators. Appendix B presents a diagram of the development of degree majors over the School's history. Appendix C provides brief histories of the various departments and program areas as they evolved over the century. Appendix D lists some of the more significant dates in the School's history.

To understand the history of the School of Human Ecology at the University of Wisconsin–Madison we must begin a few years earlier than its founding in 1903 and consider the roots of the discipline in the United States. Home economics emerged in the late nineteenth century in a reaction to dramatic changes in the country. Under the pressure of increasing industrialization and urbanization, waves of immigration, and technological, scientific, and medical breakthroughs, Americans faced a rapidly changing environment. Many, especially middle-class reformers, were frightened; they feared the "social disintegration" that they saw all around them. High rates of infant mortality and morbidity, the spread of trusts and

monopolies, political corruption, deteriorating conditions in urban and rural areas drove home economics leaders to develop educational programs to prepare women to cope with these new conditions. In preparing women—wives and mothers of future citizens—to deal with the problems of the modern world, these courses of study would also create stronger families that would, in turn, alleviate social problems.[2]

Ellen Swallow Richards, the foremost proponent of home economics in its early years, insisted that women needed an education that would provide them with the tools to protect and nurture their families and their communities. One of Richards' most popular examples of the power of educated women was her solution to the problem of harmful and deceptively prepared foods. By the beginning of the twentieth century, scientific research and new technology had led to new products; at the same time, competition among food producers had led to mislabelling and even adulteration of products. A cadre of educated women could investigate and disclose such fraudulent practices and persuade local, state, and federal government agencies to create food regulations based on contemporary science. Therefore, with a training in home economics, women would improve the health and well-being of their own families and of the wider community.

Joining with Richards, home economics leaders fostered the development of home economics programs throughout the country to create just such a cadre. At the Lake Placid Conferences, 1899–1908, home economists gathered to define the scope and content of their field. In 1909, they formed the American Home Economics Association (AHEA) and began to publish the *Journal of Home Economics*, which provided the new discipline with an organizational base and a publication outlet. In the *Proceedings* of the Lake Placid conferences and the *Journal*, early home economists argued that the country needed home economics programs to train women how to be modern consumers and housekeepers and informed citizens. And,

who better to teach these students than college-educated, scientifically trained women? Consequently, the push for home economics also opened up new and expanding careers for women in teaching, nutrition, sanitary engineering, housing design, and allied professions.

Even earlier, in the last several decades of the nineteenth century, home economics programs were being established on U.S. college campuses, especially among land-grant universities. In this period, the University of Wisconsin offered home economics to its students, though only briefly and in a limited format. In 1894, the progressive professor of economics Richard Ely convinced the university's Regents to invite Helen Campbell, author, reformer, and home economist, to present two courses of lectures at the university the following spring.

In the 1870s, Campbell had become interested in both the nascent home economics movement and in the living conditions of the poor. In 1878, she began teaching at the Raleigh Cooking School, North Carolina, and in 1881 she published a textbook entitled *The Easiest Way in House-Keeping and Cooking.* But Campbell was best known for a series of works on economics that she wrote, including *The Problem of the Poor* (1882), *Prisoners of Poverty* (1887), and *Women Wage Earners* (1893). The latter, for which Ely wrote a foreword, won an award from the American Economic Association. In these three works Campbell demonstrated her concern with the appalling conditions in which the poor lived, and in particular with the effects of low wages on women factory workers.

According to the 1894–95 University catalog Campbell offered two courses, "Women wage-earning" and "Domestic Science." A friend of Ellen Richards, the economist had agreed to lecture at the University of Wisconsin because she eagerly anticipated these courses as preparation to the development of a home economics program in Madison. In a letter to Ely, she accepted her payment of $200 "with the understanding that it was prelude to the longer work, and a formal chair in your department of social economics."[2] The following

year, Campbell published the lectures she had given under the title *Household Economics: A Course of Lectures in the School of Economics of the University of Wisconsin.* But despite her offers to give several more lectures so that the topic would not be dropped, her work did not immediately lead to the permanent establishment of a domestic science department nor to her employment at the UW, although she taught briefly at Kansas State Agricultural College.

Though Campbell did not return to lecture on home economics at the UW, interest in the subject remained high. Women's clubs throughout the state, the University Board of Regents, and the governor's wife, Belle Case La Follette, all promoted the establishment of a department of home economics on the Madison campus. In February 1903, a women's club in Waupaca approached the state legislature in its support; in March, a group from Edgerton added its voice to the call. Shortly after these direct appeals, the state

Illustration I.2: A group of early home economists. Ellen Richards is seated to the far right; the woman seated next to her is probably Helen Campbell. Source: Caroline Hunt, *The Life of Ellen H. Richards* (Boston: Whitcomb & Barrows, 1912), opp. pg. 286.

legislature appropriated $7,500 for a Department of Domestic Science, one half of the University's original request.

The name "domestic science" may appear surprising from the vantage point of the twenty-first century, but a century ago, as the field was just beginning to coalesce and define itself, various names were used interchangeably. A few opted for "household arts," connoting manual training in the skills they considered necessary for successful home making, skills such as cooking and sewing. Others preferred "domestic economy," reflecting the work of mid-century educators such as Catharine Beecher, who were interested in problems of the housewife and her servants. Still others called their enterprise "domestic science," connecting the field more specifically with laboratory work and emphasizing the field's roots in nutrition and sanitation studies. Ultimately, the agreed-upon term was "home economics," a name that was more closely aligned with the popular social sciences of the day and that served to link the home to the larger political sphere. But this consensus was not achieved until the formation of the American Home Economics Association in 1909.[3]

Regardless of the new discipline's name, its story at the University of Wisconsin began in 1903. In May of that year, the state legislature approved funding for a Department of Domestic Science; that June, the UW Board of Regents appointed Caroline L. Hunt its first professor in the Department of Home Economics.

Notes

1. Frances Zuill, quoted in Laureen Seefeldt Thorstad and Emma Jordre, "School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences: Home Economics–Its Challenging Past, Present, and Future," pp. 87-99 in *A Resourceful University: The University of Wisconsin–Madison in its 125th year* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1975), p 87.

2. For more on the history of home economics, see, for example, Sarah Stage and Viriginia B. Vincenti, eds., *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997) and Emma Seifrit Weigley, "It Might Have Been Euthenics: The Lake Placid Conferences and the Home Economics Movement," *American Quarterly*, 1974, 26 (1): 79-96.

3. Helen Campbell to Richard Ely, 21 February 1895, located in the Wisconsin State Historical Society Archives, Wis Mss MK, Box 8, Folder 7.

4. For more on the formation of the field and the issue of naming see, Weigley, "It Might have Been Euthenics," and Sarah Stage, "Introduction: What's in a Name?" in Stage and Vincenti, *Rethinking Home Economics*, pp. 1-13.

Illustration 1.1: An early dress-making class, c. 1903-1910. This photograph was taken between 1903 and 1910, either during Caroline L. Hunt's career as professor of home economics at the University of Wisconsin, or during the early years of the tenure of Abby L. Marlatt. Source: University of Wisconsin- Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3. Box 202, Folder 7: "Textiles and Fashion."

1

The Beginning, 1903–1908

"The final test of the teaching of home economics is freedom"

Caroline L. Hunt had been involved in the evolution of home economics since the late nineteenth century. A close colleague of Ellen Richards and a staunch proponent of home economics education, her own broad interests can be seen in her educational background. For her undergraduate degree, completed in 1888 at Northwestern University, she majored in Latin and enrolled in a variety of science and language courses. Between 1893 and 1896, she carried out graduate work in chemistry and German at Northwestern University. For two of these years, she lived part-time at Hull House, the famous settlement house in Chicago, where she collected data for two studies: *The Italians in Chicago: A Social and Economic Study* (1897), was published by the U.S. Department of Labor; *Dietary Studies in Chicago* (1898), published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture was a collaboration with Jane Addams.

Illustration 1.2: Caroline L. Hunt, Professor of Home Economics, University of Wisconsin 1903–1908. Source: *Home Economists: Portraits and Brief Biographies of the Men and Women Prominent in the Home Economics Movement in the United States, Compiled by a Committee of the American Home Economics Association* (Baltimore, 1929), p. 15.

Hunt believed that home economics embodied the best general and interdisciplinary education. From 1896 until 1902, she was an instructor in domestic economy at the Lewis Institute in Chicago. Her interest in the newly developing discipline of home economics is evident in her participation in several of the

Lake Placid Conferences, the set of conferences led by Ellen Richards between 1899 and 1908. During these conferences Hunt argued that a training in home economics ought to liberate women from the hardships of housework, teach them to guard their health and safety and that of their families, and simplify their lives. She spoke often of the power of home economics to liberate women from drudgery, arguing that

> The final test of the teaching of home economics is freedom. 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 have we failed. If we have simplified one life and released in it energy for its own expression, just so far have we succeeded.[1]

A good friend of the Progressives Belle and Robert LaFollette, Caroline Hunt did not mask her belief in the political power of home economics. Her public lectures and publications often reminded women of the influence they held, though in this period they lacked the vote. Home economics education meant knowledge and knowledge could and should be translated into action. Her approach to home economics typically applied contemporary scientific knowledge to issues of family and community health and safety. When speaking before the 1907 Lake Placid Conference, she insisted that

> [Women's] knowledge of the dangers which lurk in food materials prepared by modern processes brings with it the knowledge that the best methods of preparation in the home can not make wholly safe those foods which have been adulterated before reaching the consumer which have been handled by careless or uncleanly methods. Their understanding of the dangers which lurk in bad air shows that proper street cleaning may be as large a factor as

> ventilation in securing pure air in their homes. ... For these reasons intelligent educated women are entering upon public work, not as a substitute for that work which is done in the interest of home life, but as a necessary means under present conditions of realizing those ideals for which the home stands.[2]

Hunt consistently advocated for the role of home economics in bringing about social justice. She repeated numerous times her view that home economics ought to teach students how to consume ethically. By avoiding products manufactured under poor labor conditions, they could help improve social conditions for those without power.

Initially, University administrators accepted Hunt's vision of home economics. Moreover, they were clearly worried about the commonly accepted equation of home economics with domestic skills only. To obviate any misunderstandings about the academic standing of home economics on the Madison campus, they placed the department of domestic science in the College of Letters and Science and insisted that students attending home economics be admitted under the same conditions as students in other programs. University President Charles Van Hise was most particular about these conditions, noting that

> with reference to the advisability of establishing this department there had been much difference of opinion. However, the principle was laid down that only students admitted to the University under the requirements already established were eligible for work in this department. It was further decided, that, so far as practicable, the courses offered should be of equal grade to other courses offered for the A.B. degree.[3]

Ardently defending home economics as a rigorous scientific education for women, Hunt added to these requirements by insisting

that students complete at least one year of college chemistry before their admittance to the program and at least forty-seven credits of science courses for graduation. Students took general chemistry, biology, physiology, organic chemistry, and bacteriology. In addition to science courses, requirements included English, mathematics, and German.

The seven departmental courses in the 1903–1904 catalog were taught by Hunt and her assistant, Ellen Alden Huntington, and were designed for students majoring in home economics as well as students outside the program. The classes encompassed a wide range of issues that home economists believed were vital to the education of informed and concerned citizens. On the one hand, House Sanitation addressed "the site, surroundings, and construction of a dwelling house considered with reference to health"; on the other hand, House Decoration addressed "the decorations and furnishings of a house considered with reference to beauty." The area of foods was represented by similar pair of courses: The Selection and Preparation of Foods involved "the economic aspect of the food problem," whereas Dietetics, "the physiological aspect of the food problem." Home Economics dealt with "the home in its relation to society"; Household Economy dealt with "the details of house management." The seventh course concerned the teaching of home economics in "the lower schools." These courses represented the areas that most engaged home economists in the early twentieth century and they demonstrate the interdisciplinarity of the field from its very inception.

Though these seven remained the heart of Hunt's home economics program, the curriculum expanded over the next several years as faculty from other departments taught courses for the Department of Home Economics. In the 1906–07 catalogue, House Sanitation was expanded with supplementary lectures on domestic architecture presented by Arthur Peabody, the University Architect. In the same year, Adulterations of Food Stuff was added, which provided students with practical experience in the "the laboratory of

the Wisconsin State Food and Dairy Commissioner, to which large amounts of material are sent for examination." Like so many home economists, Hunt had long seen the problems of adulterated and deceptive food products as a prime arena for women's social action. While accepting the benefits of the prepared and mass produced foods that were flooding the market in the early twentieth century, she also recognized the opportunities for deception, opportunities that should be battled by scientifically educated women. She undoubtedly intended that courses such as these would provide her students with the knowledge they needed to enter the public arena to fight for more healthful conditions for their families and their communities.

The Department offerings were designed to attract different groups of students. One group consisted of women enrolled in other departments on campus. Hunt anticipated that her department's courses would supplement those of other departments, "as part of

Illustration 1.3: This photograph of a food chemistry class was probably taken during Caroline L. Hunt's tenure, or possibly in the first year of Abby L. Marlatt's career at the University of Wisconsin. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection. Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 2: "Foods and Nutrition."

the general education of all the young women in the College of Letters and Science." In other words, she envisioned home economics as one aspect of the college education of all women. Other women encouraged to enroll in home economics were those anticipating careers in teaching or "other professional work."[4] Hunt assumed, as did many social reformers of the day, that all women, even those preparing for professional careers outside the home, would at some point in their lives be responsible for home and family. Accepting the social expectations connecting women and domesticity, she designed the curriculum to provide an education that would make women's home lives less oppressive and, at the same time, encourage graduates to pursue issues of social justice outside the home. Home economics students who completed the rigorous program and a thesis would earn a Bachelor of Arts in Home Economics.

Classes began in the new department in the spring of 1904 with thirty-four students. In the first full year of operation, this number grew to 113 and then fluctuated over the next several years from sixty-nine to seventy-two to eighty-five. Together with her assistant Huntington, Hunt created a program closely evaluated and highly praised in its first few years. In 1905, a Report of the Regents concluded that

> none of the older departments seem of greater importance than this one. In this department young women may pursue useful studies that stand on equal footing with any of classical or scientific courses. The fact that more girls are taking courses in chemistry and bacteriology seems to indicate that they are making the required preparation to enter the department of Home Economics. This is not a mere 'cooking school,' but from the work done here, Wisconsin cannot fail to get better housekeepers and homemakers.[5]

President Charles Van Hise hoped that the "young ladies" of the

campus would take their "opportunities to learn how to become the intelligent heads of households."[6]

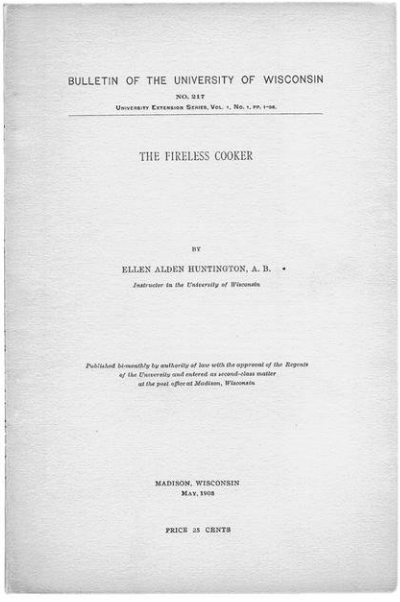
Moreover, Hunt's belief in the power of home economics education led her to take this instruction outside the confines of the University classroom. In this she acted on both the tenets of the early home economics movement—to bring the latest research findings to women inside and outside academic institutions—and on the "Wisconsin Idea." Maintaining the importance of sharing university research with the state's residents, University President Van Hise asserted boldly and often that "I shall never be content until the beneficent influence of the University reaches every home in the state."[7]

As an example of this, Hunt began holding "Housekeepers' Conferences," as early as 1905; these short courses were offered in conjunction with the Farmers' Course in Agriculture. The classes were held in the month of February, a time when rural women could more easily leave their homes to study. The conferences "aim[ed] to help all women of the state. The work [was] of a practical character, consisting of talks on sanitation, house decoration, the judging of textiles for household use, and lessons in the preparation of food."[8] This innovation was quickly commended as the "opportunity" for "the university [to] help the farmer's daughters as well as the farmer's sons."[9]

The February 1908 Conference was typical. Reflecting Hunt's belief in the power of home economics to improve society, lectures at this conference included Dressing for Health; The Campaign for Pure Milk, The Preparation of Milk for Infant Feeding, The Pollution and Inspection of the Water of the State, and an illustrated lecture on Life in Japan.[10] And Wisconsin residents eagerly attended the Conference and took their learning back home. For example, one attendee at the 1908 Conference was a "young lady from the Town of New Chester." A few months after the Conference she married and moved to a farm in Westfield. There she quickly set about

remodeling the farm house according to what she had learned, "put[ting] in a hot water furnace and bathroom...unheard of in those days with no electricity."[11] Hunt clearly influenced a broad range of Wisconsin residents.

Even in the early years when Hunt and Huntington were occupied with the problems of defining a department and developing innovative course work, research appeared as an important, though understated element of their work. The beginning of home economics research at the University of Wisconsin is often dated from 1914 with the work of Amy Daniels, who studied infant nutrition and child welfare. However, research actually began with Huntington. In the early twentieth century, a new cooking device was imported into the United States from Europe: the fireless cooker. This modern utensil consisted of a wooden or metal container lined with some insulating material such as hay or asbestos. The food to be cooked was heated in a metal container that was then placed in the fireless cooker, where it remained well insulated until the food was ready to be served. (In many ways, the fireless cooker was a precursor of today's electric slow cooker.) At the time, there was much discussion about which materials were most efficient and effective for household fireless cookers. With the assistance of students in the Department of Home Economics, Huntington conducted



BULLETIN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

NO. 217

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION SERIES, VOL. 1, NO. 1, PP. 1-16.

THE FIRELESS COOKER

BY

ELLEN ALDEN HUNTINGTON, A. B.

Instructor in the University of Wisconsin

Published bimonthly by authority of law with the approval of the Regents of the University and entered as second-class matter at the post office at Madison, Wisconsin.

MADISON, WISCONSIN

MAY, 1908

PRICE 25 CENTS

Illustration 1.4: "The Fireless Cooker," 1908. This bulletin describes the experiments conducted by Ellen Alden Huntington and home economics students that document the efficacy of the "fireless cooker." It is the earliest published example of research in home economics at the University of Wisconsin. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/4/1, Box 1.

a series of experiments to test to what extent foods held heat in a fireless cooker and the advantages of cooking food at temperatures below the boiling point. She determined that the fireless cooker "based on scientific principle proves itself practicable for household use" and concluded that

> housekeeping has lagged far behind other industries. An evidence of this has been the disregards of small economies. There is, however, a growing tendency toward such economies and toward measuring them accurately and scientifically.[12]

Her conclusion echoed Hunt's calls for linking modern science and women's domestic work and foreshadowed the direction of much of home economics research in the next several decades.

For three and a half years Hunt attempted to create an intellectually rigorous program that would carry out her ambitious social vision for home economics, despite growing pressure to emphasize manual skills. In 1908, a Regents' appointed committee reported on the possible relocation or restructuring of the Department of Domestic Science. The committee members clearly expected a field very different from that envisioned by Hunt. They explained that "our young men are drifting rapidly toward the engineering courses. Let us foster here another science–one that may become particularly attractive to our young women, and one that seems to accord naturally with their capabilities and with their inclinations." Moreover, the report concluded that young women should "obtain such learning as will equip them to become teachers themselves in the art."[13] Evidently, the home economics curriculum they wanted was not an "add-on" for the women students enrolled in other degree programs or a degree that would prepare them for waged work; rather, they expected a degree that focused on manual skills or teacher preparation.

Van Hise evidenced a similar sense that home economics education was not supplemental, but rather the goal itself for women at the University of Wisconsin, when he reported to the Association of

Collegiate Alumnae (which later became the American Association of University Women) that:

> it will be realized that the scope of the knowledge of the head of a household should include business, the applications of chemistry, physics, and biology to food and health, the applications of architecture and art to the house. The woman who has studied the fundamental sciences leading to these subjects and becomes trained in their application to the home is educated in a profession as dignified as other professions. When a woman becomes thus educated she will find the direction of her home a high intellectual pleasure, rather than wearisome routine.[14]

In other words, to Van Hise and to some extent the Regents, women needed education that would make them better wives and mothers.[15] Moreover, with this education women would be content to stay in the home. The only career beyond domesticity that he acknowledged for home economics educated women was teaching. It is this narrower vision of the field that came to dominate home economics education in subsequent decades in both Madison and nationally.

Hunt was deeply disappointed by this vision of home economics and with Van Hise's decision in the spring of 1908 to transfer the home economics department to the College of Agriculture, a decision that was predicated upon her resignation. She wrote him:

> I think there is a place for Home Economics in colleges—and that the purpose of this work should be to teach women the social significance of the control which they have over wealth, of the fact that they can determine to a large extent what shall be made and under what conditions it shall be made. I see no place for cooking and sewing in such courses except as they give an understanding of materials and processes.[16]

For Hunt, home economics was much more than simply preparation for housewifery and teaching.

Was it this difference in vision that ended Hunt's tenure at the University of Wisconsin? Or, was it that her program was more rigorous than the Regents wanted? Or, more ambitious than they were willing to support? Were Board members and administrators uncomfortable working with Hunt? Were they concerned about fluctuating enrollments? Unfortunately, given the limitations of the extant historical record we can only speculate on the reasons for Hunt's dismissal.[17]

Appointed as the first professor of home economics at the University of Wisconsin in 1903, Caroline Hunt was forced to resign only five years later. Her life and her short tenure at UW indicate some of the tensions and debates that surrounded the establishment of home economics programs within colleges. Her attempts to create a home economics program may not have met with approval from university officials in her own time, but with the benefit of hindsight her vision for the field appears worthy of much admiration. Although Hunt pursued many other activities after her departure from the university, she lost the important role she had once played in the discipline as influence shifted towards those who wanted to emphasize homemaking and teacher preparation over a broad liberal arts and sciences foundation. In the early 1910s, she became co-editor with her friend Belle La Follette of the women's page of *La Follette's Weekly*, authored numerous pamphlets for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, contributed to the suffrage movement, and in 1912 published the work for which she is best known, *The Life of Ellen H. Richards*. But she soon gave up her public life.

Though Hunt was forced from the UW faculty and the program was temporarily suspended, the demand for home economics on the Madison campus remained strong. In subsequent years the program was developed by Abby Marlatt into a vibrant unit of the University of Wisconsin.

Notes

1. Caroline L. Hunt, "Revaluations," [1902,] reprinted in Marjorie East, *Caroline Hunt, Philosopher for Home Economics* (Pennsylvania State University, 1982), p. 62.

2. Caroline L. Hunt, "Woman's Public Work for the Home," [1907,] reprinted in East, *Caroline Hunt, Philospher for Home Economics.* p. 88.

3. Charles Van Hise, "Report of the President," *Biennial Report of the Regents of the University for the Years 1902–1904*, pp. 6, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 1/00/1.

4. *Catalogue of the University of Wisconsin for 1903–1904*, p. 186.

5. Jessie M. Cole and H. J. Desmond, "Report of the Committee on Department of Home Economics and School of Education," *Biennial Report of the Regents of the University for the Years 1904–05 and 1905–06*, p. 187, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 1/00/1.

6. "Housekeeping in Transition Period," *The Daily Cardinal* [University of Wisconsin], 26 January 1904.

7. Van Hise quoted in Erin Elliott, "The Influence of Van Hise Lives on through Wisconsin Idea," *Wisconsin Week*, 9 April 2003, p. 1.

8. *University of Wisconsin, Department of Home Economics, 1907–1908*, Bulletin of the University of Wisconsin, no. 172, August 1907, p. 5.

9. Arabelle S. Brandenburg, et al., "Course in Domestic Science (1908)" quoted in East, *Caroline Hunt, Philosopher for Home Economics.* p. 15.

10. "Third Annual Housekeeper's Conference," Department of Home Economics, University of Wisconsin, February 4–14, 1908, copy in the possession of Rima D. Apple.

11. We wish to thank Roberta Johnson for providing us with this history of her mother's experiences. Personal correspondence Johnson to Rima D. Apple, 27 March 2001, letter in the possession of Apple.

12. Ellen Alden Huntington, "The Fireless Cooker," *Bulletin of the University of Wisconsin,* no. 217 (Madison, WI, May 1908), p. 37, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/4/1, Box 1.

13. "Report of the Committee on Home Economics," Board of Regents Minutes, 16 June 1908, p. 2, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 1/1/3, Box 21, Folder 7.

14. Charles Richard Van Hise, "Education Tendencies in State Universities," *Publications of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae*, Series III, no. 17, Feb. 1908, p. 42.

15. It is this emphasis on the domestic that probably led to the somewhat pejorative nickname of the "bride's course." The nickname received prominent attention as the title of an article written in celebration of the School's seventy-fifth anniversary. However, we can find no contemporary mention. The earliest reference we have found is in an April 1931 article in *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, twenty-seven years after the department was established.

16. For more on the decision to fire Hunt and transfer home economics to the College of Agriculture, see East, *Caroline Hunt, Philospher for Home Ecomonic,* and University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Papers of President Charles Van Hise, Series 4/10/1, esp. Box 3, Folder: "Florence G. Buckstaff" and Box 7, Folder: "Harry Russell."

17. For more analysis on this point, see East, *Caroline Hunt, Philosopher for Home Economics.* pp. 11-24.

Illustration 2.1: During the early years of the administration of Abby L. Marlatt, before the home economics building was constructed at 1300 Linden Drive in 1914, classes were held first in the College of Agriculture, shown here in a photograph from the early twentieth-century. In 1911, the University bought the small white house on Linden Drive, directly south of the Washburn Observatory, for use as the Practice Cottage. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 8/5, Box 122, "College of Agriculture."

2

The Expansion of Home Economics, 1909–1939

"The greatest need of America today is a wisely educated womanhood"

In 1909, Abby Lillian Marlatt was appointed the second professor of home economics at the University of Wisconsin, which was now a department in the College of Agriculture. Marlatt directed the program for thirty years, during a period when home economics redefined itself locally and nationally to answer the problems of contemporary life. During her tenure at Wisconsin, the student body expanded dramatically as the number of majors offered grew in order to prepare students for careers in teaching and other areas, and in order to provide students with the tools to improve family life and society. The program moved into a specially constructed building, rather than the make-shift quarters that had been assigned to Hunt. And, the students applied their classroom learning in "real-life" situations in new units such as the Practice Cottage and the tea room, significantly altering the students' pedagogical and social experiences. Under Marlatt's tutelage, home economics developed its distinctive place on the Madison campus.

At first glance, with Hunt's exit, the repositioning of the Department in the College of Agriculture, and the hiring of Abby Marlatt, home economics at the University of Wisconsin appears quite different from its earlier form. Yet, in substance, Marlatt maintained many of the values and standards that Hunt had sought to establish and built on the programs that Hunt initiated. Marlatt, too, valued home economics training for women inside and outside the academy and she considered an education in home economics to

be the basis for improving the lives of Wisconsin citizens. She consistently held to the belief that:

> the greatest need of America today is a wisely educated womanhood. As woman sets the standards of life, so the nation's homes are built and citizens made. . . .
>
> Today the profession of home making is a learned one, and she who does not prepare for it faces the greatest work woman can do with hands tied.[1]

Despite these similarities, however, the Department developed quite differently under the tutelage of Hunt and Marlatt. Their personalities may, in part, account for the differences. In addition, in the years after Hunt's tenure, circumstances beyond the campus, such as the United States' involvement in World War I, the passage of innovative federal legislation, and the like, stimulated a greater appreciation for home economics and provided needed resources for the growth of the field, both in Madison and across the country.

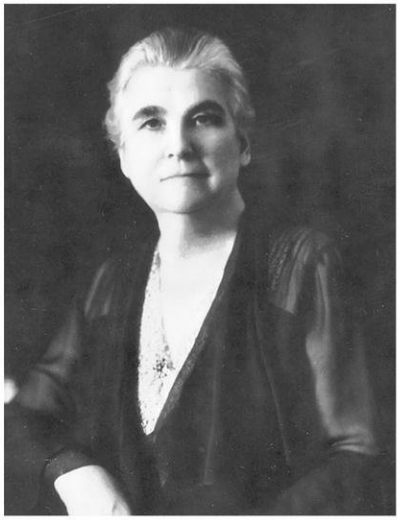


Illustration 2.2: Abby L. Marlatt, director of home economics at the University of Wisconsin, 1909–1939. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 3/1, Box 60, negative# x25 707.

Marlatt was born on March 7, 1869, in Manhattan, Kansas, to a family interested in teaching, writing, and agricultural issues. She attended Kansas State Agricultural College (now Kansas State University), earning her B.S. (Domestic Science) in 1888 and her M.S. (Domestic Economy) in 1890. (Kansas State also awarded Marlatt an honorary Doctor of Science in 1925.) Before coming to Madison, Marlatt organized a domestic economy department

at Utah State Agricultural College in Logan, Utah (1890–1894), and a home economics department at the Manual Training High School in Providence, Rhode Island (1894–1909). Her reputation for this work caused Harry L. Russell, Dean of the College of Agriculture, to take notice of her abilities. He requested that she come to Wisconsin to develop a department of home economics. Marlatt joined the UW faculty in 1909 and remained until her retirement in 1939.

Like Hunt's, Marlatt's influence extended well beyond the borders of the state as she attended many of the Lake Placid Conferences and often served on committees of the American Home Economics Association. She aided home-front efforts during World War I as a committee member of Hoover's staff on food conservation and during Hoover's administration she was active on his national housing commission. Concerned with the development of home economics outside this country as well, she encouraged U.S. home economists to think internationally and she chaired a committee that raised funds to establish a department of home economics at the Women's College of Constantinople.

Her reputation was as a stern, austere, and tough woman with an imposing physical presence and a no-nonsense attitude. Because she felt her students and faculty represented UW Home Economics, she insisted on perfection from them at all times. However, those who knew her well realized that the exterior gruffness did not accurately represent the true Abby Marlatt. According to May Reynolds, a fellow department member, Marlatt was a "marshmallow" inside. It was because she wanted the best for her department that she demanded so much of her faculty. When it came to caring for her students and faculty, Marlatt had a soft side for those who met the challenge of her personality. When the scholarship fund of Omicron Nu, the home economics honor society, lacked sufficient funds, which was nearly always, Marlatt secretly made up the difference with contributions from her own pocket.[2] Similarly, when a student could not afford the eye

surgery she needed, Marlatt quietly told her to go ahead and get the operation done; she would see to it that the bill was paid. Helen Parsons, another home economics faculty member, characterized Marlatt as a "warm-hearted, crabby person."

The Department's change in status provided Marlatt with a firm platform from which to expand and refine her program. When the program had been housed in the College of Letters and Science, its degree-granting aspects were less important than its goal of providing supplemental courses for all women students. Marlatt continued to encourage women students from across the campus to enroll in home economics courses in preparation for their future lives as wives and mothers, but the focus of the program shifted with the move into the College of Agriculture. Domestic science was no longer offered primarily as an enhancement to a general liberal arts curriculum or as teacher preparation. Rather, slowly over the years, the Department of Home Economics offered a growing number of professional and non-professional majors, creating curricular tracks of its own.

Likening the home to a "scientific laboratory," which "requires an education in applied chemistry, physics, biology, botany, sociology, business methods, and general household management,"[3] Marlatt, like Hunt, stressed the importance of a secure scientific basis for home economics education. She continued to insist that the home economics curriculum encompass chemistry, physics, bacteriology, and physiology, as well English, and German or French. She significantly expanded the course offerings, but maintained a critical scientific perspective. In addition to an introductory laboratory course, General Survey of Home Economics, which covered subjects like household chemistry, household bacteriology, and food and care of the sick, students in the department enrolled in laboratory courses like Principles of the Selection and Preparation of Food, Textiles, Dietetics, and Home Architecture and Sanitation. The course description of the Textiles course from the 1909–1910 catalog indicates

the interdisciplinary nature of Marlatt's home economics courses and her vision, like Hunt's, of the social reform potential of home economics.

> Textiles. Evolution of the textile industries, microscopic study of fibres [sic], chemical treatment of fibres [sic] in industries and tests for purity in composition and harmful coloring material; hygienic aspect of clothing; problems of shrinkage and tensile strength; economic problems involved in purchase of textiles and the artistic aspect in study of color and design in costumes.

Hunt had augmented her House Sanitation course with supplemental lectures by the University Architect; Marlatt's course, Home Architecture and Sanitation, placed more emphasis on this aspect of house design, according to the 1909–1910 catalog.

Illustration 2.3: Design laboratory, c. 1923. According to the home economics course catalog for 1923–24, in this laboratory "students plan and draw floor plans and exterior of one and two story houses." Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 6: "Interior Design."

> A study of the evolution of the home; modern houses as to situation, surroundings, construction, hygienic, economic and artistic conditions. Lectures on soil, drainage, ventilation, lighting, heating, water supply and arrangement of space to conserve time and enhance beauty in the home will be supplemented by field excursions and practice in drawing skeleton floor plans and elevations of houses suited to varying conditions.

The prerequisites for this course included Chemistry 1, Physics 1, and Bacteriology 1.

The areas of home and family life gained increasing attention in the curriculum, reflecting the professor's concern for infant mortality

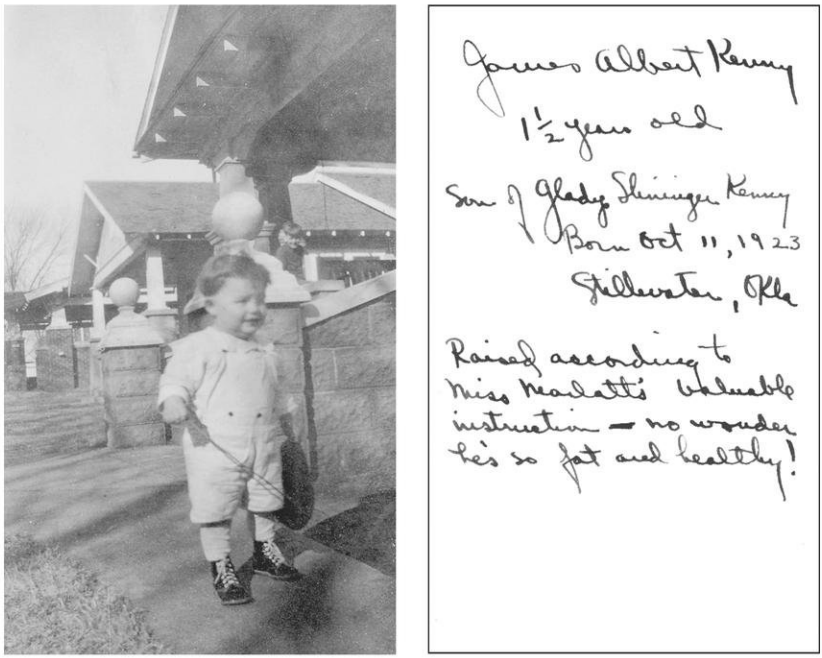


Illustration 2.4: Photograph sent to Marlatt in gratitude by a former student, 1923. Many former students sent Marlatt notes and photographs of their children in appreciation for their home economics education at the University of Wisconsin. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/40.

and morbidity and the health and welfare of Wisconsin families. A centerpiece of this new direction was Marlatt's own course, Humanics. Students studied the development of the individual from infancy to adolescence, discussing issues of hygiene and mental development in light of influences such as heredity and nutrition as well as housing conditions and sanitary living. Graduates often wrote to Marlatt, sending Christmas letters with photographs of their children and expressing appreciation for their home economics training in general and Humanics in particular. One mother claimed that her son was "Raised according to Miss Marlatt's valuable instruction–no wonder he's so fat and healthy." Another mother was even more specific:

> I have often wanted to write you how much Home Ec has meant to me and what a help it has always been. Particularly so was this true just before and since R. was born. He is a fine, strong, happy boy! Humanics is an invaluable course![4]

Marlatt also modified several of Hunt's courses. Marlatt's Household Management course encompassed both the economic organization of the home and the "chemistry of cleaning metals, wood, fabrics, and experiments in use of disinfectants in cleaning a room and clothing." These courses reflected Marlatt's belief that "Woman today is responsible for the conserving of life and health. She it is who must be taught to meet the present conditions."[5] Not surprisingly, then, the first graduate degree from home economics was granted to Katherine Agnes Donovan, who submitted a master's thesis entitled "A study of the infant mortality of Madison" in 1911. In it, she argued for educating "the school girls, who are the potential mothers, in biology, physiology, home making, humanics, care of the child, social problems and heredity."[6]

When the Department was re-opened in 1909, all 48 students majoring in home economics were required to take all the courses offered by the Department. However, the curriculum expanded rapidly, making that an impossibility for future students. By 1915,

students decided in their junior year between two majors, textiles or foods, choosing from among 21 courses. Throughout Marlatt's tenure the number of courses grew, as did the number of majors, to include areas such as applied bacteriology, hospital administration, and household arts, as well as teacher education and a nonprofessional degree designed for students most interested in homemaking. In order to offer this more comprehensive curriculum, Marlatt utilized some of the science courses offered in the College of Agriculture to supplement her limited staff. In her first year, she taught many of the classes herself and was assisted by an instructor of applied arts, Leona Hope, and a graduate student assistant in foods, Alice Loomis. However, as the number of courses grew, the need for staff increased. By 1915, the first year majors were offered, the Department listed a staff of 15, including Marlatt, Associate Professor Amy Daniels, two assistant professors, and 11 instructors with 274 students. Those

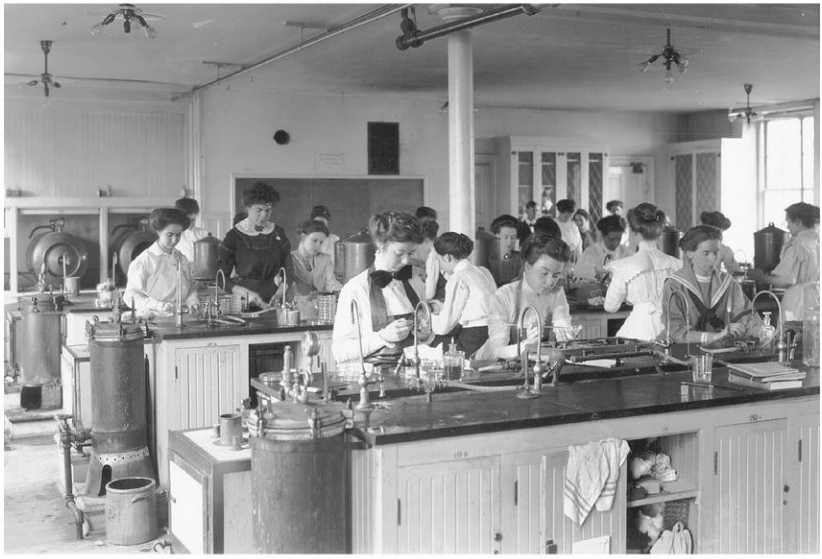


Illustration 2.5: Bacteriology laboratory, c. 1914. The caption for this photograph in the 1914–1915 catalog states: "Class in industrial bacteriology: Some of the applied problems include study of milk supply, water supply, vacuum cleaner, disinfection. Visits are made to the inspected dairy farms, sanitaria, and water and sewage plants." Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 2: "Foods and Nutrition."

numbers quickly expanded: by 1923, Home Economics enrolled 311 women, who chose from among 47 courses taught by a staff of 24; and, by 1939, there were almost 550 students, 67 courses, and a faculty of 25.

The expanded curriculum was designed to attract students with more specific professional goals than in the early years. The Department still provided courses for those who viewed home economics as an important adjunct to a liberal arts degree, or, as noted in the catalog, "as part of a liberal education leading to preparation for life's problems."[7] However, reflecting growing career opportunities for women educated in home economics, Marlatt placed greater emphasis on those prospective students who saw home economics as a career path. Of course, teaching on the elementary and high school levels remained a significant focus of many students pursuing a bachelor's in home economics. But, school catalogs and brochures distributed to high school students described the exciting opportunities for graduates of home economics beyond teaching. The crisis of World War I accelerated this trend toward professionalization as home economists conducted food research in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, taught Red Cross classes in dietetics, and acted as home demonstration agents. By 1920, the Department's curriculum was designed for students planning careers as different as home economics teaching, welfare work, dietetics, hospital administration, food chemistry, bacteriology, journalism, costume design, and interior design. In addition, the Department offered several programs leading to a master's degree in home economics.

Also, in 1924, a new program was established, the non-professional or general major, for students not intending employment as a professional home economist after graduation. This course of study was less technical, requiring fewer science classes and permitting more electives. This major was intended, in Marlatt's words, "to meet the demands of a course in fundamental knowledge in the group of home

economics subjects necessary as part of a liberal education but with lessened requirements in the general sciences as prerequisites."[8] In a brochure designed to interest high school students in the discipline, Marlatt reminded her readers:

> The Home Economics course is dedicated to training the woman, so that no matter what profession she chooses, she finds in the end that she has the knowledge, the methods, and the ideals which make for leadership in the community and happiness and contentment in the home.[9]

In doing so, Marlatt was once again emphasizing the importance of interdisciplinarity in the study of home economics.

Though the general major was moving away from Hunt's vision of a science-based liberal arts education for all college women, it clearly filled a need. One graduate wrote back to Marlatt, reviewing the significance of her home economics education:

> Each day as I do my work I realize more fully just how much my training in Home Economics has helped me make the wheels run smoothly. Of course, there a[sic] times when they jolt, but in the main, I find that with a definite plan and system I am able not only to keep my family comfortable, but happy and well besides. And I want you to know that your help and teaching have had a large share in this.[10]

Another described how her degree in home economics made her a role model in the community.

> I find that as a Home Economics graduate I am constantly being watched in even the details of my housework and dress; so that the challenge to do my best, thus giving most to my fellow women, is ever before me.[11]

By 1924, 617 women had earned bachelor degrees in home economics on the Madison campus and forty had earned master's

degrees. A survey of these 657 graduates documents the importance of women's domestic role in American society at this time. Two hundred forty-one graduates responded that their "work" was "married," and an additional forty-four listed "at home." Thus, nearly 45 percent of these home economics graduates were not involved in careers outside the home. In the aftermath of World War I and the passage of women's suffrage, the country focused more on the individual family and was less concerned with broad-based social reform movements. This conservative inward turn accentuated once again the significance of women's role in the home, a profession that the new major was designed to encourage.[12]

But it was teacher preparation that dominated the training of professionals in home economics in the first half century of the home economics program in Madison. Not surprisingly, the first graduate of the department, Sarah Augusta Sutherland, class of 1910, immediately moved to teach high school in Milwaukee. Passage of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914 and the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917 provided federal funds for aspects of home economics education. The Smith-Lever Act created the Agriculture Extension Service, which provided federal funding for Cooperative Extension programs, and from its beginning home economics education for farm women formed a critical part of this initiative. The Smith-Hughes Act established federal support for vocational education, including the funding of teacher training programs. This was of particular importance to the UW Department of Home Economics because home economics teacher training was considered vocational education.

With this infusion of resources, departments of home economics around the country continued to grow, attracting women interested in teaching home economics in public schools. Their career goals and the availability of federal funds increasingly shifted the emphasis of the UW home economics program toward teacher training.[13] By the 1920s, Marlatt reported that the large majority of women

graduating with a degree in home economics taught at least two years before "they go into the actual practice of homemaking."[14] The 1924 survey had found that 180 graduates were currently teaching in junior high schools, senior high schools, vocational schools, normal schools, and colleges. An additional twenty were in extension and four were supervisors of home economics.[15] With her experiences at Utah and Rhode Island, Marlatt had the skills and a vision of teacher training that enriched this aspect of the UW Department. Moreover, establishing and maintaining its control over home economics teacher training enabled the Department to carve out a clear identity and unique niche for itself within the University.

Over the years, the expanded course work reflected changes in the field nationally. Increasing attention was paid to the area of the family, especially the care of children. Design programs placed greater emphasis on interiors and less on house-building. In foods and nutrition, though students continued to learn about the economic power of the consumer to shape the market, they heard more about their important roles in the home and about preparing safe and nutritious meals. The number of courses grew so dramatically that in 1924 the Department was arranged into three departmental units: Clothing and Textiles, Related Art, and Administration and Foods. The third was by far the largest, subsuming foods and nutrition, family relationships, economics of the household, household administration, housing and institutional management, and home economics education. By 1927, the Department of Home Economics offered undergraduate degrees in seven majors: general or nonprofessional; general teaching; vocational education; foods and nutrition (including preparation for the positions in hospital dietetics and institutional management); textiles; applied bacteriology; and a joint major with nursing in hospital administration. A major in related art was added in 1929. A major of home economics journalism was added in 1932.

From the beginning of home economics on the Madison campus,

the department's faculty envisioned the education it would provide as both theoretical and applied. A report in the August 1922 issue of the *Journal of Home Economics* gives some indication of Marlatt's effort to take home economics students out of the sterile classroom and closer to real world situations. It describes several instances in which students applied their classroom learning to local problems. In one example, the city welfare department informed students in the advanced clothing class about children in need of new clothing. Students then visited the homes, "became acquainted with the mother and family," and took the children's measurements. They purchased the necessary materials and made clothes for the children. In another case, students in a nutrition class undertook research into the food habits of children, using a variety of Madison families. They carefully measured all the food each child ate and calculated food values. They noted food likes and food dislikes. "By this method the student obtain[ed] a realization of the scope of the problems involved in the feeding of children as well as the possibility of their solution,"[16] the reporter concluded.

To foster this ideal of applying the results of scientific research in everyday life, Marlatt established the "Practice Cottage." Within the Cottage, students could utilize what they had learned in the classroom in an actual working home. They would decorate the rooms according to the design principles they had studied, prepare meals according to the nutritional precepts they had learned, and all within a limited budget, in order to reflect the conditions many of them would face in their professional and domestic careers after graduation. The first Practice Cottage on the UW campus epitomized the value and power of home economics as applied science. In 1911, the "Schmelzer property," as it was called, cost $8,900 and the Board of Regents granted an additional $1,200 for remodeling the house and equipping a modern kitchen. The house was sparsely furnished and students completed much of the decoration. Moreover, dietetics students were required to live in the cottage and to plan, purchase,

prepare, and serve meals for themselves and two instructors. Students also used the kitchen to conduct class experiments. In 1930, the house was moved from the corner of Randall Street and Linden Drive to Lorch Street and Linden Drive to make way for a new orthopedic hospital. The students continued to live and study in the Practice Cottage, but its physical problems and limitations were becoming increasingly apparent. Although Abby Marlatt began agitating for a new cottage in 1918, it was not until 1941 that a more spacious and modern house was constructed.[17]

This combination of theory and application was apparent in other aspects of the School as well. The Dorothy Roberts Nursery School was founded in 1926. It began as a cooperative with the mothers (and

Illustration 2.6: Madison Welfare Clinic, c. 1920s. This photograph appeared in many home economics course catalogs in the 1920s with the caption: "Selected students majoring in foods and nutrition assist the physician and nurse in weighing and measuring children with special reference to follow-up work in nutrition studies." The woman seated at the table on the right is Dr. Dorothy Reed Mendenhall, who for many years served as an instructor in the home economics department. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 4: "Child and Family Studies."

sometimes fathers) of the children volunteering on a regular basis. In 1937, the fee was fifty cents per day per child, or twenty-five cents on days when a child's parent assisted. Soon after being taken over by the Home Economics Department, it began to be used for educational purposes. Students in Abby Marlatt's humanics course visited the nursery school regularly; dietetics students helped to prepare the children's meals and then watched them eat; students in nursing, education, psychology, and occupational therapy also paid visits. A 1938 report on the Nursery School, probably written by Marlatt, noted:

> The training is invaluable to the students not only as a part of a liberal education but also as a part of their understanding of the personality of children and the possibilities that lie in the improvement of the health through adequate nutrition and in the development of personality through wise choice of environment including play material....Each senior student is privileged to select one child as her particular study, and she must study that child not only with reference to its activities at the school but also with reference to the methods of training that are used in the home. The mothers are extremely co-operative, and the work has always been carried through very successfully and happily.[18]

Moreover, students many times applied their learning outside the campus. Popular sites in the 1920s were the child clinics at Hawthorne School and Neighborhood House, a community settlement house in Madison's Italian neighborhood. There students from the senior class would assist physicians and nurses by taking a child's health history, weighing infants, or caring for children while they waited to see the doctor. Other students worked at the Madison public welfare department, in welfare and speech defects clinics, and with public school nurses.

Marlatt was ever ready for her and her students to respond to national and local crises. In 1917, the University War Committee was organized to support home-front efforts. Members of the subcommittee on women's service, which included Abby Marlatt, presented a course of emergency lectures and demonstrations for all university students. Among the most important topics were the conservation of food, clothing, and health. Marlatt's service to the university students outside of home economics continued even after the war. In 1918, the University, the city, the state, and the nation faced an influenza pandemic. Returning soldiers brought with them a particularly virulent strain of the virus, one that most often struck young adults. As the soldiers disembarked and as demobilized service personnel went to their homes, the disease spread rapidly through the country and reached Madison. Marlatt described this emergency situation:

> When the influenza struck us it was a question of closing the University as far as everything but the

Illustration 2.7: Women's short course, c. 1915. A cooking class held during an early Housekeeper's Conference. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 2: "Foods and Nutrition."

> S.A.T.C. [Student Army Training Corps] or handling it on the basis of taking care of everybody who became ill. They accepted my volunteering of the Senior girls to supervise sanitation, quaranninte [sic] and feeding of the girls who would be isolated in their own sororities or boarding houses as they became ill. Only very serious cases could be taken to the girls infirmary. I planned out a diet list and installed most of the class in dietetics, in the houses as the list was sent me fron [sic] the clinic. Then I supervised their work. They certainly were jewels and worked like Trojans, being excused from classes during the crisis.

As a result, she proudly exclaimed,

> the Home Economics department has come into its own.... so you see there are some bright spots in spite of a good deal of the sadness which has come with the death of three of the women students as well as several of the S.A.T.C. men. For weeks it was awful, but the worst is over.[19]

Marlatt also wanted to reach other women in the state; she wanted to bring the knowledge and the benefits of modern home economics education to women who could not attend the regular university course. Hunt had begun Housekeeper's Conferences in 1905; Marlatt's Housekeepers Conferences too epitomized the "Wisconsin Idea," the conviction that the walls of the University equal the border of the State, and that therefore University research ought to be brought to the citizens of the state in order to benefit them. Each year, Hunt had held a one-week course in conjunction with the Farmers' Course; Marlatt expanded the program to two weeks. The first week provided short-course students with a series of lectures. The second week, with a more restricted number of participants, involved laboratory work building on the lectures. In 1911 more

than 500 registered for the first week; due to lack of equipment and space, only 73 could register for the second week. By the 1920s, annual attendance was nearly 1,000.

The topics and the lecturers at Marlatt's Conferences reflected her ideas about the direction of home economics research and the significance of home economics education. The 1913 Conference, for example, entitled "Home in Relation to the Community," demonstrated Marlatt's uniting of the pragmatics and the social service ideal of home economics. At it, Marlatt noted that the home could no longer be considered an isolated unit. Rather, she stressed "its vital relation to the rest of the community from the standpoint of healthy citizenship, civic righteousness and moral standards." The lectures encompassed topics such as relation of individual habits to community welfare, supplying the farm home with running water, the right of the child to be well born, the use of 'tinned' foods, and cost to community of unfit marriages.[20] The 1917 Conference, titled "Count the Cost! Time, Labor, Fuel, Food Value," included courses ranging from "Short cuts in sewing" and "Three meals a day for three hundred and sixty-five days a year–How to do it easily" to the "Submerged factor in the household income–Change in value due to unpaid labor" and "Child welfare."

In addition to organizing the Housekeepers' Conference, Marlatt travelled throughout the state offering lectures to women who could not attend the Madison course. Her commitment to these lectures was legendary, exemplified by one particular trip early in her tenure. On a very cold winter day, Marlatt rushed to the train station, only to discover that her train had gone. She found the station master and insisted that she needed to travel because she was scheduled to speak. He replied that "The only way to get there, lady, is to hire your own train." Marlatt responded: "I'll do it." She never disclosed how much that train trip cost, but over the years she would retell the story, concluding that she was probably the only Extension speaker who arrived for her lecture in a private train.[21]

The home economics faculty continued such extension work until a separate cooperative extension service was established with funding through the Smith-Lever Act of 1914. After that, resident faculty remained active with the Housekeepers' Conferences, later called

Illustration 2.8: Nutrition exhibitions at Farm and Home Week, 1938. Such displays were designed to provide useful information for Wisconsin farm women. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/40.

Farm and Home Week; they also continued writing bulletins for distribution state wide.[22] By the 1920s, with support through federal programs such as the Smith-Hughes Act, the extension arm of the Department of Home Economics had grown well beyond the annual conferences. So much so that it employed five full-time extension specialists, led by Nellie Kedzie Jones. These women worked with county agents and local women's clubs on areas encompassing clothing, food, and household management, reflecting the academic program on the Madison campus. They combined research and outreach to improve the lives of Wisconsin citizens. For example, after their studies disclosed that many Wisconsin children, both rural and urban, were significantly underweight, the staff promoted hot lunch programs in the schools. By the end of the school year, they could point with pride to their success: one county in which more than 30 percent of the school children had been underweight saw this figure cut to 4 percent. In another instance, one of the specialists attended the State Fair and collected thousands of foot x-rays. These became the basis of an extension circular with instructions on how to fit shoes properly.

Extension work was significantly enlarged during the years of the Great Depression. With Wisconsin families increasingly strapped financially through the 1930s, extension specialists emphasized consumer education, food preservation, health and cost-effective cooking, and nutrition. According to Elwood R. McIntyre, historian of the co-operative extension program in Wisconsin,

> Authorities estimated that a year of well-balanced meals for five persons would cost $600 retail in 1939. The cash outlay for the same family could be slashed to $100 through a well-planned food supply grown at home. This reduction added $500 to the family income, then averaging only $1,765.

The home economists educated the women of Wisconsin on just these issues.

Another example of outreach to Wisconsin residents during Marlatt's era was the development of the "homemakers' program" on WHA radio. Aline Hazard, who for many years presented the program, dates its origins to 1921, when Gladys Meloche, a UW home economist who specialized in clothing and textiles, made the first broadcast devoted to home and family. The programs were varied, ranging from "Better Breakfasts," to "Know Your Fabrics" and "Making the Winter Wardrobe Do Until Spring," to "How to Eliminate Static in the Home." The programs were heard intermittently, interspersed with programs dealing with farm topics, until April 1929, when the Homemakers Program became an independent entity.

Marlatt was committed to preparing women as modern, trained homemakers and as professionals. Through her years at the UW, she received hundreds of letters from people around the world who wanted information about the University of Wisconsin program. Marlatt answered the letters herself with well-thought-out replies. She did not mince words or fail to assert her opinion when appropriate. For example, in response to a letter suggesting that women did not belong in nutrition research, she wrote decisively that

> the home economics groups throughout the country are holding very strenuously to the point that the work must be done by women for women because first, they understand the home problems better and, second, they should be given the opportunity to develop themselves in research work in applied chemistry, applied economics, or applied sociology in connection with the rural farm home.[23]

Nutrition remained a focus of much of home economics research in the first half of the twentieth century.[24] Though there is fragmentary evidence of home economics research at Madison as early as 1908 with Ellen Alden Huntington's study of the fireless

cooker, sustained home economics research began in 1914 with Amy Daniels, an associate professor of foods and nutrition. Daniels researched infant nutrition and child welfare as well as nutrition questions that arose during the First World War. She directed the Woman's Service War Preparedness Committee's research work, for which she conducted experiments that led to the publication of two bulletins about fruits and vegetables. She also wrote or co-wrote numerous bulletins relating to the wartime conservation effort, such as "Twelve Ways to Use Barley" and "What Shall We Eat on Wheatless and Meatless Days." Under Daniels' tutelage, students compared the effects of various cooking methods on the nutritional value of foods and studied the effects of different diets on the health of rats.

Though Daniels left in the UW in 1918 for the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station, other faculty continued the tradition of research that she had established here, a tradition that merged the laboratory studies with practical applications, and that led to both publications in the academic arena and extension bulletins. Helen Tracy Parsons, who originally arrived in Madison as a student in 1912, joined the Home Economics faculty in 1920. After a leave of absence during which she gained a Ph.D. in biochemistry from Yale University, she returned to the Madison faculty in 1928, remaining until her retirement in 1956.[25] Parsons gained an international reputation for her research in nutrition, which was most especially focused on the role of vitamins and the absorption mechanisms of vitamins. She published widely and, as a dedicated mentor, she encouraged her students' research and their professional development as well. In 1944, the American Home Economics Association recognized Parsons' contributions to the field of nutrition with a Borden Award.[26]

Other faculty members expanded home economics research into the social sciences. In 1918, May Louise Cowles earned her master's degree from the University of Wisconsin Department of Home Economics. She continued on the faculty until her retirement in

1959, except for a leave she took to earn her Ph.D. in economics from the University of Chicago in 1929. During her long tenure at the University of Wisconsin (1915–1959), Cowles's research and teaching interests ranged widely but typically concerned conditions of farm life. She frequently published in research journals such as the *Journal of Home Economics*, the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, and *Rural Sociology*, and used her research to inform her Extension publications, too. For example, her popular pamphlet *Meeting Housing Needs of Older People in Rural Areas* (1957) was a direct result of her research into the needs of the rural elderly. She encouraged her students to follow a similar path of applied science in home economics and is remembered as an inspiring teacher. In 1944 Cowles taught the first Family Economics course on the Madison campus and she later participated in national seminars to encourage high school teachers to include family economics classes in their curriculum.

This tradition of research and applied science was communicated in other, more direct ways to the home economics students. Required to complete a thesis for graduation, these students worked on a variety of topics that applied science to common homemaker concerns. One tested 11 commercial varieties of potatoes, baking them, boiling them, and drying them, to determine their relative mealiness and flavor, thereby evaluating the claims made by their distributors. Another studied the effects of various commercial detergents on different fabrics. And, for many students, this tradition continued after their graduation as they took positions in teaching, hospital dietetics, and even social work that built on their research skills.[27]

Despite her evident success in building the home economics program at the UW, Marlatt's relationship with the administration was not always positive. While at UW, Marlatt frequently met with frustration and disappointment in her efforts to gain support for home economics. She fought hard for her department, faculty, and students, and approached every new problem with optimism.

However, if she encountered obstacles, her severe disappointment could cause her to relinquish her efforts. The Graduate School's reputed dislike of home economics made Marlatt's desire to establish UW Home Economics as an important and well-respected research department a constant battle. For example, although Marlatt thought that a graduate program in biological chemistry would help retain home economics graduate students who wanted to pursue scientific research, the Graduate School denied her request.

Another blow the administration dealt Marlatt concerned the new home economics building. Since nearly its inception, the Department had struggled with insufficient space. Hunt had been allocated only one classroom and one office in South Hall. With the arrival of Marlatt and the move to the College of Agriculture, the faculty and students were given a first-floor classroom in Agriculture Hall and a laboratory in the basement. Later they expanded into a basement storeroom as well. With an expanding student body and

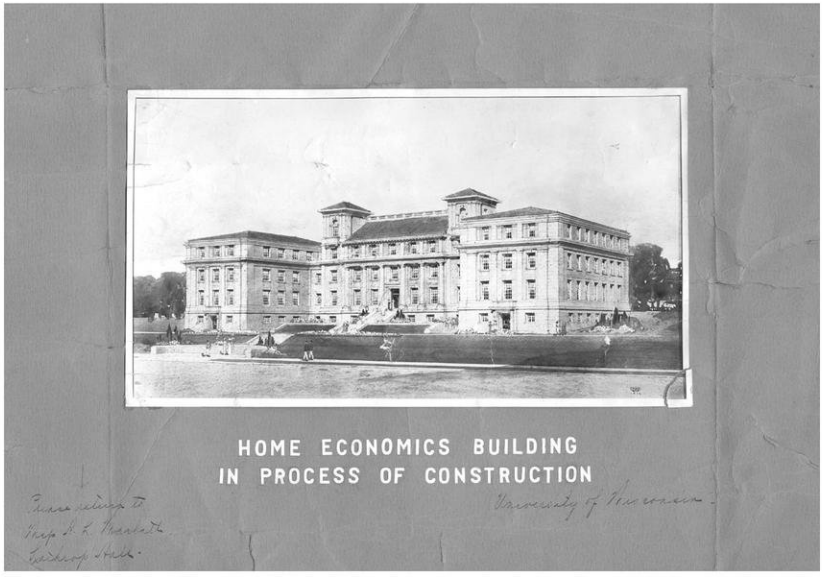


Illustration 2.9: The design of the proposed Home Economics Building, c. 1914. Note that initially only the main section and east wing were built. The west wing was constructed nearly 40 years later. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/40.

additions to the faculty, soon space was once again at a premium. The next move was to the newly constructed Lathrop Hall, where a portion of the attic was allocated to one classroom, one office, and laboratory that was subdivided into a foods laboratory with dining area, a textiles and housing area, and a classroom. Marlatt continually pressed the Regents for additional space for the growing department and she was granted more room in the attic for a clothing laboratory and related art laboratory.

The Regents were not unaware of the overcrowded conditions faced by the Department of Home Economics. But how to persuade the Legislature to allocate funds for a new building? According to Nellie Kedzie Jones, a long-time member of the extension faculty, one of the legislators jokingly asked Abby L. Marlatt in 1911 if her students could make good pancakes. Ever ready for a challenge and a chance to demonstrate the prowess of her students, Marlatt arranged a pancake supper cooked by the students for the legislators. Shortly afterwards the legislators passed the allotment for the new building. Following that, the Regents voted for funds to construct a new building to be devoted to home economics and extension. In the summer of 1914, home economics and extension moved into their new building at 1300 Linden Drive. (The building consisted of the central portion of the current building and the east wing. The west wing was added in the 1950s.)

Despite the relatively spacious new classrooms, laboratories, and offices, the building was not what Marlatt had been promised. Marlatt had thought that the building would house only home economics. However, while she was away from campus because of her father's final illness, the Regents decided that the building would be shared by home economics and Extension. When she returned to Madison, Marlatt was devastated. The building was supposed to be hers, and it was not. Too frustrated and emotionally exhausted from her recent loss, Marlatt did not fight the inclusion of University of Wisconsin Extension in her building.

Marlatt, like Hunt, envisioned home economics as the path to salvation for a disintegrating society. However, where Hunt emphasized the significance of women's economic role in the home and in the community, Marlatt focused more on women's responsibility for healthy families, which would result in a healthy citizenry. This is not to say that Marlatt ignored women's economic power. In the 1913–1914 and subsequent catalogs, she explained that women controlled the more than $12 billion spent each year in the United States for food, shelter, and clothes and that consequently they needed education that "would fit them to spend wisely." In the same catalogs, though, she devoted more attention to women as care takers of the family, explaining that

> the central thought in all of the work in Home Economics is the conserving of human life, not only by improving the environment as found in the home and in the immediate world outside the home, but also by so improving the individual through a

Illustration 2.10: Home Economics Building, 1924. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 9/3, Box 142, "Home Economics."

> knowledge of proper health conditions that future generations will reach a higher level of efficiency than those which have preceded them.

She was most pointed that "[t]he problems of care of infants, care of the sick, use of disinfectants, and use of preventive measures in control of disease are part of the work in home economic education. Such training is most essential for improvement in the condition of the race." The change in emphasis—from Hunt's focus on economics and social justice to Marlatt's greater concern for physical health and home life—is reflected in curricular shifts in the University of Wisconsin's home economics program, shifts that are also evident nationally as home economics programs across the country concentrated increasingly on individual and family life in the 1920s and 1930s. It was Marlatt's emphasis on the domestic and maternal role of women in addition to their economic role that informed the development of her curriculum, a curriculum solidified in the following years by Frances Zuill.

Notes

1. Abby L. Marlatt quoted in Esther Burke, "To Make Happier Homes ... is the Aim of Abby Marlatt," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, June 1934, p. 15.

2. For more on the honor societies and social organizations of home economics at the University of Wisconsin, see Susan R. King, "Student Organizations within Home Economics," in this volume.

3. Abby L. Marlatt, "The Need of Home Economics in Education," *Journal of Home Economics*, June 1914, 6.

4. These and other examples of the photographs and notes sent to Marlatt are located in the University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/40.

5. Abbie [sic] L. Marlatt, "Popularity and Need of Home Economics Courses," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, July 1911, 5: 280.

6. Katherine Agnes Donovan, "A Study of the Infant Mortality of Madison," Master's thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1911.

7. *University of Wisconsin Bulletin of Courses*, 1913–1914, p. 16.

8. *Triennial Report from the Home Economics Department to the President*, [prepared by A.L. Marlatt, Director of the Home Economics, submitted August 29, 1924,] pp. 5-6, typescript, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/2/0, Box 2, Folder: "Marlatt."

9. Abby L. Marlatt, *"Careers in Home Economics," Bulletin of the University of Wisconsin*, General Series no. 1169 (Madison, WI:, 1927?), p. 3.

10. Marlatt, *Careers in Home Economics*, p. 5.

11. Marlatt, *Careers in Home Economics,* p. 6.

12. *Triennial Report from the Home Economics Department to the President*, p. 3.

13. Rima D. Apple, "Liberal Arts or Vocational Training: Home Economics Education for Girls," in Sarah Stage and Virginia B. Vincenti, eds., *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 79-95.

14. Abby L. Marlatt, "Home Economics Serves Wisconsin," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, February, 1927, p. 128.

15. *Triennial Report from the Home Economics Department to the President*, p. 3.

16. "News From the Field: Wisconsin," *Journal of Home Economics*, August 1922, pp. 411-412.

17. For more on the Practice Cottage, see Judith E. Pasch, "Changing Curriculum and the Practice Cottage," in this volume.

18. "Notes for the Wisconsin Alumnus: Dorothy Roberts' Nursery School," dated 3/21/38, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/6, Box 1,"Various History Typescripts," p. 2.

19. Letter from Abby L. Marlatt to Emma Conley, dated October 21, 1918, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/10, Box 12, Folder: "Correspondence: Marlatt Abby, 1918."

20. "Women's Course in Home Economics and Demonstration School in Home Economics," 1913, College of Agriculture, University of Wisconsin, January, 1913, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/0/1, Box 1.

21. Elmwood R. McIntrye, *Fifty Years of Cooperative Extension in Wisconsin, 1912–1962* ([Madison, WI, 1962?]), p. 170.

22. The last Farm and Home Week was held in February 1964. College Week, three days of activities designed to "encourage personal growth, increase awareness of state, national and foreign issues, and increase participation in public decision making," began in 1963.

23. Letter from Abby L. Marlatt to Nina Simmonds, dated December 4, 1925, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/1/0, Box 13, Folder: "1924–1925."

24. Margaret W. Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), esp. pp. 160-217.

25. For more on Parsons, see Greta Marie Zenner, "Helen Tracy Parson: A Passion for Science and Learning," in this volume.

26. Several other nutritionists on the faculty won the Borden Award in later years, such as May Reynolds (1958) and Hellen Linkswiler (1971).

27. Hazel F. McGrath, "'The Brides' Course' Turns 75," *Wisconsin Alumnus Magazine*, May 1978, 79: 6.

Illustration 3.1: Students at dinner in the Home Management House, c. 1953. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 202, Folder 10: "Home Management House."

3

Consolidation, 1939–1961

"Personal and family life have been greatly enhanced by the knowledge and skills...acquired at the U.W."

When Frances Zuill succeeded Abby Marlatt as director of Home Economics at the University of Wisconsin in 1939, she inherited a thriving program that she continued to develop and expand. She was very successful in gaining much-needed resources for the school, and the unit prospered during her years in office. In her twenty-two years at UW, the status of home economics was transformed from a Department to a School, and in 1951 Zuill became the first associate dean of Home Economics within the College of Agriculture. As one of a very small number of female administrators, and then as the only woman associate dean within the College of Agriculture, Zuill needed all the strength she had. She gained money for and then oversaw the construction of the new Home Management House, the west wing of the Home Economics Building, and the new PreSchool Laboratory. Enrollment grew dramatically during her years in office. In addition, reflecting changes in home economics both on the University campus and nationally, the School was organized into four departments: Clothing and Textiles, Foods and Nutrition, Home Management and Family Living, and Related Art; with a fifth department, Home Economics Education and Extension, added in 1955, and new majors instituted in subsequent years. Student organizations also expanded their activities. In 1948, members of the Euthenics Club, Phi Upsilon Omicron, and Omicron Nu begin a series of Open Houses to encourage high school students to attend home economics programs.[1]

Like Marlatt, Zuill had received her home economics education in the early years of the field's development. She had been determined to attend Stout Institute (now the University of Wisconsin–Stout) but was unable to afford it. Consequently, she taught at rural schools for two years to save up the needed funds. She earned a two-year diploma from Stout in 1913 and then taught at the North Dakota School of Science in Wahpeton from 1913 to 1919. In 1920 she moved to New York where she earned a bachelor's (1920) and then a master's (1921) degree in Home Economics from Teachers College, Columbia University. She supervised home economics in the Baltimore public schools, and taught at Johns Hopkins University, Cornell University, and the University of Washington before accepting a position as chair of the Department of Home Economics at the State University of Iowa. After serving in this position for fifteen years, she was offered the comparable position at UW. The dean at Iowa tried to persuade her to stay by reminding her of how much she had accomplished at Iowa and arguing that she was too old to do the same thing at another institution. Zuill immediately accepted the challenge.

Illustration 3.2: Frances Zuill, head of home economics at the University of Wisconsin, 1939-1961. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives. Iconography Collection, Series 3/1, Box 97.

Zuill was a formidable presence, and both faculty members and students recall being intimidated by her. She demanded much of her faculty, whose work weeks averaged forty-eight hours. She believed that faculty ought to be so dedicated to their profession that they would pay their own way to attend national and state

meetings. Although she sometimes agreed to provide financial support, she never believed that faculty should make such requests. Zuill also expected personal sacrifices from her faculty. Single for her entire life, she believed that women had to choose either career or family because it was not possible to dedicate oneself fully to both. She became outraged when her faculty members decided to get married. One faculty member later remembered how nervous she felt when she had to tell Zuill that she was planning to marry. Another faculty member recalls her amusement when Zuill interviewed a young woman for a position. Several months later when she arrived in Madison, the woman was not only married, but also pregnant. Zuill was livid.

The director of home economics at the University of Wisconsin wanted the best for her students because she felt they deserved it, even writing to potential employers and informing them that the salaries they were offering were not high enough for her graduates. Although she was never generous with praise, faculty and students soon learned that she was proud of them and cared deeply about them. On numerous occasions she assisted students with her own money. Students later demonstrated the same generosity toward her. After she announced her upcoming retirement, a group of students bought her a vase and filled it with flowers each week for an entire year. Zuill's personal side also showed through in her dedication to sports, particularly football. One faculty member remembers watching the snow accumulate on Zuill's black hat during a UW football game because she refused to stop watching and go inside.

Zuill was dedicated to home economics at the national and state levels, as well as internationally. New faculty members quickly learned that they better become members of the American Home Economics Association (AHEA) if they were not already. Zuill attended her first meeting of the AHEA in 1921 and missed only three meetings between then and her retirement. She served as secretary of AHEA from 1928 to 1931, then president from 1931 to 1933, in addition to

other administrative positions. She was very active in the Wisconsin Home Economics Association and served a term as president. Zuill's service record also involved international work. In 1958, she spent six months in India for the State Department as an educational consultant. After she retired in 1961, she and May Reynolds, nutrition researcher on the home economics faculty, traveled to Pakistan to advise three colleges of home economics in Karachi, Lahore, and Dacca.

One of Zuill's most visible achievements at Madison was the realization of an enlarged Home Economics building. By 1939, the beginning of Zuill's tenure, there was great pressure on the School's physical plant. Throughout its history, the building at 1300 Linden Drive now occupied by the School of Human Ecology has been chronically overcrowded. Constructed in 1914, it was occupied both by the University of Wisconsin Extension Department, which was housed in the main wing, and the Home Economics Department, which received only the east wing and fourth floor. The Home Economics Department quickly outgrew its space. Meanwhile, the

Illustration 3.3: Overcrowded conditions in the Home Economics Building, 1940. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/2, Box 201, Folder 1: "Classroom and Lab Scenes-General."

promised construction of a new building for Extension, which would have given the Home Economics Department the main wing, took almost fifty years to accomplish. Ironically, the home economics extension staff had no room in the Home Economics and Extension Building; instead it was housed in a borrowed room in the Agricultural Engineering Building.[2]

For much of her administration, Marlatt had appealed for additional space to no effect. The students themselves supported her

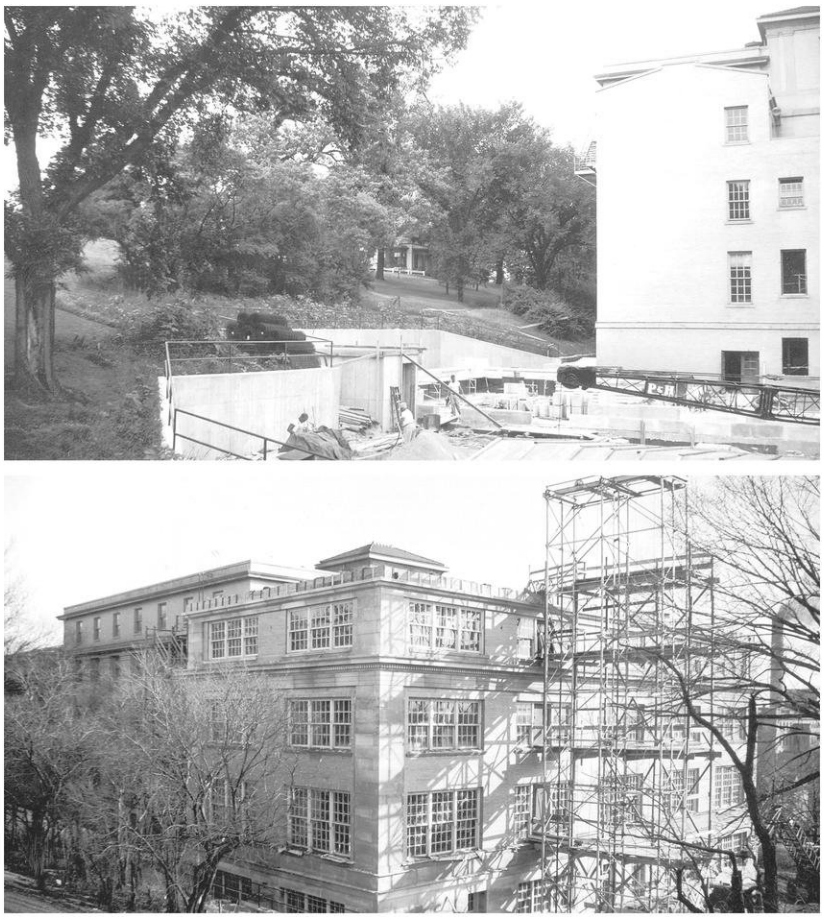


Illustration 3.4: Two views of the construction of the west wing of 1300 Linden Drive, 1951-53. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/40.

lobbying with their own campaign, including mounting a petition drive. They pointed out the difficulties of "trying to cook jelly over a bunsen burner, because both elementary foods classes and research work must be carried on in the same laboratory" and their desire to attend class in "a lecture room with acoustics that permit us to hear what is being said without missing out on most of the important points."[3]

As the student body continued to grow, Zuill repeatedly pushed for additional space. By the 1940s, the need for space had become acute—in 1941 there were 675 students crowded into the classrooms and laboratories in the east wing that had been built for 250 students. During the years of World War II, there was a slight drop in enrollments, but the figures quickly rebounded as college admissions across the country exploded in the post-war years. At the same time, as a result of the increasing emphasis on the development of professional majors in the Madison home economics program, which also reflected developments on the national level, the limitations of physical space loomed ever larger. Fortunately, the construction

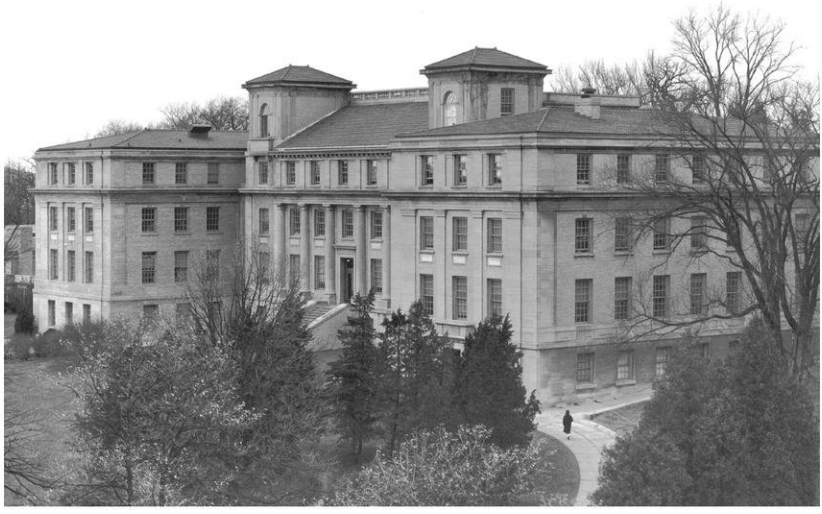


Illustration 3.5: Home Economics Building after construction of the West Wing, 1953. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 9/3, Box 142.

boom during the post-war era provided an opportunity for expansion. When the bids for the University's Memorial Library were lower than anticipated, the governor released funds for the Home Economics Building. The Regents approved the construction of a west wing, which was completed in 1953. Space remained at a premium, however, until 1962, when University Extension finally vacated the central portion of the building.

Another major transformation of home economics on the Madison campus occurred in 1951. Since 1909, the Department of Home Economics had remained within the College of Agriculture where Marlatt, and then Zuill, carried the title of director of Home Economics. From at least the 1940s, the faculty had complained that the size of the Department of Home Economics was too large and too unwieldy to function smoothly, specifically worried that the unit was "too diverse in interests and in types of specialization to function satisfactorily as a single department."[4] In 1951, the Department of Home Economics became the School of Home Economics and Zuill assumed the title of associate dean for Home Economics in the College of Agriculture, as well as director of Home Economics. At the same time, the internal structure of the School was clarified; four departments were established, each headed by a chair: Clothing and Textiles, Foods and Nutrition, Home Management and Family Living, and Related Art. The School also solidified its relationship with Co-operative Extension as several Home Economics Extension specialists became faculty members of resident subject matter departments. In 1955, a fifth department, Home Economics Education and Extension, was added to the School.

Underlying these administrative shifts was an evolving vision of home economics. By the 1940s and 1950s, though the natural sciences remained strong and critical to home economics, the discipline here and nationally widened to incorporate more of the social sciences in its search for answers to problems of contemporary society. May Louise Cowles did some of her most important work in this period,

studying, for example, the housing and financial conditions of rural families. The appointment of Louise A. Young in 1945 as home management specialist added emphasis to this aspect of the School. For instance, in 1951, Young, in collaboration with a law school colleague, wrote a highly popular circular, "Your Property–Plan Its Transfer," which provided many local groups and Wisconsin residents with important information about estate planning. She also led a series of family financial workshops for both rural and urban families. While building on the traditional consumer and family economics content in home economics, the program also expanded in the areas of child development and family relations. This significant realignment of subdisciplines within home economics itself was somewhat masked because for many years these areas were housed within the same longstanding department, the Department of Home Management and Family Living.

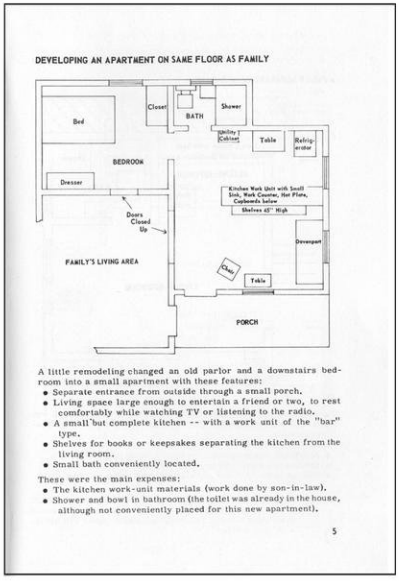
Circular 545 March 1957

MEETING HOUSING NEEDS OF OLDER PEOPLE in rural areas

May L. Cowles
Clara G. Sweeney

IN 1950 nearly 310,000 Wisconsin residents were 65 years old or more. And nearly 55,000 of these folks were living on farms. Since then, some of these "senior citizens" have moved -- gone to live with a son or daughter, or moved to villages or cities. But for the most part, older people expect to spend the rest of their lives after retirement in the houses they have made their homes over the years.

University of Wisconsin — EXTENSION SERVICE
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, MADISON



DEVELOPING AN APARTMENT ON SAME FLOOR AS FAMILY

Bed
Closet
BATH
Shower
Utility Cabinet
Table
Refrigerator
BEDROOM
Dresser
Kitchen Work Unit with Small Sink, Work Counter, Hot Plate, Cupboards below
Shelves 42" High
Doors Closed Up
Davenport
FAMILY'S LIVING AREA
Chair
Table
PORCH

A little remodeling changed an old parlor and a downstairs bedroom into a small apartment with these features:

- Separate entrance from outside through a small porch.
- Living space large enough to entertain a friend or two, to rest comfortably while watching TV or listening to the radio.
- A small but complete kitchen -- with a work unit of the "bar" type.
- Shelves for books or keepsakes separating the kitchen from the living room.
- Small bath conveniently located.

These were the main expenses:

- The kitchen work-unit materials (work done by son-in-law).
- Shower and bowl in bathroom (the toilet was already in the house, although not conveniently placed for this new apartment).

5

Illustration 3.6: "Meeting Housing Needs of Older People in Rural Areas," 1957. This booklet, prepared by May L. Cowles and Clara Sweeney, is one example of the many extension publications home economics faculty wrote. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Biographical Files, "Cowles, May L."

During World War II and in the post-war era, as during World War I, the faculty assisted in the war effort and in national re-building by expanding the scope of their work. For example, the main objective of the extension faculty was

> to help families live with the war and make it possible for everyone to make his maximum contribution to winning the war with as little damage to personal and family development as possible.[5]

With these goals in mind, extension staff stressed the areas that reflected topics within contemporary home economics, namely, food and health, conservation of materials, maintaining health and morale, and bolstering group and family relationships. In other areas of the Department, researchers undertook studies to determine the cooking methods that would provide maximum nutritive food value and develop more healthful hospital diets. Still others looked at the newest fibers available to evaluate the effects of light, heat, and construction methods in order to find which were the most appropriate for given uses and conditions.

Clearly, Zuill's administration was continuing to build upon many of the traditions established by her predecessors. From her earliest years at Madison, she, like Marlatt, recognized that "a large proportion of the college girls marry a short time after graduation and homemaking becomes their life vocation," a situation that would be further heightened during the baby boom of the post-World War II era. Because of this belief, Zuill considered that "it is not always necessary to professionalize this study because many of the non-professionals and the students from other courses show a sincere interest in their work."[6] This perspective led her to emphasize even more than Marlatt the pragmatic aspects of home economics education.

A survey of 1944 graduates of the Department of Home Economics conducted during their fiftieth reunion indicates that Zuill was realistic in her assessment of her graduates' life work. It documents

the variety of ways in which these women applied their University of Wisconsin education and the development in home economics in the mid-twentieth century. Respondents noted careers in areas as diverse as anaerobic bacteriology, nutrition, food writing, public relations, science teaching, and clothing design as well as volunteer work in their local communities and abroad. The most often mentioned paid occupation was home economics teaching, not surprising considering the thrust of home economics in the period. Nearly all the respondents reported marriage and children and they stressed the importance of their home economics training to their lives as wives and mothers. Some withdrew from the labor force while raising their families, while others did not. But regardless of their employment status, they uniformly agreed that "personal and

Illustration 3.7: Home economics education, 1948. This photograph, from a promotional brochure directed to high school students, emphasizes the importance of home economics education, noting that "Teaching youth subject matter closely related to life is a stimulating career with far reaching influence." Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/40.

family life have been greatly enhanced by the knowledge and skills [they] acquired at the U.W."[7]

The case of the Practice Cottage demonstrates Zuill's perspective on the expected roles of home economics graduates. The Cottage had been conceived as a laboratory in which dietetics students would conduct research and students in other courses would apply the theories they were learning in the classroom to everyday situations. Under Zuill's administration, the Practice House was replaced by the Home Management House in which the research components were eliminated, leaving domestic training.

In 1940, thanks to the efforts of G. W. Van Derzee, a University of Wisconsin electrical engineering graduate of 1908 whose daughter Karen was enrolled in home economics, the Wisconsin Utilities Association offered $20,000 to fund a new home economics practice house. The new home was furnished with modern gas and electric appliances, including a washing machine, dishwasher, mangle, and electric dryer. For nearly three decades, groups of senior home economics students lived in the Home Management House as part of their study, as they had in the Practice Cottage. Even married women were required to enroll in this class, during which students learned to manage a household on a limited budget. Though the Practice Cottage had provided space for foods and nutrition experiments, these activities were not incorporated into the Home Management House but were moved into the laboratories in the main Home Economics Building. During their residence in the House, the students rotated through various home management roles such as bookkeeper and dishwasher. For example, each student would serve as food manager at some time during her stay in the House. In this capacity, she was required to plan the meals for her day on a limited budget of one dollar per person per day. There were also two "lower-cost food days," for which the food manager had to plan meals that cost eighty to ninety cents per person per day. The funds saved from these days could be used for entertaining friends, both

female and male, at a more elaborate meal. Some alumnae have unhappy memories of their time in the Home Management House; they believed that their experiences there were based on an old-fashioned notion of homemaking and were not realistic. However, others remember their two weeks with pleasure, even relating stories of impressing their future husbands with the skills they displayed during dinners at the house.

The combination of classroom learning and practical experience that epitomized the Home Management House also characterized another aspect of the School, the tea room. Students enrolled in institutional management were offered various opportunities to step outside the classroom and develop professional skills. In the early years, they worked in different cafeterias around campus and in a small, temporary tea room erected in Wingra Park. By the early 1920s, however, the School housed its own cafeteria and tea room on the third floor of the Home Economics Building under the long-time direction of Stella Patton. There, students enrolled in Home Economics 133 gained practical experience in food management.

It was Patton's goal "to give students some experience in food preparation and service, some idea of what it means to be working for the public and not just for a grade," though they were most definitely graded as well.[8] With patrons consisting of faculty members, extension workers, and students, the institutional management students in the course rotated through a variety of jobs; they took charge of planning the menus, ordering supplies, preparing all the food, acting as servers and cashiers, and managing the account books to make sure that the cafeteria was financially sound. The restaurant had a seating capacity of fifty-four but typically served eighty to 100 people a day. The tea room was open for three weeks during the semester and offered a limited menu. Then, students spent an additional three weeks on the much more difficult task of running a full service cafeteria five (later three) days of the week. There were two choices every day. In 1935, the dinner menu, which included

meat, cost thirty-five cents, while the lunch menu cost twenty-five cents. During the Second World War, students had additional concerns—because they had to take ration points into consideration, the menus they chose emphasized non-meat items. By 1949, the price had risen to sixty cents a meal. After the construction of the west wing of the Home Economics Building in 1953, the tea room moved from its third-floor location down to the new basement outfitted with the most modern kitchen and laboratory equipment. A few years later, the tea room was phased out.

In the same period, the homemakers' radio program also expanded. From Meloche's first broadcast in 1921, it had become a regular feature on WHA. Aline Hazard joined it in 1933. Toward the end of her career, which lasted until 1965, Hazard recalled that the program discussed a wide range of topics:

Illustration 3.8: Home economics lunch room, c. 1920s. Students in the institutional management program ran this lunch time restaurant in the home economics building. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 202, Folder 11: "Institutional Management," negative# x25 2486.

> information included experimental findings that alerted listeners to the finer values and better homemaking methods. For variety I supplemented interviews and round table discussions with on-spot reports and individual talks. University staff members and specialists from the state department of agriculture gave freely of their information. Practical homemakers, dietitians, home economics department specialists and staff with vocational, technical and adult leadership participated.[9]

The Homemakers Program generated an incredible volume of mail, typically requesting additional information. Hazard's success as a broadcaster was evident not only in the many national awards she won, but more importantly in her loyal following around the state. Her dedication to providing accurate and up-to-date information is evident in her decision to pursue a B.S. in Home Economics from

Illustration 3.9: Homemakers program. Aline Hazard, far right, long-time host of the program, talking with five guests on her Homemakers Program. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 23/24/01, Box 295.

UW while working full-time and supporting her two young children by herself. Through part-time studies, she completed this degree in 1940. Listeners clearly trusted her for the advice she gave about homemaking as well as for the company she provided to them. She regularly received more mail than any other program on WHA. In 1962 alone, Hazard received more than 10,000 letters. After her retirement, the School's involvement with WHA continued, though the programs carried different names over the years.

The PreSchool program expansion is another major achievement of the post-war era. In 1927 the popular nursery school was moved to the basement of the Practice Cottage and the number of children that could be accommodated dropped to five boys and five girls, but as the nursery school acquired more space, additional spots were opened. When the new Home Management House opened in 1941, the PreSchool gained urgently needed space by taking over the entire Practice Cottage. Soon the nursery school expanded to both a morning and an afternoon program; previously children had come only in the mornings. The reputation of the school for quality child care made it very popular among neighborhood parents, especially faculty members. In 1941, Helen Cleveland Dawe was appointed to the Department of Home Economics (in the Home Management and Family Living Department) and the School of Education (in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction) and as director of the PreSchool Laboratory, a position she held for thirty years. Under her supervision, the PreSchool blossomed as home economics students in courses on family relationships and child training would observe children there. In Dawe's Home Economics 119, each student would conduct a personality study of one child, including home visits, to enable her to see the child as a family member.

Space concerns continued to plague the PreSchool, though, both because of the demands of parents for the School to enroll more children and because of the pressures of increasing numbers of home economics students participating in courses involving the study of

children. By 1948 there were spots for thirty-two children. The waiting list for positions often included more than one hundred children, and some parents placed a child on the waiting list even before the child was born. Finally, in 1957, the PreSchool Laboratory moved into purpose-built quarters next to the Home Management House. This further expanded the research function of the nursery school, resulting in an intricate intertwining of the service, teaching, and research aspects of the home economics program.

Physical expansion and curricular expansion were accompanied by another major shift in the School in these years: male students. From its initial class in 1903, only women had enrolled as students in home economics, though a few men had registered for special classes such as institutional management and textile chemistry. As late as 1948, in the brochures designed to encourage high school girls to enroll in the University of Wisconsin program, Zuill claimed that one of the advantages of home economics was "Little or no competition with men."[10]

Illustration 3.10: PreSchool lab, c. 1940. Source: University of Wisconsin-Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 4: "Child and Family Studies."

In 1947, Paul Cleary, a UW student interested in becoming a chef, applied to the School. Zuill was uncertain how to handle this unique situation. After his career goals became clear, he was admitted. However, the administration decided to modify the School's typical course of study for Cleary. He was not permitted to take basic clothing design, during which the students often disrobed to try on clothing, and he was not allowed residency in the Home Management House, where six students lived for several weeks at a time to develop their homemaker skills. Nor did he enroll in the humanics course, which studied topics such as marriage, family, and sex; rather, he was required to substitute a sociology course on marriage and family. He completed his basic program and then temporarily left the School to serve in the Marine Corps from 1950–1953. Upon his return, he finished his courses and graduated in 1955.[11] During Cleary's military service, another man, Gwyn Ricketts, entered the School; his interest in interior design attracted him to the related arts major. "At first, I was just like any other student here at the University–a number," Ricketts remembered. "But I didn't remain a number for long–not in Home Ec."[12] Despite these pioneers, it would take another decade before the enrollment of male students became a significant and consistent part of the School.

When Zuill joined the University of Wisconsin, she headed a Department of Home Economics with a faculty of thirty-seven. By her retirement in 1961, she led a School of Home Economics, sat as an associate dean in the College of Agriculture, and directed a faculty of forty-nine. In the following decades, the identity of home economics, both at Madison and nationally, began to evolve away from Zuill's vision of the field as an exclusively female discipline with strong ties to its rural roots and a focus on teacher training. The School that Zuill oversaw combined both women's professional and domestic preparation. In subsequent years, as women's roles in United States society underwent an important transformation, the professional aspects of the School grew at the expense of the domestic.

But Zuill's legacy–greater resources, a diverse faculty strong in research, teaching, and outreach, and a growing student body–would see the School through the discipline's changing identity that lay ahead.

Notes

1. For more on student clubs, Susan R. King, "Student Organizations Within Home Economics," in this volume.

2. [Mrs.] H.C. Weiss, "A Good Job is Worthy of Cooperation from All of Us," typescript, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/40. Weiss was at this time secretary of the University of Wisconsin Home Economics Alumnae Association.

3. S. Toeper, "Home Ecs Ask for More Room," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, November 1938, pp. 5, 20.

4. "Recommendations on the Reorganization of Home Economics," typescript, p. 2, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/40.

5. Beatrice Schweigert, "Home Economics Extension," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, February 1945, p. 8.

6. Eunice Rohrer, "A Home-Ec Interviews Miss Zuill," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, October 1939, p. 8.

7. "Class of 1944: Alumni Breakfast Information Form: Carol E. Burns," University of Wisconsin Archives Accession no. 99/17, Box 1, Folder: "Results of Alumni Survey."

8. "They Feed a Hundred a Day the Home Ec Way," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, December 1949, p. 11.

9. Hazard, quoted in Ruth Dickie, "Women and Cooperative Home Economics Extension," in *University Women: A Series of Essays, vol. II*, Marian J. Swoboda and Audrey J. Roberts, eds. (University of Wisconsin, 1980), p. 96.

10. "The University of Wisconsin Prepare for Home Economics," brochure, 1948, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/40.

11. *Impact* [University of Wisconsin–Madison School of Human Ecology], Spring 1999, p. 8.

12. Gwyn Ricketts as told to Libby Grimmer, "Outnumbered 600 to 2," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, March 1953, p. 6.

Illustration 4.1: Students sitting in a circle on the lawn of the Home Economics Building, 1981. This group is probably part of a class discussion section. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Iconography Collection, Series 14/2, Box 200, Folder 1: "Home Economics Groups-General."

4

Turbulence, 1961–1985

"The School is literally attacking societal problems that focus on family life with a definite objective of making the world better"

Abby L. Marlatt had served three decades directing the home economics program at the University of Wisconsin–Madison; Frances Zuill, more than two decades. However, over the next thirteen years, the School was led by no less than four directors and several acting directors. Josephine Staab served from 1961 to 1964; Rita Youmans, from 1965 to 1968; Louise Young, from 1968 to 1969; William H. Marshall, from 1969 to 1973; Rose M. Chioni, from 1973 to 1974. During this turbulent period, the School continued to grow in terms of student body, faculty and staff, space, and curriculum. By 1974, when Elizabeth Simpson arrived, the School had changed dramatically. In the diversity of their educational backgrounds, experiences, and interests, these heads of home economics at the University of Wisconsin suggest how the field's changing identity and, in particular, specialization, were affecting the discipline in Madison and across the country.

Illustration 4.2: Josephine Staab, associate dean of Home Economics, 1961–1964. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 3/1, Box 83.

Unlike Marlatt and Zuill, who were members of the first generation of home economists in the United States, Josephine (Jo) Staab graduated in 1932 with a degree in home economics

education from the University of Iowa, where she had studied under Frances Zuill. In the following years, she taught high school in Wisconsin, Vermont, and Texas and at the University of Tennessee, Tackersey Women's University in Bombay, and the University of Texas. She also completed an M.A. at Teachers College, Columbia University, and earned a Ph.D. in family economics from the University of Chicago. Following Zuill's retirement in 1961, Staab was appointed associate dean of the College of Agriculture, the first director of Home Economics on the Madison campus with a doctorate. She resigned from this position in 1964 and resumed full-time work as a professor in the Department of Home Management and Family Living, which she continued until her retirement in 1976. Staab then became involved in political organizations such as the Wisconsin Women's Network, the Women's Political Caucus, and the League of Women Voters. In 1998, the year before her death, she published *Marriage as an Economic Partnership: How One State Made It Happen*, a history of Wisconsin's passage of a marital property reform law.

Illustration 4.3: Rita Youmans, associate dean of Home Economics, 1965–1986. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 3/1, Box 97.

Rita Youmans succeeded Staab. She brought to home economics an interest in shifting the field's traditionally rural and middle-class focus to one emphasizing more urban issues, particularly those involving low-income families. She earned her B.S. in home economics from Central Missouri State College (1937), her M.S. in family economics from Kansas State Agricultural College (1945), and her Ed.D. from the University of Illinois (1957). During these

years she taught home economics at several Missouri high schools. In one poor mining town, she decided to adapt her teaching to students' living conditions by instructing them to make over clothing. But none of the children brought clothing to the class. One student said, "We don't have anything to make over." Another said, "If you think we buy clothes to last more than one season, you live in a house with a closet." A little research revealed that the average family size in this town was seven, while the average number of rooms in a house was four. Obviously few families had space for closets.

After serving as chair of the Home Economics Department at Stevens Point State University (now UW–Stevens Point) from 1952 to 1956, Youmans came to UW in 1956 to accept a joint appointment in the School of Education, the School of Home Economics, and at Wisconsin High School. She became acting associate dean for seven months and then from February 1965 until 1968 she served as associate dean, after which she moved to UW–Milwaukee to help develop a program in school social welfare.

Louise Young followed Youmans, serving as acting associate dean from 1968 to 1969. Young worked primarily in extension where, as a specialist in family and consumer economics for more than thirty years, she taught Wisconsin residents to manage their finances and to understand consumer issues. She earned a degree in home economics education in 1932 from the University of Illinois and an M.A. in family and consumer economics in 1941 from the University of Missouri,

Illustration 4.4: Louise Young, acting associate dean of Home Economics, 1968–1969. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 3/1, Box 97.

where she continued as an instructor. Appointed to the UW in 1945, Young traveled extensively throughout the state for the next three decades, teaching people about a wide variety of financial issues. Initially her teaching focused on basic financial and estate planning, but later she expanded into areas such as consumer credit, record-keeping, and life insurance. She published a number of bulletins including "Family Estate Planning," "Our Family Records," "Savings and Investments," "Wise Use of Consumer Credit," and "Problems Facing Consumers."

In the decades of the 1960s, under the direction of Staab, Youmans, and Young, the School changed in many ways. At Zuill's retirement in 1961, there had been forty-nine faculty members and eight majors offered within the School; during Staab's term, the number of faculty grew to fifty-four and, with curricular revisions, the School housed twelve majors within the five departments. Under Youmans, the faculty increased to sixty-two and such majors as Apparel Design and Family and Consumer Economics were added. In the same period, the specialization among the School's disciplines, which had become increasingly apparent since at least the 1920s, was more clearly established. By the late 1960s, fewer common courses were required across the School's majors, reflecting changes across the campus in general as students were demanding more say in the curriculum. Unlike the emphasis on science found in the curriculum developed by Hunt and Marlatt, the new core curriculum required only twelve credits of "natural science." At the same time, departments were given greater leeway in determining which academic courses were required for specialization within their particular subject matter areas. New majors appeared, such as Child Development and Preschool Teaching, Retailing, Textile Science, and Interior Design.

While some areas of the School were expanding to incorporate emerging issues in home economics, other areas were lost, most significantly nutrition. From the beginnings of home economics on the Madison campus as well as around the country, the curriculum

had stressed the nutritional sciences. In many institutions, nutrition was the most prominent of home economics departments, its faculty conducting research as well as holding courses on cooking and food sanitation. In times of national emergency such as World Wars and the Depression, it was the nutrition faculty who led food conservation programs. The loss of the Department of Foods and Nutrition was difficult for the School; some professors, both inside and outside Foods and Nutrition, regretted the move.

The initial requirements for a home economics degree at UW included forty-six credits of chemistry, physics, physiology, and bacteriology as the foundational sciences for courses with such titles as Food Analysis and Microscopical Examination of Food Products and Fibers. For many years, Dietetics, described as "Dietary standards; balanced rations; diet as influenced by age, sex, and occupation; construction of dietaries and service meals; dietetic treatment in disease and principles of home nursing," was a popular major for students who aspired to careers as dietitians in hospital or school cafeterias. Some of their laboratory study was conducted in the Practice Cottage. They also had the opportunity to gain experience in Stella Patton's course on tea room management. Other students elected to conduct research on nutrition that involved working in the animal laboratory in the basement of the Home Economics Building. An additional group of students majored in experimental foods after Flora Hanning developed the program in the mid-1940s. Faculty also prepared extension publications on food safety and cooking techniques and frequently lectured for extension short courses.

The study of nutrition remained an important home economics major for many decades. In 1951, when the Department of Home Economics was reorganized as the School of Home Economics in the College of Agriculture, one of its four new departments was Foods and Nutrition. In 1968, however, when the School was again reorganized and renamed the School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences (FRCS), the nutrition faculty moved into the

newly created, free-standing Department of Nutritional Sciences in the College of Agriculture. Fewer and fewer students interested in nutritional sciences and food administration graduated with degrees from FRCS, later the School of Human Ecology. The School stopped admitting students to nutritional science in 2000.

The new name, Family Resources and Consumer Sciences, was indicative of the increasing professional orientation of the School. It represented not a radical transformation, but rather a ratification of the changes that had been developing over the decades both within the School itself and in the field nationally. Echoing Hunt's calls to prepare women for their role as informed consumers who are aware of the value of the dollar and sensitive to economic issues beyond their families, the new name highlighted the consumer aspects of the field as well as the significance of families, a response to the increasing consumer-orientation of U.S. society. [One unfortunate aspect of the name change was the acronym that it generated; FRCS was

Illustration 4.5: Nutrition laboratory, 1962. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 3: "Foods and Nutrition."

typically pronounced by those outside the field as "fracas," a pronunciation that often caused giggles.]

Consumer and family economics had been a part of the field at least since Hunt's years in Madison, but the economic perspective of home economics was submerged within the Department of Home Management. Through the late 1960s and early 1970s, while refining other majors, the faculty of the School worked to develop more clearly the consumer and family economics aspects of the field. By 1973 the Consumer Studies Committee proposed a program for an interdisciplinary Consumer Studies Institute. Though the Dean appointed a Steering Committee for the Institute, its plans never fully materialized. However, with the development of the new administrative structure of Program Areas in 1974, Consumer Sciences emerged as a distinct entity, along with Environment and Design (later Environment, Textiles, and Design), Child and Family Studies (later Human Development and Family Studies), Home Economics Education (later Family and Consumer Sciences Education and then

Illustration 4.6: Consumer economics class, 1950s. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 5: "Consumer Sciences."

Interdisciplinary Studies in Human Ecology), and Home Economics Communications (later Family and Consumer Communications).

Moreover, the focus on consumer issues was not limited to one department. Suggestive of the School's broad scope, textile chemistry, for example, was also concerned with consumer protection. Just as home economists had consciously connected science study and economic and social concerns, so too did Manfred Wentz, professor in Environment, Textile and Design, especially in his textile chemistry courses. As he explained his philosophy,

> We're trying to find a textile education program closer to society . . . because the home economist is nearer the consumer now. [When she attempts to argue for consumer legislation, she] won't be recognized . . . unless she has a good natural science background. It takes technical knowledge to back up consumer issues.[1]

This statement would have sounded familiar to Caroline Hunt and her generation.

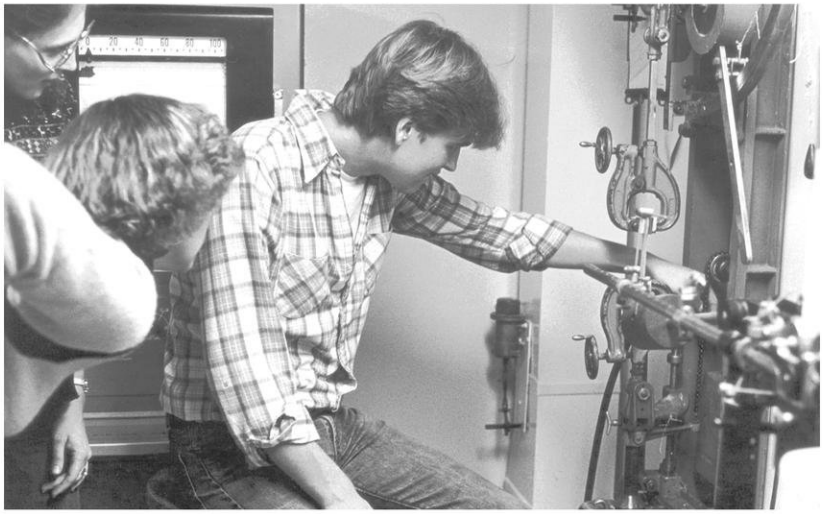


Illustration 4.7: Students studying textile chemistry equipment, 1981. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 202, Folder 8: "Textiles and Fashion."

The emphasis on consumer protection echoed the early work of home economists; another emerging issue of the period also reflected the history of the discipline. Though the field had previously focused on training women for professional roles and preparing women for their domestic roles in society, home economics education both at the university and in middle and high schools around the country had encouraged some participation of males, though usually to no avail. The University of Wisconsin had encouraged male enrollment as early as 1932, when the *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, which was produced by students of the UW College of Agriculture, including home economics students, published an article entitled "'Home Economics for Men?' It's Beginning to Look That Way." Explaining that men as well as women needed to understand issues such as nutrition, child development, and household budget, the writer pointed out that some high schools were admitting boys into cooking classes with much success, success that could be reinforced with college home economics classes designed specifically for men.[2] As far as we can determine, no such course was offered at UW in the period, though a few men apparently did register for special courses, such as institutional management and textile chemistry. One such example was Philip Dakin, who enrolled in an advanced draperies course in 1933 and helped design the student fashion style show that year. His work caught the eye of theater designers from Chicago. As a result he was offered contracts to design stage and film productions.[3] However, Dakin appears to have been one of very few men who enrolled in home economics courses in the period.

In the post-war era, the situation was quite different. Reflecting developments on the national level, home economics was struggling to redefine itself in a changing world. The text of the School catalogs is one indication of this change.[4] From 1903 onwards, the catalogs assumed that all students in home economics were and would be female, though male students such as Dakin and Cleary enrolled; School publications continually used female pronouns. By the 1958–

1960 catalog, though, gender specific pronouns were no longer used. Despite this apparent openness toward male enrollment, few men graduated in the 1950s and male students did not enter the School in significant or consistent numbers until the 1960s. Even in the late 1970s, when there were almost thirty men majoring in the School's departments, males were still a distinct minority. Some found this an enviable position. As Mark Gaura, an apparel design major at the time, remarked, "We do stand out in the crowd since most of the students are female."[5]

Male participation was fostered not only within the ranks of the student body but also among faculty and administration.[6] In 1969, Glenn S. Pound, the long-time dean of the College of Agriculture, selected as the new associate dean of Home Economics William H. Marshall. Like many men who entered the field in this period, it was Marshall's interest in child development that led him to home economics in the 1950s, at a time when few men were entering the profession. Marshall had earned a B.A. in psychology and sociology from Ohio Wesleyan University (1953), an M.A. in child psychology and preschool education from the State University of Iowa (1955), and an Ed.D. in family studies from Columbia University (1960). He then completed a twelve-month post-doctoral fellowship in marriage and family therapy at the Merrill Palmer Institute in Detroit. He spent five years on the faculty of Michigan State University and three years at West Virginia University.

Illustration 4.8: William H. Marshall, associate dean of Home Economics, 1969 to 1973. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 3/1, Box 60.

As Marshall remembers the situation:

> Pound hired me because I was very visible in home economics nationally at

> that time. When I was appointed dean/director of the home economics program in West Virginia in summer 1966, I was the first man to become dean of a land grant home economics program....When I interviewed at Madison, I was relatively young–38, I was male and Pound wanted a man in the position.[7]

Marshall then joined the faculty of the University of Wisconsin–Madison, where he held a position as professor of Child and Family Studies from 1969 to 1990. He served as associate dean of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and director of the School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences from 1969 to 1973.

There were those uncomfortable with the appointment of a man to the position, uncomfortable enough to write Pound for an explanation. The agriculture dean was very clear on his reasons. As he explained to one such correspondent, in response to her query of why a man?

> Because schools [of home economics] have been staffed primarily by women, they have an unfortunate image of domesticism [sic]. It is very difficult for such schools to be competitive in a great research environment unless they are making a significant research input....our new School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences not only will still maintain professional Home Economics teacher training, but also will develop a significant research thrust with a sharp focus on family life and consumer problems.

Pound linked this development to broader cultural changes, claiming that "This academic thrust is badly needed today as we witness such upheaval and turbulence of the social structure of America."[8]

As associate dean, Marshall brought his vision of home economics to the School. To him, the discipline's "broad aim [was] to prepare men and women for professions relating to the betterment of family

and community life." He recognized that the alumnae would prefer education for homemaking, but, in Marshall's view, the School was a "professional school....In a four-year curriculum turning out competent professionals must be the number one goal. It leaves very little room for the other kind of thing," he explained. To do so, he envisioned major curricular changes with an increased emphasis on research and graduate education.[9]

Marshall's years as director of home economics were strained as he often "banged heads" with Pound. From the beginning of Marshall's tenure at Madison, they fought over budget, over positions, over the place of the home economics in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. At the same time, tensions mounted as Marshall clashed with the faculty. In March of 1973, "Some concerned faculty in the School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences" wrote Dean Pound, asking him to provide Marshall with an opportunity to resign. They considered that " ... the actions from the Dean's [Marshall's] office have been detrimental to faculty morale, commitment and recruitment and to programs within the School." They feared that

> If the present situation continues with the ineffective leadership and concentration on alienating and dividing faculty and students, the deterioration of the program could well lead to complete destruction of the School.[10]

The problems came to a head a few weeks later when Pound publicly admitted to "a deteriorating pattern of human relationships during the past 15 or 18 months,"[11] relationships between Marshall and the faculty and between Marshall and Pound. The crux of their final battle was disagreement over the autonomy of the School. A University committee had recommended that the School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences be severed from the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and be established as an autonomous unit on the Madison campus. In later years, Marshall recalled that

> Pound dropped a warning to me in fall 1972 that he thought things were not going well; in spring 1973 he told me it was time for a change. He gave me the opportunity to resign, which I refused. He then dismissed me from the associate dean's position.[12]

In 1973, Marshall was fired from his administrative post, though he continued as professor in the Department of Child and Family Studies until 1990.

But Marshall's dismissal was only one of several major changes to the School in the 1970s. After more than sixty years as a unit of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, home economics was reconstituted as an autonomous unit within the University in 1973. Rose M. Chioni, an associate dean of the School of Nursing, became acting associate dean of FRCS from 1973 to 1974. In the latter year, the new independent School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences was once again re-organized, this time into six departments: Child and Family Studies (later Human Development and Family Studies), Consumer Sciences, Environment and Design (later Environment, Textiles and Design); Home Economics Education (later Family and Consumer Education and then Interdisciplinary Studies in Human Ecology); Home Economics Communications (later Family and Consumer Communications); and Continuing and Vocational Education. In that same year, the School welcomed its new dean, Elizabeth Simpson.

Illustration 4.9: Elizabeth Simpson, dean of the School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences, 1974–1985. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 3/1, Box 81.

Simpson received three degrees in home economics education—a B.S. from Indiana

State University (1941), an M.S. from Iowa State University (1949), and an Ed.D. from the University of Illinois (1955). Between her first two degrees, she taught high school home economics in Indiana. After earning her doctorate, she was professor of home economics education first at Purdue University, and then at the University of Illinois. When Simpson was appointed acting chair of the Department of Vocational-Training Education at the University of Illinois in 1967, she was the first woman to chair any similar department in the country. In 1969, she moved to Washington to work for the U.S. Office of Education. She held three positions there, the last of which was as branch chief of the Curriculum Development Branch in the Division of Research and Demonstration. She was also the first female president of the 50,000-member American Vocational Association.

Simpson arrived at a time of uncertainty for the School and for the discipline as a whole, but she united faculty behind her vision of the field, which she described for the student newsletter:

> As a nation, we have had a crisis in values. Home Economics can play a significant role in helping people to understand values, to analyze their own and to give guidance for developing their own values.[13]

Among her goals was to increase the attention focused on research within the School, and she succeeded in attracting research funding from a number of private and government sources. Publications by faculty also grew under her tenure.

Simpson's definition of the School's mission recapitulated the goals of early home economics leaders. She insisted that "The School is literally attacking societal problems that focus on family life with a definite objective of making the world better." On her list of areas that the School faculty was investigating were senior citizen housing conditions, law and responsibility of the consumer, poverty and the family unit, consumer protection legislation, prevention of crime or child mishandling, communication patterns of women who work

away from home, psychological effects on families of the away-from-home father, communication systems within families, and how parent-child and child-child interactions affect learning and development,[14] a panoply of issues that assumed that the discipline—whether called home economics, family and consumer sciences, or later human ecology—was concerned with the interconnections between human beings and their immediate surroundings, both material and social. It was a definition that reflected the changing social environment of the late twentieth century.

Another indication of the new social climate nationally and on this campus was that in 1970 the Home Management House was converted into office space and classrooms. Students no longer used it as a practice house. As early as the 1940s, some students had been questioning the requirement that all seniors spend time in the Home Management House. As one editorial queried:

> Since so many senior home ecs seem to be married women.., does it not seem possible that we might make the requirements more adaptable to the purposes of these girls?[15]

By the 1960s, many students had found the "practice cottage" experience unnecessary and unrealistic. In the 1968–1970 University catalog, the stated rationale for the Home Management House was

> ...to give students the chance to apply principles learned in home economics courses, such as nutrition, family economics, design, and textiles, to a particular situation, and to integrate these principles with those of management.

Many other universities were closing their home management houses; increasing numbers of students were already living on their own before their senior year at university, and were even married; and the focus of the School was moving more to professional development with less of an emphasis on domestic skills. Moreover, men were entering the School in greater numbers and they were not

expected or allowed to stay in the home management house. By 1970, Marshall reported that a "live-in practice house is neither desirable nor educationally advantageous." The last class lived in the House in the spring of 1970. Since then the building has held the office and classrooms of the Department of Human Development and Family Studies (formerly the Department of Child and Family Studies).

As society was changing, so too was the content of some long-standing courses. Take, for example, the family economics course taught by Staab, Home Management and Family Living 475. Each student, typically as a senior, was required as a final class project to create a family budget appropriate to her first year of married life, reflecting a clear assumption that every student was expected to marry soon after graduation. In the early years, the overwhelming majority of graduates did marry soon after graduation, but that scenario was becoming less likely in the last several decades of the twentieth century. Consequently, at least one student rebelled at the assignment as early as 1970. Not anticipating marriage in the near future, she sought a different, more meaningful assignment, namely, to trace out the costs of women's workforce participation at two transitional points by studying a woman re-entering the workforce after raising her children and a woman leaving the workforce to begin her family. Recognizing the value of the student's proposal, Staab agreed to the alternative.[16]

Cognizant of the changing times, the School undertook a series of studies in the 1960s and the 1970s to help it more clearly define its role in contemporary society and to modify its curriculum accordingly. In identifying its "new directions," the School both continued the traditions of home economics and incorporated new ideas and practices that better reflected emerging social and professional issues. As Simpson described their construction:

> Curriculum decisions are based on the competences required for the professional fields for which the School prepares students; social and economic conditions and needs; research and technological

> developments related to the subject fields; and the interests and needs of students served by the School.[17]

One example of new courses entering the curriculum is Sex Differences, Sex Roles, and Society, which was first taught in 1973 by Professor Jane Piliavin. The catalog description of the course—"Biological, psychological and social variables, their interaction in the development and maintenance of sex differences and sex role behavior in our society"—suggests both continuity and change; in many aspects the course continued the interdisciplinary approach of the courses designed by Hunt and Marlatt, especially Marlatt's Humanics. The subject matter, however, highlighted emerging concerns in the latter third of the twentieth century.

Not surprisingly, in this turbulent time with shifting curricular concerns and social issues, the student body of the School was also changing. We saw how students convinced the administration that

Illustration 4.10: Kathryn Beach, associate dean for admissions and counseling, advising an unidentified student, c. 1970s. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 200, "Home Economics Individuals."

the Home Management House experience was irrelevant by the 1960s and 1970s. The composition of the student body shifted as men entered the School in increasing numbers. Certain programs attracted the largest numbers of males, both students and faculty, most particularly Consumer Sciences (including Retailing) and Child and Family Studies (now Human Development and Family Studies). This growth in male enrollment was, in part, a result of a conscious drive to attract men to the School. For example, in the early 1980s, Simpson called a meeting to focus specifically on the position of male students, maintaining that

> male students are a minority group in FRCS. The School administration is interested in trying to accommodate their special needs as well as trying to increase the number of male students into the School.[18]

Recognizing that men comprised a small, but burgeoning and important segment of the student body, Simpson looked for ways to encourage expanded male enrollment. Though it is impossible to correlate directly the actions of Simpson and other administrators and faculty, it is clear that increasing numbers of men were admitted. By 1987, men accounted for nearly 35 percent of the School's enrollment.

Illustration 4.11: Home economics student with child, 1961. Published in the 1962–64 course catalog, this photograph carried the caption: "Curiosity and learning stimulated in early laboratory experiments." Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 4: "Child and Family Studies."

Kathryn Beach, who was on the faculty from 1947 to 1974 and served as the associate dean of student affairs for the last six of those years, vividly remembered those turbulent years and how

the students were different from those who previously had enrolled in the School. She noted that before 1961, Zuill had run "a tight ship" on which "students accepted everything without question."[19] By the 1960s and early 1970s, however, students were beginning to rebel against authoritarian structures throughout society, as students marched for civil rights and women's rights and against the Vietnam War. Time-worn university traditions became a prime target. Recognizing these developments, the faculty and administration initiated "talk-in sessions," during which the students were invited to voice their opinions about the program. And voice them, they did:

> . . . they questioned the value of such sacred cows as the Home Management House, with its emphasis on elaborate table service and the right way to store blankets, at a time when campus buildings were being trashed and bombed.[20]

Students' lives were also changing, and administrators learned to cope with the new student. In Beach's experiences, students became more "open." She recalled one particular incident with a student whose grades fell precipitously; "he came in and told us frankly he'd been on drugs." This was in sharp contrast, she concluded, to the earlier years "when we worried about apartment parties and coed dorms."[21]

In these years, students' academic activities also became more varied. Students continued to be encouraged to see the field as an important path to public service. In Child and Family Studies, students could undertake volunteer work as part of the course Child Development 362. This activity took them to organizations such as Head Start, daycare centers, and Girl Scouts. And the students were pleased with the experience. According to one of those students, Mary Kay Rehberger,

> The work is both fullfilling [sic] and enlightening. It makes the course hang together and more applicable to daily life.[22]

In the mid-1970s, the Department of Consumer Sciences developed a student internship program in Wisconsin's Office of Consumer Protection. Students accepted to this academic program worked for two or three semesters within the office, answering consumer complaints, dispersing information, and investigating consumer activities and abuses in the marketplace.

Many majors in the School developed internship programs, particularly as surveys during the 1970s indicated how highly prospective employers considered internship experience. One study found that employers rated internships or on the job experience fourth out of ten factors. (Interestingly, grades were much less important; that factor was rated eighth. Appearance was rated number one.)[23] Both for their employment potential and their pedagogic value, internships grew to be critical aspects of majors such as interior design, home economics journalism, and retailing.

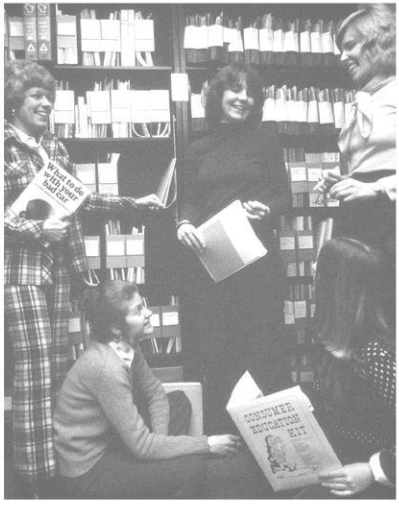


Illustration 4.12: These consumer science students are conducting research in the resource library at the Department of Justice's Consumer Protection Division, c. 1975. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 5: "Consumer Science."

From the 1960s to the 1980s, the field of home economics responded to changes in American society and the University of Wisconsin School of Home Economics, then the School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences, responded as well. The student body and the faculty and staff were becoming more diverse; urban issues became more prominent than rural ones; the curriculum shifted from a combination of teaching, professional training, and domesticity to an increasing emphasis on research and specialization.

Though domesticity disappeared as an integral element, the School's focus remained on the family and particularly the role of the discipline in improving the lives of individuals and families, a mission very similar to that of today's School of Human Ecology. Subsequent deans built on these changes, enabling the School to be even more responsive to contemporary needs.

Notes

1. "New Textile Chemistry Profession Meets Challenge," *The Fam-Com Communiqué*, [fall 1974], p. 1.

2. Candance Hurley, "'Home Economics for Men?' It's Beginning to Look That Way," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, December 1932, pp. 5, 13. See also Lila Hammen, "Should Men Learn to Cook and Sew?" *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, April 1936, pp. 7, 15.

3. "Thirty Years of Home Economics," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, December 1934, pp. 8-9, 15.

4. The data for this paragraph has been drawn from Hunter A. Tjugum, "Male Enrollment Influx into the School of Home Economics, University of Wisconsin–Madison; and Other Attempts of the Discipline to Represent the Changing Times (1947–2001)," paper prepared as part of CS 501: Archival Research in the History of Home Economics, spring 2002, copy in the possession of Rima D. Apple.

5. "Male FRCS Major," *FRCS Communique Newsletter*, February 1978, p. 4.

6. Margaret W. Rossiter, "The Men Move in: Home Economics in Higher Education, 1950–1970," in Sarah Stage and Virginia B. Vincenti, eds., *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 96-117.

7. William H. Marshall to Rima D. Apple, email dated 16 October 2002.

8. Letter from Glenn S. Pound to Mrs. William Bradford Smith, dated 22 April 1969, located in University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 90/80, Box 13.

9. Violet E. Dewey, "Dean is Part of the New Home Image," *The Milwaukee Journal*, 12 November 1972.

10. Letter from "Some Concerned Faculty in the School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences" to Pound, dated March 14, 1973, located in University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 4/211, Box 98.

11. Glenn S. Pound, interviewed by Donna Hartshorne, tape recording, 1979, University of Wisconsin–Madison Oral History Project.

12. William H. Marshall to Rima D. Apple, email dated 16 October 2002.

13. "Welcome," *The Fam-Con Communiqué* [University of Wisconsin School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences], [fall 1974].

14. "Financial Quarterly," *UW Foundation*, Summer 1977, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/94/6, Box 9, Folder "Child and Family Studies Program Area."

15. Florence Markwardt, "Is it Necessary — A Editorial," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, January 1947, p. 3.

16. Jeanne Vergeront, "Employed Homemakers: A Discussion and an Analysis," class paper for Home Management 475, dated 8 January 1971 (in the possession of Rima D. Apple).

17. Elizabeth Simpson, "From the Dean," *FRCS: New Directions*, May 1976, p. 4.

18. Elizabeth J. Simpson, "Memo: Male Student Meeting," dated March 12, 1981, located in the University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, 94/6, Box 8, Folder: "Students/Males 1981," quoted in Tjugum, "Male Enrollment Influx."

19. Quoted in Hazel F. McGrath, "The 'Bride's Course' Turns 75," *Wisconsin Alumnus Magazine*, May 1978, p. 7.

20. McGrath, "The 'Bride's Course Turns 75," p. 7.

21. McGrath, "The 'Bride's Course' Turns 75," p. 7.

22. "Volunteer Work Replaced Discussion Groups: Child Development Students Work in the Community for Credit," *Communique: Family Resources and Consumer Sciences*: University of Wisconsin–Madison, October 1976, p. 1.

23. "Internships rate high with employers," *FRCS Communique Newsletter*, [Fall 1996?], pp. 2-3.

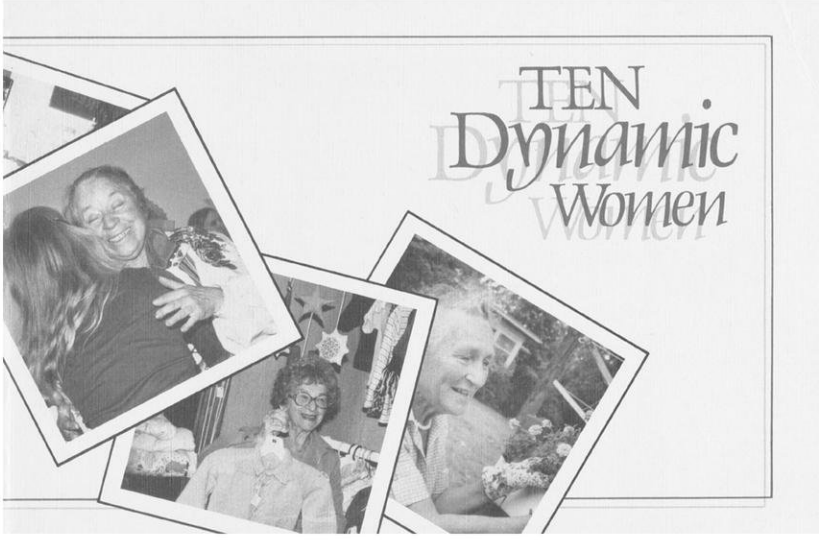


Illustration 5.1: *Ten Dynamic Women*. Written by Grace Tonge, this book is one of the many projects supported by the Beckner Fund. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/4/1, Box 4, "Ten Dynamic Women."

5

Toward the Second Century, 1985–present

"Home ec is no longer dominated by 'cooking and sewing.' Thank the Lord!!"

The first home economics department at the University of Wisconsin was housed in the College of Letters and Science, and it enrolled thirty-four students who were instructed by a faculty of two. A century later, home economics has been replaced by human ecology; the department, by an autonomous school with nearly 1,000 undergraduate students, more than one hundred graduate students, and a faculty of more than sixty. In 1903, the department offered seven courses, covering foods, housing, household economy, and teaching; today, the School offers a wide array of courses in diverse fields such as textile arts and design, interior design, consumer affairs and personal finance, retailing, consumer education, consumer journalism, family and consumer education, community leadership, and family studies and human development. If Caroline Hunt, or Abby Marlatt, or Frances Zuill were to appear on the scene today, would she recognize her discipline within the School of Human Ecology? At a very fundamental level, today's School is very different from that envisioned one hundred, seventy, or even forty years ago. No longer is it a goal of the School to prepare female students for a domestic life, even Hunt's broader conception of domestic life. In the first place, the student body includes both women and men; in the second place, the School prepares students for a broad range of careers in education, outreach, design, communications, management, and many other areas. The difference is highlighted by the School's mission statement:

> We recognize the interdependence of individuals, groups and families within their social, psychological, economic, designed and cultural environments. The

> mission of the School of Human Ecology is to understand these complex relationships in order to enhance the quality of people's lives and their environments through interdisciplinary research, creative innovation, teaching, learning and outreach.

Yet, within this mission statement are elements that would be familiar to earlier leaders of home economics: the sense of human beings as interconnected with each other and with a larger social and economic world, and the call for service to others.

Continuity and change are evident in one particular, material aspect of the School. Marlatt and Zuill would probably recognize much of School's physical plant, the same building into which the department of home economics moved in 1914, though remodeled and extended. However, one new addition would surprise and probably please them, the Gallery of Design. For decades the School had searched for a place appropriate to show the artwork of its faculty and staff and to house visiting collections and other exhibitions. In

Illustration 5.2: Unidentified woman studying the computer database of the Helen Allen Textile Collection, c 1980s. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 8: "Slide Sheet."

the early 1990s, with School building's renovation, a new unit was formed: the Gallery of Design. The space was carved out of the ground floor of the west wing, what had once been the tea room used by institutional management students, to create a hall for exhibiting artwork as well as traditional crafts and utilitarian objects. For over a decade the Gallery has mounted a wide array of exhibitions including the artistry of the University's staff and students, textiles from the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection, travelling art shows, and, biannually, the work produced by children enrolled in the University's Preschool. The same building, but different.

The deans who followed Simpson, Hamilton I. McCubbin and Robin A. Douthitt, also illustrate continuity and change in the School's history, and the "challenge of constantly changing times." For example, McCubbin and Douthitt both encouraged and facilitated the tradition of research, building on a significant aspect of the School that dates from its earliest years. However, unlike Hunt, Marlatt, and Zuill, both McCubbin and Douthitt have been active researchers themselves. Moreover, in times of increasing costs and shrinking budgets, they have also striven to cultivate endowments that enable the School to expand into emerging arenas.

Illustration 5.3: Hamilton I. McCubbin, dean of the School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences, later the School of Human Ecology, 1985-1999. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 3/1, Box 62.

Following Simpson's retirement, McCubbin was appointed dean of the University of Wisconsin's School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences and professor of Child and Family Studies in 1985. He

earned all three of his degrees—a B.S. in Political Science in 1964, an M.S. in Social Work in 1966, and a Ph.D. in School Psychology and Child Welfare in 1970—at UW–Madison and completed post-doctoral studies at Yale University, the University of Minnesota, and Stanford University. For several years he was director of the Family Studies Branch of the Naval Health Research Center and director of research for the Army Corrections Program. Immediately before coming to UW, he was professor in the School of Social Work and then head of the Family Social Science department at the University of Minnesota.

During his tenure as dean, the School increasingly emphasized the research elements of the discipline. For example, in this period, the School established three Bascom Professorships and six endowed centers and institutes of research. It also changed its name to the School of Human Ecology in 1996. In 1999, McCubbin returned to his faculty position, and retired from the University of Wisconsin in 2000.

Douthitt followed McCubbin. In 1999, she was appointed interim dean of the School of Human Ecology, and in 2001 she became the School's new dean. After earning her B.S. in home economics (consumer studies) at Ohio State University in 1977, she continued on to the College of Human Ecology at Cornell University where she received her M.S. (1980) and Ph.D. (1982) in consumer/family economics. For four years she was an assistant professor at the University of Saskatchewan before coming to the UW in 1986 with a position in the Consumer Sciences Department. She has held the

Illustration 5.4: Robin A. Douthitt, dean of the School of Human Ecology, 1999- . Source: Personal collection of Douthitt.

Vaughan Bascom Professorship in Women and Philanthropy and has been a Vilas Associate in the Social Sciences. She has published extensively on women's unpaid work and its social value.

After studying the reasons why so many untenured female faculty chose to leave the UW, Douthitt founded and directed the UW–Madison Women Faculty Mentoring Program from 1989 to 1996. This program led to a measurable improvement in the university's retention of female faculty and has become a model for other universities. In recognition of this achievement, Cabinet 99, the women's initiative of the Wisconsin Alumni Association, presented its $10,000 Faculty and Staff and Recognition Award to her in 2000. In 1998, she was named one of the Madison YWCA's Women of Distinction.

Not only have the School's deans been responsive to "changing times" and changing needs, so to have the School's alumni and others committed to its philosophy and mission. Throughout its history, the School has benefitted from generous contributions that have fueled new initiatives, supported undergraduate and graduate students, and fostered research among the faculty and staff. During the 1920s, a memorial fund drive was established to honor the memory of Dorothy Roberts, a much beloved instructor who died in 1921. The monies raised were used to organize a nursery school where home economics students could study the nutrition of children and observe child behavior. Others have contributed to scholarship funds . Some of these were donated in memory of former students, others to memorialize former faculty and administrators, and still others as the way alumnae acknowledge their commitment to the mission of the School.

Other, more recent endowments have been designated to specific purposes, such as the Center for Family Excellence and the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection. A good example of these new initiatives is the Meta Schroeder Beckner Fund. Meta Schroeder earned a bachelor of science degree in home economics in 1919.

Inspired by Marlatt, then head of home economics, and intrigued by histology, Schroeder went on to study bacteriology, receiving a master's degree in 1920 and then a Ph.D. in preventive medicine from the University of Chicago in 1922, after which she found employment as a researcher until her marriage to Earl Beckner in 1926. While devoting the rest of her life to family responsibilities, Meta Schroeder Beckner sustained a lifelong interest in social and political problems, particularly those of the homemaker. After her death in 1979, her husband endowed the Beckner Fund, whose income was and is designated for the express purpose of informing homemakers about social, political, and legal changes through informational materials and outreach programs. One of its first projects was an ERA (Equal Rights Amendment) information campaign that included thirty sixty-second radio messages, each of which dealt with a different aspect of the ERA debate. Another Beckner-funded project was the publication of Grace Tonge's *Ten Dynamic Women*, a study of contemporary influential Wisconsin women, including one of the School's professors, May Reynolds. With these and other endowments, the School continues to rise to the challenge of changing times.

Illustration 5.5: Meta Schroeder Beckner, 1919 graduate of home economics. Her interests in the social and political concerns of homemakers inspired her husband to endow the Meta Schroeder Beckner Fund. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/1, Box 200, "Home Economics Individuals."

The School's faculty, staff, and students respond to changing times with research projects that often grow out of perceived social issues. Examples of the topics they are investigating

include an evaluation of Wisconsin's welfare-related child support reforms, the dynamics of urban poverty, the long-term consequences of multiple family disruptions, the social and affective aspects of teaching and learning for African American children, and the role of the single parent African American family in preparing young women of color for work. Hunt, Marlatt, and Zuill probably would not be surprised at these subjects. Though the problems studied are clearly a function of human ecology in the twenty-first century, they also reveal a continuity with the concerns of the first generation of home economists.

Similarly, the Wisconsin Idea, first exemplified in Hunt's Housekeeping Conferences, remains an important element in the School. For instance, the Wisconsin Family Impact Seminars, a series of seminars, briefing reports, newsletters, and discussion sessions, provide state policymakers with solution-oriented information on timely topics such as child care, competent parenting, juvenile crime, and welfare reform, information based on current research findings. Policymakers recognize that these seminars have increased their knowledge of research on family issues in ways that are useful in decision making and that shape the development and enactment of public policies. Moreover, legislators report that because of their own participation in these seminars, they are more apt to see the practical value of research and to consider how pending legislation affects families. The Seminars' influence even reaches beyond the borders of the state with recent initiatives to provide technical assistance to twelve sites across the country conducting or planning to conduct Family Impact Seminars in their state capitals.

In many areas, the School similarly responds to contemporary social concerns. One project resulted from the call of a local hospital that needed appropriate clothing for its perinatal bereavement program. Instructors in the School produced five different patterns for garments of the proper size and proportions. One weekend each semester, members of the Textile and Apparel Students Association

and staff come together to cut, sew, and embellish the gowns, which are then distributed by the hospital. Another example is CHESS, the Comprehensive Health Enhancement Support System, an information and support program for breast cancer patients. Analyses of survey responses show that women who received CHESS had significant greater confidence in making major health decisions, possessed greater confidence in their medical team, felt freer to ask more questions, and reported improved social support. These projects and many others undertaken by faculty, staff, and students of the School are reminders of the continuity in mission and functions of the School, the focus on "enhanc[ing] the quality of people's lives and their environments through interdisciplinary research, creative innovation, teaching, learning and outreach."

Along with continuity, though, there were undeniable changes, changes that often arose out of the challenges of contemporary society. A survey conducted at the fiftieth reunion of the class of 1944 demonstrates some of the evolution in home economics during the second half of the twentieth century. Respondents were asked to note what they considered the most significant changes in the field of home economics in the past fifty years. Many of them wrote about how dramatically women's roles had been altered, pleased to see "more freedom and social status to women." They were particularly proud of what they regarded as the beneficial effects of home economics on society, for example, how nutrition research had improved the family diet and the increased popularity of child development theories and ecological theories of the family. They appreciated that home economics was no longer a single-sex field, observing that both girls and boys attended home economics classes in middle schools and more men were enrolling in the UW School. One, reflecting the sentiments of other alumnae, noted with evident relief that "home ec is no longer dominated by 'cooking and sewing.' Thank the Lord!!" However, they also feared a loss in all this and

were most disturbed by the greater emphasis on careers. That so many women were entering the work force, the 1944 graduates observed near the end of the twentieth century, could result in a "deterioration of the family." Considering that "Parenting is so important," they worried that some of the changes in the School were shortchanging the students, not giving them what they needed later in life, beyond their careers in the paid labor force. One respondent was pleased with her forty-four years as a full-time homemaker, "a life for which the old Home Economics school prepared young women of 1944," but realized that this was not the life to which modern students aspired.

As these survey results and this history suggest, through its one-hundred years, the School has not been isolated from the larger world. Rather, it has been acutely aware of changing social conditions and has with greater or lesser success attempted to respond to social needs. It often did this through the leadership of its directors and deans, who over the decades have reflected developments in the larger discipline, increasingly downplaying domesticity, stressing research, teaching, and outreach, and fostering departmentalization and specialization.

With a dedicated faculty and staff, with a clear mission, with committed students, the University of Wisconsin School of Human Ecology looks forward to its second one-hundred years. From a small department of home economics to the current School of Human Ecology is a dramatic transformation, but one continually shaped by social and professional issues and responsive to society's needs. This continuity, this tradition, is what enables the School to remain the vibrant and relevant research and academic institution it is today and will be in future, ever ready for the challenge of changing times.

Illustration 6.1: Home economics students conducted experiments in foods and nutrition in the diet kitchen of the Practice Cottage, c. 1910s. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 202, Folder 9: "Practice Cottage."

6

Changing Curriculum and the Practice Cottage

by Judith E. Pasch

Tucked midway between Agricultural Hall and the Human Ecology building on the University of Wisconsin–Madison campus rests a moderately-sized four bedroom home. To early students of home economics, this simple yet elegant residence was known as the Home Management House. Designed as a tool for teaching the latest domestic technology skills and home management theories, the cream-colored brick structure replaced the original deteriorating Home Management House or Practice Cottage, as it was originally called, in 1941. During each semester, a group of six to eight senior home economic students lived in the home for two weeks in order to fulfill a course requirement in household administration. Thirty years later, in 1970, this course requirement came to an end as "the continuation

Illustration 6.2: Home Management House, c.1940s. Source: University of Wisconsin-Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 9/3, Box 142.

of the Residence [sic] as a live-in practice house... [was] ...neither desirable nor educationally advantageous." Today, the building provides offices and a research laboratory for the Department of Human Development and Family Studies.[1]

The building and more precisely, the educational course work preceding the practicum experience in the home tell a unique story. The building symbolizes the spirit of the first home economists' struggle and determination to develop respect for the labors of homemaking. This chapter examines the undergraduate home economics curriculum requirements culminating in a home management practicum at the University of Wisconsin Practice Cottage and Home Management House from 1909 to 1930. It identifies curriculum changes that set in motion a gradual restructuring of academic coursework, eventually leading to the termination of the Home Management House practicum. This analysis reveals that the home economics curriculum gradually shifted away from the scientific management educational curriculum and progressively incorporated social studies in home economics. This curriculum shift reflects the malleable identity of home economics and is reflected in the variety of name changes the field has frequently encountered including Domestic Science, Domestic Arts, Euthenics, Home Economics, Family Resources and Consumer Sciences, and finally, as identified today, Human Ecology.[2]

The term "Practice Cottage" was coined during the Lake Placid Conferences on Home Economics (1898–1908). The women and men who established the home economics discipline sought to understand the tremendous impact industrialization and urbanization had on their lives. These progressive minded individuals recognized the need for education in the area of home sciences and home economics. The University of Wisconsin embraced the idea. Training was needed in the areas of "foods, care of the sick, raising of infants, economy in housekeeping, home comforts, the servant problem, the woman in charity work and social life..." Practice cottages were considered

necessary for teaching domestic sciences, serving as the central building or laboratory for researching home life, illustrating home design, and practicing experimentation in home economics. A variety of arrangements for teaching household arts were considered. However, living in a practice cottage was viewed as the ideal training environment.[3]

Home and housekeeping were highly valued in the early twentieth century. Through courses in domestic science, young women could be trained in the "most wholesome of all exercise - housework." In home economics, young women were taught the skills of cooking, sewing, and the importance of economy of time and money. In this way, women were encouraged to view home making as a profession. Burton J. Bledstein, in *The Culture of Professionalism,* defines professionalism for the "informed Mid-Victorian" women as a "voluntary...[choice]...to develop...inner potential...special gifts and sensibilities...within the sphere of the home and...charitable

Illustration 6.3: Dining room of the Practice Cottage, c. 1913. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 10/01, Box 1, Folder 2: "Interior of Practice Cottage and HMH."

organization[s]."This professionalism was achieved "during a fairly difficult time consuming process, [when] a person mastered an esoteric but useful body of systematic knowledge, completed theoretical training before entering a practice or apprenticeship, and received a degree or license from a recognized institution." [4]

The actual "esoteric...body of systematic knowledge" used in the study of home economics came from "scientific management" or "Taylorism." Scientific management, a term used to define the measurement of industrial productivity, was coined by Frederick W. Taylor, an American industrial engineer and inventor. Taylor sought to reduce time and energy spent on unnecessary factory workers' tasks. By employing this method of specific measurements and exacting standards all factors of the production process were evaluated to arrive at what was described as the "best method" of production to reduce waste. In this era of rapid industrial and social change, scientific management was incorporated in the educational system that was grooming future generations for the new mechanized world. Curricula were developed teaching only what was necessary, i.e., to "reduce waste" in education and to eliminate unnecessary instruction for men and women. Therefore, educational standards were designed to ensure that "future men and women were destined to perform different roles in society...it was simply inefficient to train them in the same way." Women were fated to be housewives, so were trained accordingly.[5]

The curriculum established at the University of Wisconsin provided young Wisconsin university women with the ideal formula for becoming professional homemakers. Basic home economics courses consisted of a rigorous theoretical science program and a final practical examination completed during the week of keeping house in the Practice Cottage where theoretical concepts were put into practice. As one of the few universities to have acquired a Practice Cottage as an educational tool prior to 1915, the University of Wisconsin Home Economics Department became a model for home

economics programs nationwide but also established a model of the modern twentieth-century home.[6]

Under the strong leadership of Abby L. Marlatt, professor and first director of the University of Wisconsin home economics program, the curriculum incorporated a very "broad and sensible education free from fad," while adhering to a social efficiency philosophy and a practical application of scientific education. The University of Wisconsin home economics curriculum, as a model for home economics studies around the country, established standards and values for the ideal home environment and educational standards for early twentieth century professional women. Marlatt adhered to the philosophy that the care of the home "in every phase is a science" and employed all the modern methods of scientific research to the established course work in home economics. Marlatt had argued as early as 1911 for using a Practice Cottage in connection with the teaching of home economics at the university level and stressed that every approach to housework must be "under constant study" in order to "reduce the labors of the...wife and enhance the protection

Illustration 6.4: Practice Cottage, 1912. Source: University of Wisconsin-Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 9/3, Box 142.

of her health." Incorporating scientific management theories in the domestic science education, Marlatt used the Practice Cottage as a technical tool and an educational instrument to teach scientific management and time efficiency theories in the new discipline of home economics".[7]

The curriculum reflected the intense scientific approach towards the education of woman as professionals both as homemakers and career women. Trained with Marlatt's "esoteric body of knowledge," many graduates from the Home Economics Department would become home economics' university and high school teachers and extension personnel. In addition, graduates from the school used their extensive science background and training to become bacteriologists, dietitians, research chemists, and government employees. Most would eventually become housewives and mothers.[8]

Considered one of the most rigorous college courses on the UW campus at the time, the curriculum included courseware in chemistry, physiology, and bacteriology; linguistic studies in English and a foreign language; and technical topics on foods, textiles, architecture, and household management. University of Wisconsin home economic educators and students were fully immersed in the scientific educational approach to teaching. In her October 1914 Report to

Illustration 6.5: Household Chemistry Laboratory, 1910. This photography was published in the *Home Economics Course Catalog, 1910-11* with the caption: "A thorough laboratory training in Household Chemistry forms a basis for the study of foods and dietetics." Source: University of Wisconsin-Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 2: "Foods and Nutrition."

the President of the University, Charles R. Van Hise, Director Marlatt illustrated the importance of scientific training and of the "rounding out the general education for girls who graduate at a non-technical course" from the University. A retyped, unsigned letter in the report reveals the depth of understanding and acceptance in the early twentieth century that women knew their predetermined role in life and the intense conviction that scientific education was the best way to achieve that position in life.

My Dear Miss Marlatt:

Last spring I took my B.A. degree in political economy at the University of Wisconsin. Immediately afterwards I was married and came here to make my home, and have been here, housekeeping, ever since. While I value very highly the training I received...I have many times found occasion to regret that my courses of study did not contain a single subject in domestic science. Home making is now my principle occupation, and...I feel very far from being able to manage a home as efficiently as I wish to. Perhaps it is my business experience and training which has convinced me that a home should be run on as scientific principles as any business.

Even in my short experience as a married woman, I have had a great deal of opportunity to realize how very much more interesting housekeeping is when it is looked at from a scientific standpoint, and...have anxiously studied whatever books the public library contains. That method is not as satisfactory as it might be, however, and so I have resolved to write to you and ask you if you might give me a little advice as to the best course to pursue in acquiring this knowledge...

I will thank you from the bottom of my heart if you can help me in this, for I do want to manage my home in the best possible manner. Conviction of my present inability to do so has caused me many unhappy hours, but I am hoping very hard that it is not too late to remedy my deficiency.

Yours very sincerely,

This letter supports Marlatt's conviction that coursework in home economics should provide female students with the educational foundation necessary to go into "homes of their own with some degree of assurance of successful management." This scientific ideology is repeatedly illustrated by home economics students. Iris Conway commented that

> ...education for women as well as for men is the preparation for life in its broadest sense; [that]...education is the training to make a living...for a profession but also for the care and management of the home. The home...[being]...the sacred hearth to which the glory of man and nation can ultimately be traced.

Use of a university practice cottage symbolized women's "professional authority" in the home.[9]

Students were quite proud of the experience the practice house provided them. They exclaimed the importance of the practicum in housekeeping in articles published in the *Wisconsin Country Magazine* and other Madison newspapers. The training instilled in the young women the language of time efficiency and incorporated scientific management into their every day lives. Home management as a science and profession was an integral part of their world. For example, home economics student Marie Metz wrote in 1920:

> Yes, it is something of an ordeal, that week of practice at the 'Cottage, and it taxes the ability of the 'Home Ec' to apply here the theories and principles which her earlier courses have developed.[10]

Genevieve Hick, spoke of the value of efficiency in the home:

> ...Efficiency isn't just a 'something'-the fad of the age: it is permanent and its real worth is known to a girl at the cottage. It takes management and efficiency to get work done in the shortest and best way, to have meals planned and ready to serve on the hour without cutting classes.[11]

These young home economists proclaimed the advantages of a

practice cottage apprenticeship. They firmly believed they were guaranteed professional status due to their degree. Final thesis papers, written for partial graduation requirements, expressed the conviction that a degree in home economics was highly valued. They articulated a commitment to a scientific management philosophy and were convinced that their education would not go to waste - especially as a wife and mother.

However strong the initial support for scientific management principles in the training of domestic scientists at the university level its continued practice began a gradual decline. Home economic leaders and students alike were soon aware of the need for more "non-technical work in the food and textile majors" as well as for general education in the study of home economics. In 1911, David Kinley, professor of Economics and dean of Graduate School from the University of Illinois, discussed appropriateness of using scientific management theory within the home economics curriculum. Outlining a course

Illustration 6.6: Household Decoration Laboratory, 1915-16. This photography was published in the *Home Economics Course Catalog, 1915-1916* with the caption: "The history of furniture and the study of fabrics is a basis for laboratory practice in household decoration." Source: University of Wisconsin-Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 202, Folder 7: "Textiles and Fashion."

in household economics, Kinley argued that the family ought to be studied from an economic organizational perspective rather than be treated as a factor of the production process under Taylorism. Kinley believed that when the family is studied scientifically, the "spiritual essence of its relationships" is eclipsed. Kinley noted "the family assumes different forms throughout the world... although we find the spiritual essence of relationship very much the same the world over." Studying the family as an economic unit, he suggested, allows for the examination of its historical, legal, and social economic aspects. Responding to Kinley's family economics approach, Frank Fetter, Cornell University professor of Economics and Distribution, praised Kinley and his "pioneering" work in the study of household economics. Fetter concluded that educators must find more appropriate ways to study family and family life given the "new social conditions" of the urbanized and industrial world of the twentieth century.[12]

At the University of Wisconsin, curriculum changes and subtle narrative alterations in stories told of the Practice Cottage apprenticeship experience reveal the movement away from scientific management ideologies. Although core courseware (English, foreign language, chemistry, physics, bacteriology, food and textile introductory courses) remained the same for new students and sophomores, the addition of new majors from which a junior year student might choose flourished dramatically. In 1913-14 majors expanded to include additional courses in food and nutrition, textiles and clothing, household administration, euthenics, vocational group, and a minor in home economics. By 1919–20, majors in hospital administration and applied bacteriology were created. The course description of new classes junior and seniors could elect reflected the shift towards social studies in the home economics curriculum and a move away from the scientific base from which the home economics program had begun. Bernice Dodge, associate professor of Home Economics at the University of Wisconsin, hired as Practice Cottage

instructor in the academic school year 1922–23, described the history of the Practice Cottage and courseware requirements in 1931:

> [The students] have completed their elementary work; they had had courses in cooking, buying, meal planning and dietetics; ...art and design and house decoration;...textiles and learned about materials and fabrics used as table linens and as draperies; ...in physics classes about the different fuels and their use; in bacteriology, ...the need of sanitation and hygiene. In addition to these technical courses, every girl has taken some courses in English, in languages, in history, in sociology, in art or music, which have deepened her appreciation for beautiful things, and which should make her a more interesting person to know.[13]

Of particular interest in the description is the inclusion of the development of the student as a person - not just the development of skills and technical abilities necessary to efficiently keep house in the role of wife and mother. Dodge's implied philosophy of teaching social concepts in addition to scientific theory is reflected in a 1926, *Wisconsin Country Magazine* article by Hildegarde Becker:

> Home is the place for social training and is aided by association with older people like the house mother of the practice cottage. Mrs. Dodge almost unconsciously helps each girl to be more social and less selfish.[14]

A shift toward social development and home life study contrasts to the earlier scientific efficiency emphasis. Teresa W. McDonough's article in the same magazine fondly spoke of Dodge as "the lovely 'little mother' of the household" and viewed the group in which she shared her practicum in the cottage as "family. [15]

The social studies trend in university and college home economics curriculum gathered momentum around the country. Simultaneously, home economics instructors voiced concern about the curricula shift. In 1929, Hazel Kyrk, home economist from the University of

Chicago, recommended to colleagues that an effort be made to incorporate "the study of economics and social problems of the home" into the curriculum yet cautioned that in doing so might alter "somewhat the character of the whole [home economics]."[16] Other educational scholars, including Helen C. Goodspeed, assistant to home economics director, Board of Education, from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, recognized the need for incorporating social sciences into home economics curricula. Goodspeed addressed this gradual change in educational focus, noting also a shift in gender roles. Goodspeed commented that, "There is no such thing as man's work and woman's work. There is just work and whether or not it is man's work to do or woman's work to do depends upon circumstances and not tradition." Goodspeed's comments addressed not only technological changes occurring within the home but also

Illustration 6.7: The back room of the Practice Cottage, c. 1914. The Cottage was sparsely furnished in its early years and students made many of the decorations themselves. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 9/3, Box 142: "Practice Cottage," negative# x25-758.

that the scientific management philosophy had failed in its usefulness in teaching and in practice.[17]

The strongest renunciation of scientific management principles as the foundation for home economic curriculum came from Hildegarde Kneeland, home economist from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture, in 1928. Kneeland, addressing the limitations of scientific management in household work, asserted that, "Critics of the modern home are fond of saying that man works in the twentieth century while his wife keeps house in the sixteenth." Kneeland emphasized that tasks of various skill levels within a small home with one worker cannot possibly be compared to the production capabilities of an industrial plant with a large work force which specialized "on one or two standardized products." Kneeland concluded that "There is no cure, in fact, for the inefficiency of household production." Nor need there be such a cure.[18]

In the same year as Kneeland's article, in 1928, a young home economist from the University of Wisconsin, Waida Gerhardt, surveyed eighty to ninety home economic students concerning their attitudes toward scientific management in the study of home and family. During a "free-for-all debate" examining the pros and cons of efficiency in the household, Gerhardt presented her fellow students with this question: "If efficiency principles have met with even moderate success in their application to the management of manufacturing plants, do they not hold promise of increased success and happiness and profit in the home?" More importantly, Gerhardt asked the students: "Do we [home economics students] want efficiency methods introduced into the home?" Gerhardt's survey respondents answered with a resounding "No." The students articulated that in an ever growing "machine world" the "humanistic element must be preserved." They shared an understanding that homemaking is made more interesting by the variety, versatility, and "unexpectedness" of the daily chores and tasks of keeping house.[19]

Not until the spring of 1970 was the UW home economics curriculum altered to remove the mandatory sixteen-day residence course. For fifty-eight years, however, hundreds if not literally thousands of young home economics students were required to "practice" homemaking, even as the educational trend shifted from scientific management to social sciences. However rational scientific management ideologies seemed to the first home economists in their efforts to train women for marriage and the "separate sphere" of household work, technological advances, cultural, and social pressures eventually rendered the custom of practicing homemaking obsolete. And while scientific management principles were initially embraced by home economics founders to enhance women's lives, these very principles bound and restricted women to the home. Scientific management, a male-oriented production and efficiency philosophy made rigid the ideology that women's work is only in the home. The struggle to unshackle Frederick Taylor's scientific management principles from the domain of home and family resulted in an enduring home economics identity crisis – a continuing struggle on many universities and college campuses today.

Notes

1. "Home-Ec's Dream Come True," *Wisconsin Alumnus*,1941, 112-113; Quotation from Marshall, William H., associate dean and director of Home Economics letter to Dale Hansman, managing director of the Wisconsin Utilities Association, 6, March, 1970; Jim Feldman, *The Buildings of the University of Wisconsin* (Madison, WI: The University Archives,1997), pp. 95, 244.

2. Hazel Kyrk, "The Place of the Economics and Social Studies in the Home Economics Curriculum," *Journal of Home Economics*, July 1929, pp. 488-494.

3. Lake Placid Conference on Home Economics, *Lake Placid Conference on Home Economics*, (Lake Placid, N.Y., 1899–1908); Quotation from "Girls Should Be Trained in Art of Homemaking," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, 1 December, 1913; Cooley, Winchell, Spohr, and Marshall, "Equipment for Teaching Home Economics," in *Teaching Home Economics*, 1919, pp. 374-416.

4. First quotation from Mrs. Newell Dwight Hillis, "Some Failures of American Women," *The Outlook,* 16 July 1910, p. 572. Second quotation from Burton J. Bledstein, *The Culture of Professionalism: The Middle Class and the Development of Higher Education in America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1978), pp. 86-87, 118.

5. Christine Frederick, *The New Housekeeping: Efficiency Studies in Home Management* (New York: Doubleday, 1919); Quotations from Herbert M. *Struggle for the American Curriculum* 1893–1958, (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), p. 99.

6. Merle Curti and Vernon Carstensen, *The University of Wisconsin: A History 1848 to 1925* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1949).

7. First quotation from W.H. Glover, *Farm and College: The College of Agriculture of the University of Wisconsin A History*, (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1952), p. 252; Marlatt's quotations from Abby L. Marlatt, "Helps [sic] For Farm Women," *The Wisconsin Farmer*, 8 March, 1917, 16 (308).

8. Annegret S. Ogden, *The Great American Housewife: From Helpmate to Wage Earner, 1776–1986,* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1986).

9. Marlatt's quotations from Abby L. Marlatt, *The Report of the Department of Home Economics for the Years 1909–1914: Biennial Report to the President.* Madison, Wisconsin. 1914, Series 10/1/3, Box 1, Folder: "1904–1917 General Records." Quotation from Conway, Iris Conway, "The Value of Training in Home Economics," *Wisconsin Country Magazine,* February 1914, p. 8.

10. Marie Metz, "Home Economics. The Apprenticeship at the Cottage: The Acid Test," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, June 1920, pp. 396, 414, 416.

11. Genevieve Hicks, "Practice Makes Perfect: Impressions of Life at the Practice Cottage," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, December, 1923.

12. Quotation from Jean Krueger, "A Comparative Study of Home Economics Courses in Colleges," *Journal of Home Economics* (June, 1920): 249-252; Kinley quotations from David Kinley, "Aspects of Economics of Importance in Household Science," *Journal of Home Economics* (June, 1911): 253-261; Response from Frank A. Fetter, *Journal of Home Economics* (June, 1911): 257.

13. Bernice Dodge, "Tea for Two?: Theories Are Put to a Practical Test in the Home Economics Cottage," *Wisconsin Alumni Magazine,* January, 1931.

14. Hildegard Becker, "The Home Ec Practice Cottage: An Ideal Place for Home Training," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, April, 1926, pp. 213-228.

15. Teresa W. McDonough, "Cottage Life is Queer: How a Week Goes By At The Cottage," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, February, 1925, p. 137.

16. Hazel Kyrk, "The Place of the Economic and Social Studies in the Home Economics Curriculum," *Journal of Home Economics* (July, 1929): pp. 488-494.

17. Helen C. Goodspeed, "The Trend of Home Economics is Sociological," *The Home Economist* (April, 1928): pp. 100, 108.

18. Hildegarde Kneeland, "Limitations of Scientific Management in Household Work," *Journal of Home Economics* (May, 1928): pp. 311-314.

19. Waida Gerhard, "Open Forum: The Pros and Cons of Efficiency in the Household," *Journal of Home Economics* (May, 1928): pp. 337-339.

Illustration 7.1: Members of the School's student organizations planning High School Hospitality Day, a program that made high school students aware of the training and career possibilities in home economics, 1951. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/4, Box 202, Folder 3: "Displays and Exhibits-HS Hospitality Day."

7

Student Organizations within Home Economics

By Susan R. King

It was almost too difficult to sit quietly and wait for their turn to walk across the stage and receive their diplomas that June morning in 1923. After all, one of the graduates, Miss Marjorie Chase, was going to be married that same afternoon. The garden of the beautiful Victorian home on Kendall Avenue in Madison, Wisconsin was decorated and everything stood waiting in perfection. The glowing, emotional bride tried to catch the eyes of each of her six graduating bridesmaids who were scattered throughout the auditorium. These young ladies had become very close over the past three years as sisters in the Gamma Alpha Epsilon Sorority and the tearful reality of their impending separation was inextricably meshed with the joy of the day. Although life was rushing forward, they were sure that their friendship was so important to each of them that it would be nurtured and would last for the rest of their lives.[1]

Within a university environment like-minded people bond together to form meaningful and lasting relationships as members of student organizations. Marjorie Chase's wedding is a symbol of what these organizations can mean to the individuals involved. Although membership in succeeding clubs may not have been as romantic as being a member of Gamma Alpha Epsilon, we can trace, through the decades, how members who have worked together for a common purpose, have gained a sense of belonging, and have made lasting friendships.

In 1921, seven young women beginning their sophomore year in the Home Economics Department at the University of Wisconsin–Madison shared a common interest in the breadth and future of home economics as a discipline and as a career.

At this time the Home Economics Department had two student organizations, neither of which fulfilled the ideals of the seven women. The Euthenics Club started on the campus in 1909[2] and invited anyone in home economics to become members. Omicron Nu began in 1915[3]; it selected only students of high scholastic achievement, limited to those in the top ten percent of the junior class and the top twenty percent of the senior class.[4] The seven sophomores felt an urgent need to start a professional organization with their interests in mind and in which a high degree of scholarship could be upheld, but not so high that it would be unattainable for many students.

The seven women presented their idea for a new professional organization to the director of the Home Economics Department, Abby Marlatt, and also to various deans on the campus. They were given permission to become a national professional sorority.[5] Mrs. Ira Thompson, the mother of Louise Thompson, one of the young women involved, became the person most responsible for the Gamma Alpha Epsilon sorority becoming a reality. She opened her home for meetings, wrote the constitution and by-laws, and in the process became a mother to each of the young women.[6]

Illustration 7.2: Mrs. Ira Thompson, 1921. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/2, Box 1.

Assistant Professor May Cowles, a faculty member in the department of Home Economics, designed the sorority's pin as a circle. The circle symbolized the continuous and unbroken growth of the future of Home Economics as well as the home and the hearth fire; the Greek letters G.A.E. stood for the "Best Type of Woman." Pastel rain-

bow colors were chosen to represent virtues that would be upheld by the members. Honor, accuracy, fidelity, hope, equality, industry, and love were the virtues. White, the combination of all the colors, was the symbol of the ultimate virtue: purity.[7] Their motto, "To be, rather than to seem," spoke to the determination of these young women to bind together in friendship and to create an organization that would promote a more congenial student home life among the home economic students, to create a high degree of womanliness and moral character, and to demonstrate a true democracy.[8]

Illustration 7.3: Gamma Alpha Epsilon Sorority Pin, 1921. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/2, Box 1.

Four years later in 1925, the Nu Chapter of Phi Upsilon Omicron (Phi U) was established on the UW–Madison campus and Gamma Alpha Epsilon dissolved as its members joined Phi U.[9] Kathleen McCarthy, the first president of Nu Chapter, wrote about the installation stating,

> Two years of hopeful waiting, much correspondence and work compiling averages and Gamma Alpha Epsilon data, ended on May the twenty-fifth, nineteen hundred and

Illustration 7.4: Members of Gamma Alpha Epsilon Sorority, 1925. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/40.

> twenty-five. At that time our local sorority of Gamma Alpha Epsilon became Nu Chapter of the National Professional Home Economics fraternity of Phi Upsilon Omicron...Our affiliation with the National Professional Home Economics fraternity gave Wisconsin girls another opportunity to help do bigger and better things in the ever growing field of Home Economics.[10]

During the early years of Phi U, part of the ritual for regular meetings reinforced the value of lasting friendship when the president would state, "We, of Phi Upsilon Omicron, have entered into a sacred friendship. Let us joy [sic] in the strength of that friendship. Let us guard and cherish it above all else, remembering that a true friend is a gift of God."[11] A Phi U song of the same period carried similar sentiments:

> Who are true blue Phi U's?
> Pals we will never lose.
> Phi U bonds grow ever more dear,
> Phi U friends will ever be near.
> True we will always be.
> Do what we can to see
> You where you want to be,
> Just for you, dear old Phi U.[12]

The second home economics student organization at the UW–Madison was the Euthenics Club; "Euthenics" comes from the Greek word "eutheno" meaning better living or "better environment for the human race."[13] The goals of the club were to study the problems within home economics, create a social life among students, and "help its members to be better women, better citizens, and better mothers."[14] Another purpose, like that of Phi U, was to promote friendship among home economics students. Not all home economics student organizations were honor based. The Euthenics Club, for example, was open to all home economics students and had only one requirement: that a student must attend two or three meetings at the

beginning of the semester.[15] *The Wisconsin Country Magazine* from 1915 described the relationships enjoyed by students who belonged to the Euthenics Club, "Since the class-room friendship is often strengthened by meeting and mixing socially, the feelings and relationship[s] between the girls are made stronger, closer ties are not only developed between Home Economics' students, but also between students and faculty."[16]

The Euthenics Club required that all initiates compose an original home economics song and at the time of their initiation they had to come prepared to sing, speak, or play their composition. One of the songs written in 1924 was an indication of the spirit and love that the young women carried for their chosen discipline:

Tune: *You Can't Have Any Lovin' Where There Ain't Any Love*

You can take Manual Arts and learn how to draw,
You may be a Lawyer and lay down the law,
You may be an Engineer and great rivers to span,
With bridges that aid the transportation of man:
You can take L and S and altho' it's a bore,
And even make Phi Bete if you have brains galore:
You can take Education—learn how to teach,
But you can't be a Home Ec unless you're a peach.[17]

The third organization for home economics students at the

Illustration 7.5: Members of Euthenics Club, 1934. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/2, Box 201, Folder 3: "Home Economics Groups-Student Orgs."

University of Wisconsin starting in 1915 was the Eta Chapter of Omicron Nu, a national honorary fraternity. Omicron is the first letter of the Greek word, "oikos" which means a house. Nu is the first letter of the Greek word, "nemein" which means to manage. The literal translation of Omicron Nu is therefore: to manage a house, but the broad interpretation "takes into consideration all effective living in the home and the community."[18] The official badge of the club was a key made with the two Greek letters Omicron and Nu; the letters signified membership in an organization that maintained high honor standards. The purpose of Omicron Nu was to promote research, scholarship, and leadership for the well being of individuals and families throughout the world; the ideal was to "develop effective leadership in home economics in each chapter and [in] each member of the society."[19] Holding to these high standards, Omicron Nu had, over the years, presented a cup to the freshman girl with the highest scholastic achievement in home economics.[20] Today, the cup is housed in the Steenbock Archives on the UW–Madison campus. Omicron Nu also co-sponsored three international scholarship students and a research fellowship with the American Home Economics Association as a national project in 1955.[21]

Through the decades, the professional projects that were carried out by the home economics student organizations played a significant role in promoting home economics as a profession and helping

Illustration 7.6: Members of Omicron Nu, national honors organization, 1924. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Iconography Collection, Series 14/2, Box 201, Folder 3: "Home Economics Groups-Student Orgs."

members to become effective leaders, as well as developing friendships among the students involved. The professional projects served to build students' skills and talents where they could be utilized after graduation in the business world, in research labs, and in the communities where they would live.

Two very early professional projects were recorded for the Eta Chapter of Omicron Nu. The first documentation of Omicron Nu's work was "under the direction and in cooperation with the Women's War Work Committee and Student Council of Defense"[22] during World War I. The *Omicron Nu Directory* explained the significance of the effort:

> Every member has been busy doing her 'bit', and the Seniors go forth with a deep realization of the responsibilty [sic] which is theirs for the summer and next year, in fact for all time to come. Woman's day is at hand and her future will be determined by how she meets and handles the situation. Eta Chapter pledges her services for the greatest advancement of womankind.[23]

The second recorded professional project explained how the influenza epidemic on the UW–Madison campus in 1918 brought the members of Omicron Nu out in full force to help a Dr. Philips with the emergency. The young women cared for the diet of all women students on the UW–Madison campus who had contracted the disease, thereby aiding them in their recovery.[24]

Omicron Nu set up two scholarship funds during the years 1919 through 1921. The first scholarship became available when the membership of the Eta Chapter reached one hundred and it was awarded to a member "whose work...[was] of high standard, and whose ideals and achievements seem[ed] to give good promise as to her future."[25] The second scholarship called the "Dorothy Roberts Memorial Fund" was set up in honor of Dorothy Roberts, an instructor who died at the UW–Madison infirmary on December

12, 1921 as a result of burns received while demonstrating alcohol as a fuel in her teaching laboratory.[26]

The Euthenics Club's early professional projects always combined the study of the problems and matters relating to home economics students with the development of students' social lives. One of the first interests of the club was welfare work. To demonstrate this interest, the club members made baby clothes for the local settlement house and did relief work with the Associated Charities. In 1920, money raised in a food sale on campus contributed to Wisconsin's share in the fund to establish a chair in Home Economics at the Constantinople College for Women.[27] Other very early activities were to welcome incoming freshmen with a matinee dance, to host an Ellen Richards' Day program, and to honor faculty at an end of the year picnic in June each year. An important contribution of the Euthenics Club that combined work and socializing was to furnish the home economics cottage after it was added to the school. As one club member recollected, "While the girls sewed curtains or embroidered linens, some one of the society reviewed a new book, read some article from the *Journal of Home Economics,* or led in the discussion of some present day problems."[28]

The Great Depression of the 1930s saw the Omicron Nu women reacting to the state of the nation's economy. Since national dues were lowered in February 1933, the question was asked whether to hold a national conclave that year and the shortage of funds in the local treasury prohibited Eta Chapter from providing a scholarship for the 1934-35 school year.[29] In December of that school year, the national editor of Omicron Nu asked each chapter to select a person who the members thought was their most outstanding homemaker. After discussing the letter, "it was the consensus that it is beneath the dignity of Omicron Nu to sponsor such 'petty' contests!"[30] The response attested to the closeness of the women within the organization and their desire to promote sisterhood instead of competition.

The years 1929 through the 1950s saw a large portion of the United States population moving to the cities. For this and other reasons there was a renewed interest in consumer issues that prompted Phi U to focus on a consumer education theme. The title of its professional project for the 1938–1939 school year was "Better Buying Skills." Dr. May Cowles, continuing on as the Phi U advisor, told members that they would be "expected to take the responsibility in dealing with the problems of the consumer after they [were]...out of school [and to] learn to be better spenders, in this way...[they could] start now to be leaders in organizations of the consumer." Consequently, Phi U put together a bibliography containing material that could be of help to consumers as well as setting up an exhibit of consumer resources.[31]

The World War II era was a time of meaningful participation in professional projects for the students within the home economics organizations. On December 7, 1941, as the Euthenics Club women were busily preparing for their annual Christmas Fair that was to be held the next day, they learned that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor.[32] The declaration of World War II was the catalyst that launched the Club into a number of projects aimed at making others aware of what they could do to help their country. The "Share-the-Meat Victory Program" was a plan devised to show other home economic student clubs ways to limit individual meat consumption to 2 1/2 pounds per person per week. There were three ways to do this: by having a meatless meal or day, by combining meat with other foods to stretch the flavor, and by using other foods in place of meat such as eggs, cheese, beans, and nuts. The students felt that they, "as home economic students, [had] the opportunity to be the leaders in bringing Share-the-Meat information to other students."[33] At one of their monthly meetings, the Euthenics women also presented a "Victory Skit" that was later distributed to other home economics clubs throughout the country. An introduction to the skit, intended to explain the project and help other clubs perform it,

stated, "This skit...dealt with food buying problems in general—and it was given in an impromptu fashion. The actresses 'brought down the house' and yet got educational material 'across'."[34]

At the same time, Dr. May Cowles, who was also an Omicron Nu advisor, discussed with the women of the Eta Chapter their responsibility to:

> ...provide a means for continuance of study to foreign students...[as being] more important than ever before. In the expectation that the need of such students may be greater as the war proceeds, it is planned to offer two such fellowships for 1944–45, if there is a demand for them.[35]

In addition, a loan fund was available that year for Omicron Nu student members who needed loans with the idea that they could be "paid back with no interest charged."[36] This was an indication of how deeply members cared about each other's well being.

In 1948, the United States experienced a shortage of home economists even though many were trained in the discipline. The director of UW–Madison Home Economics at the time, Frances Zuill, gave her reasoning as to why the shortage was occurring.

> More [young women] are getting married and new kinds of jobs are opening up faster than the demand for women to fill them can be met. One result of this steadily widening gap between supply and demand, for example, is the fact that industry is tending to hire home economists away from jobs in teaching and dietetics.[37]

A student initiated idea caused the three home economics organizations, Phi Upsilon Omicron, Euthenics, and Omicron Nu, to work together to host area high school students at an open house that would help to make them aware of the "training and the possibilities for careers in that field." The project, called "High School Days" was the first time that such a venture had been put into action and the "home economics faculty...[was] pleased as punch that the

idea was not 'handed down from above' but came from the girls' own initiative."[38] The first High School Day was held May 1, 1948 in the Home Economics building on the Madison campus and senior girls in high schools within a seventy-mile radius of Madison were invited; more than three hundred attended. Events included a skit showing opportunities in home economics, a tour of Elizabeth Waters Hall (a women's dormitory), a luncheon and style show, tours of the Home Economics building and nursery school, and an inspection of the seventeen exhibits showing phases of the home economics field; refreshments, enjoyed by everyone, topped off the day.[39] The project was so successful that it was an annual event for many years with the numbers in attendance increasing every year.

During the 1950s two additional professional projects for Omicron Nu also focused on making high school girls aware of the opportunities available to them if they were to choose a career in

Illustration 7.7: Hospitality Day, 1960. Home economics students Laureen Seefeldt, Geraldine Olson, Dorothy Tetzlaff, and Agnes Kraemer preparing for Hospitality Day, previously called High School Days, to be held March 12, 1960. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Accession no. 2003/40.

Home Economics. The projects included the formation of a bulletin board that was loaned to schools in Madison and neighboring towns on which careers in Home Economics were described; information sheets listing available printed materials on Home Economic careers were also put together. The sheets were mailed to the guidance directors of many Wisconsin high schools.[40]

Phi Upsilon Omicron was involved in three noteworthy projects in 1955. The first involved twenty-two Phi U women in the Danforth Fellowship, a month long, summer, intensive leadership training program. The first two weeks were spent in St. Louis, Missouri and the final two weeks followed at the American Youth Foundation Camp Miniwanca in Michigan. The purpose of the Fellowship was to: "help college Home Economics students to enlarge their horizons, to broaden their contacts, to help them make decisions, and to assist them in finding their places of largest service."[41] The second exemplary project saw eight Phi U's as members of the International Farm Youth Exchange Program, "living and working with farm families in Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and the Pacific in order to promote better world understanding."[42] A third project saw members of Phi U producing and participating in a series of radio programs in cooperation with Aline Hazard's daily Homemaker's Program and the UW–Madison's radio station WHA. One broadcast in particular, "Desserts and Beverages," focused on controlling one's weight with simple nutritional rules and a good dose of willpower. As one of the young speakers admonished, "There isn't anything so terribly wrong with a medium sized piece of cake, angel, sponge or pound, but if you are going to add 1/2 cup or so of rich, gooey icing you aren't playing fair."[43] According to the 1956 vice-president's report, "These shows seem to have been quite successful and the girls have appeared to benefit from and enjoy them."[44]

A yearly project sponsored by Phi Upsilon Omicron and Omicron Nu was an open house for home economic students called "What's New in Home Ec?" These events focused on research and

new developments in the various fields of home economics; its purpose was to acquaint students with the many opportunities within the field. One of the programs had an interesting variety of talks based on research conducted in the school. The titles included: "Yeast as a Food," "Availability to Human Subjects of Pure Riboflavin Ingested with Live Yeast," "Study of Expenditure Patterns and Dietary Practices of 42 Families Receiving Public Assistance," "Research in Farm Housing," "Dietary Practices of Rural School Children in Two Wisconsin Counties," "Demonstration: Effect of Protein Content of Diet on Vitamin Requirements," "Exhibit on Potato Darkening which included, Testing on Folic Acids in Potatoes and Fat Stability," and "Consumer Acceptance of Dried Whole Milk as a Beverage." There were also exhibits on interior decorating and weaving and costume design; tours of the nursery school were also given as part of the open house. Ushers for the event were "girls from Miss Juaire's clothing class who...model[ed] costumes...[of] their own creations."[45]

The 1960s began for Phi Upsilon Omicron with a professional project that sought to help prepare mentally handicapped patients of the Bethesda Lutheran Home in Watertown, Wisconsin to reenter

Illustration 7.8: Members of Phi Upsilon Omicron, 1960. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/2, Box 201, Folder 3: "Home Economics Groups-Student Orgs."

the working world. Phi U sisters planned various designs on towels for the patients to sew as a money making endeavor. The plan benefited both the patients and the fraternity women, as everyone became friends.[46]

Phi U ended the 1960s with the "Wright Street Project" that involved working with teen girls, aged 13 to 16 years, from the Wright Street Community Center. The center, near Truax Field, served the Madison Housing Authority Project by providing young people from a nearby housing development with programs to help them better their lives.[47] An article written for publication in the *Ag-Home Ec. Student* magazine described the endeavor:

> Take an old electric sewing machine that doesn't sew and a stove with one setting 'too hot', and add seven teenage girls who would rather play pool and dance the Afro-Boogaloo to Marvin Gay's rendition of 'I Heard It Through the Grape-Vine' than [sic] learn to cook and sew, and you've got a problem. Especially if you were the one who volunteered to teach them how to bake cookies or how to sew a pair of bell bottoms.[48]

The project drew the Phi U women closer together as friends and as a fraternity as evidenced by the words of one of the members,

> We've learned a lot about the backgrounds, problems, [and] frustrations...of those less fortunate than us. The Phi U's that go out there together once a week get to know each other better.[49]

Though projects remained a focal point of these organizations through the 1960s some were beginning to reevaluate the role of home economic honor societies on the university campus. For example, at the twenty-seventh Omicron Nu conclave held on August 29 and 30, 1969 in Fort Collins, Colorado, a group of panelists posed the poignant questions:

> Is Home Economics too narrow? Is the role of the Honor Society to develop thirst for knowledge that is

> never really quenched? Are we a society to recognize scholarship only or should we be interpreters? [The] consensus was that Omicron Nu be more than just a society to recognize scholarship—[it] should promote community involvement, social involvement, [and] marshall resources toward some project.[50]

A decision was made that a large part of the purpose of the organization was to recognize that it was an arena that should cultivate friendships and maintain social involvement between its members. The same thoughts were echoed at the 1973 conclave when Dr. Kathryn T. Schoen of Ohio State University stated, "It is not enough for the intellectual to nurture scholarship or intellectualism remote from life, uncommitted or uninvolved. Leadership involves people and the integration of learning and life must be a goal constantly pursued."[51]

As a result of the conclaves bringing about an increased awareness of the importance of cultivating friendships, Omicron Nu became involved in a number of social and fundraising projects in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Lecture notes for large classes, T-shirts, tote bags, and stationery were sold to students[52] and a get-together called a "Cheese Crunch" was held to honor students with scholastic achievement who were prospective members of Omicron Nu. Hot mulled punch, cheese, and home-baked goods were served to everyone attending the "Cheese Crunch" and "members and guests alike gained a better understanding of...the honor society."[53]

Phi U was also actively involved in professional projects during the 1970s and 1980s. In 1970–71, the Salvation Army Day Care Center benefited from the Phi U women's sewing skills when they received hand puppets and beanbags for the children to play with and new painting smocks and dress-up clothes for the children to wear. The young women also got together on Saturday mornings to paint room dividers as well as to accomplish other tasks to help the center.[54] Because many past projects had focused on Madison's youth Phi U

decided in 1970–71, to make St. Patrick's Day greeting cards for the three area nursing homes so that residents would have a cheery greeting on their food trays; Madison Convalescent Center, McCarthy Nursing Home, and Sunny Knoll Nursing Home all received the cards.[55]

The "Big Sisters" project held friendship as one of its main goals during the 1980s. Taking the role of "big sisters," Phi U's helped incoming freshmen become acquainted with their new collegiate life by giving tours of the campus and holding a "tea" during registration week. Similar to this idea was the "mentor" program. Initiated in 1989, all incoming students at the UW–Madison, that included both freshmen and transfer students, were assigned to upperclassmen in their respective majors to act as their mentors during their first year.[56] The "mentors" were all Phi U members who had taken training and who had demonstrated an ability to "advise others responsibly."[57]

Not all student organization projects however, were altruistic. For example in 1982, Charles Kleibacker, a renowned New York fashion designer, was the guest attraction for a co-sponsored fashion design show. Omicron Nu and the Retailing Club hosted Kleibacker's tour and exhibition of his evening wear collection that was held in the Great Hall in Memorial Union at the UW–Madison at 8:00 P.M., February 2. Kleibacker began his career in journalism as a fashion copy-writer but later switched to retailing and design. Before opening his own business, he

Illustration 7.9: Charles Kleibacker on stage with model, 1982. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/1, Box 2.

worked for the House of Lanvin in Paris as well as designing in Italy and New York.

During his visit to Madison, Kleibacker explained his reason-ing behind teaching and touring,

> [They] bring in the revenue for me to continue the work I truly love. Most famous name designers haven't made their money on their couture line, but by putting their names on perfume, bed sheets or chocolates. I teach instead.[58]

It was quite a feather in the caps of the two organizations to be able to bring such a famous person to campus. The effort enabled many students to experience what they might never have had the opportunity to do, both socially and educationally.

Of the three home economic student organizations discussed, only Phi Upsilon Omicron has an active chapter on the UW–Madison campus to date. The Euthenics Club continued into the 1950s under a new name, the Home Economics Club, reflecting the decision in January 1926 to become affiliated with the American Home Economics Association (AHEA), a national professional organization. The Home Economics Club underwent another name change in the 1960s when it became the Wisconsin Home Economics Association.[59] The organization, now called the Wisconsin Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, has been revised over the years and the current faculty advisor is Professor Wendy Way. The last year that Omicron Nu was registered with the Student Organization Office on the Madison campus was 1989–1990 and although no information was found to explain its demise, it was probably due to an increase in other student activities and an ensuing lack of interest and time.

Currently, Phi Omicron Upsilon is thriving under the advisorship of Dr. Karen Goebel, professor in the Department of Consumer Sciences. Some of the recent professional projects of the fraternity include: devoting an evening to playing basketball or other types of games with children at the Salvation Army; working with

the Ronald McDonald House to prepare a meal once a month for the people staying there; babysitting children at Eagle Heights, the married student housing complex at the UW–Madison; and tutoring and mentoring Madison area teen boys and girls after school in what is called "Project Boot Strap."[60] Projects that Phi U was involved in for the 2002–2003 school year include: decorating children's rooms at the University of Wisconsin Children's Hospital; selling pizzas as a fundraiser for Phi U; and setting up food boxes at two sites in the School of Human Ecology in order to collect donations that the Phi U women distributed to food pantries in the Madison, Wisconsin area.[61]

In comparing the membership of Phi Upsilon Omicron today with the memberships of the student organizations of past decades in home economics at the UW-Madison, one can see that there are fewer students involved. There are now many majors and concentrations within the School of Human Ecology and students have many different specialized organizations to choose from unlike the days when all of the students were committed to home economics. Today, the organizations focus more on professional development and put less emphasis on social activities that specifically promote "friendship," as had been the case in the past. As students have taken on more commitments and more demands, they are finding it increasingly difficult to give the time needed to develop intimate friendships. Consequently, the organizations exist in a different form today because the world is different.[62]

So, what are the advantages of joining a student organization today? Why should an overly committed person join? Are these organizations still valuable and can they still add, albeit in a different way, to the value of students' lives? These are questions that need asking. A response is found in part, in Dr. Dena Cederquist's keynote address at the 1971 Omicron Nu conclave; Cederquist, a professor of nutrition in the College of Human Ecology at Michigan State University, talked of Omicron Nu's earlier days:

> It was possible for one to know and be known by all members of the academic community. A degree of intimacy existed which is foreign to most campuses today—we are now "big business." Individuals who were chosen for membership in an honor society could undoubtedly be evaluated by both faculty and student members in a manner not possible today. Perhaps all who were chosen for membership lived up to the words spoken at the initiation ceremony: "By inviting you to join us we have conferred upon you an honor and an obligation." Because of the size and complexity of our universities today, we may not be able to evaluate the worthiness of prospective members. Perhaps our method of membership selection today merits re-evaluation. But going back to the original initiation ceremony, what does this really mean and does it have anything to say to us today? In my opinion it does...the honorable person is a 'high-minded character. He believes that the individual is the center of political, social, and economic gravity...he acknowledges all members of the human race equal [and] he is his brother's keeper. Honesty and charity are his way of life and he lends stability to the group with which he associates.[63]

The answer, I believe, is that it is still very worthwhile to join a student organization today. As human beings we will always need to feel connected to others who are like-minded in values, education, and career goals; we still need the support and strength that type of relationship supplies. But even though the focus today is more on professionalizing than on socializing and time is more limited, it is still very beneficial to students as their relationship together as a "club" creates an environment where they can learn and grow through

the involvement in various activities. By consciously choosing to commit time to membership in a student organization, the rewards that are gained far outweigh the effort it takes to become a contributing member.

Notes

1. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/2, Box 1, Phi Upsilon Omicron Scrapbook.

2. Leone Heuer, "Euthenics History Related by Manning," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, November 1927, p. 14.

3. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/2, Box 1, Arlene Henke, "Omicron Nu—Forty Years of Honoring Home Ec Leaders," clipping from *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, April 1955, p. 4.

4. I am grateful to Prof. Karen Goebel for sharing this information and the material she has collected on the history of home economics organizations at the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

5. Goebel.

6. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/2, Box 1, Phi Upsilon Omicron Scrapbook.

7. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/2, Box 1, Phi Upsilon Omicron Scrapbook.

8. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 99/52, Box 2.

9. Goebel.

10. Goebel.

11. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/2, Box 1, Phi Upsilon Omicron Scrapbook.

12. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/2, Box 1, M. Streckenbach Scrapbook.

13. "Euthenics Club," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, October 1915, pp. 451-452.

14. Heuer, "Euthenics History," p. 14.

15. Heuer, "Euthenics History," p. 14.

16. "Euthenics Club," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, October 1915, pp. 451-452.

17. Eleanor Southcott, "Home Ec Songs," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, April 1924, p. 216.

18. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/1, Box 2, Folder: "Eta Chapter/Guidelines and Business."

19. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/1, Box 2, Folder: "Eta Chapter/Guidelines and Business."

20. *The Badger* [yearbook] (1949).

21. Henke, "Omicron Nu—Forty Years," p. 4.

22. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/1, Box 1, "Omicron Nu Directory for 1917-1918," p. 45.

23. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/1, Box 1, "Omicron Nu Directory for 1917-1918," p. 45.

24. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/1, Box 2, "Brief History of Home Economics Department and Eta Chapter of Omicron Nu-Presented April 2, 1963, at Initiation," Folder: "Eta Chapter/Guidelines and Business."

25. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/1, Box 1, "Omicron Nu Directory for Year 1919–1920," p. 43.

26. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/1, Box 2, "Brief History of Home Economics Department and Eta Chapter of Omicron Nu-Presented April 2, 1963, at Initiation," Folder: "Eta Chapter/Guidelines and Business."

27. "Euthenics Club Work," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, October 1920, p. 16.

28. Heuer, "Euthenics History," p. 14.

29. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/2, Box 2, "Brief History of Home Economics Department and Eta Chapter of Omicron Nu-Presented April 2, 1963, at Initiation," Folder: "Eta Chapter/Guidelines and Business."

30. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/2, Box 2, "Brief History of Home Economics Department and Eta Chapter of Omicron Nu-Presented April 2, 1963, at Initiation," Folder: "Eta Chapter/Guidelines and Business."

31. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/2, Box 1, Newspaper clipping, paper unknown, date unknown.

32. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/3, Box 2, Euthenics Scrapbook.

33. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/3, Box 2, Euthenics Scrapbook.

34. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/3, Box 2, Euthenics Scrapbook.

35. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 99/52, Box 2, May L. Cowles, "What Do We Do With Your Dues?"

36. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 99/52, Box 2, May L. Cowles, "What Do We Do With Your Dues?"

37. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/4/4, Box 1, Folder: "Clippings," "U.W. Co-Eds Plan Own Open House to Get More into Home Economics," newspaper unknown, April 19, 1948.

38. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/4/4, Box 1, Folder: "Clippings," "U.W. Co-Eds Plan Own Open House to Get More into Home Economics," newspaper unknown, April 19, 1948.

39. "New May Venture Home Ec Organizations Will Hold Open House For High School Girls," *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, April 1948, pp.12-13.

40. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/2, Box 1, Folder: "Professional Projects," Martha Bubeck Schmidt, "Recruitment—A Challenge!" typescript, 1955.

41. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/2, Box 1, Sarah Tabb, "Danforth Fellowship, 1955," *The Candle*, Fall 1955, p. 12.

42. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/2, Box 1, "Phi U IFYE's Abroad," *The Candle*, Fall 1955, p. 2.

43. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/84.

44. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/84.

45. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 99/52, Box 2, "Omicron Nu and Phi Upsilon Omicron Present 'What's Cookin' in Home Ec!'" (program for the event), April 22, no year given. I could not find a year for these open houses but from the style of programs they seem to have occurred in the 1950s and possibly in the very early 1960s.

46. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/84.

47. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/84, "Phi U Teaches Teen Girls How To Sew, Cook," article was to be published in *Ag-Home Ec. Student* magazine.

48. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/84, "Phi U Teaches Teen Girls How To Sew, Cook," article was to be published in *Ag-Home Ec. Student* magazine, typescript.

49. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/84.

50. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 99/52, Box 2, Folder: "Conclave—1969, Minutes of the Twenty-Seventh Conclave of Omicron Nu."

51. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 99/52, Box 2, Folder: "Conclave—1973, Conclave 73 Special Edition," *Omicron Nu Newsletter*, p. 2.

52. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/1, Box 2, Folder: "Omicron Nu Fundraising Activities."

53. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/1, Box 2, Folder: "Eta Chapter/Guidelines and Business, *Omicron Nu Eta Chapter Newsletter*," March 1978.

54. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/84, The patterns for the "Phi-U Phrog" and "Puffy the Phi-U Puppet" are available. The day care center had other needs met by the Phi U women, these included: making puzzles, a doll house and furniture, small, manipulative games, and acquiring a new rug for the story center and lumber scraps and nails for a carpenter bench.

55. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/1, Box 2, Folder: "Professional Projects."

56. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/1, Box 2, Folder: "Professional Projects."

57. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/5/1, Box 2, Folder: "Professional Projects."

58. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series, 10/5/1, Box 2, Shirley Baumann, "Omicron Nu, Retailing Club Sponsor Fashion Design Show," Omicron Nu Scrapbook.

59. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series, 10/5/1, Box 1, Folder: "Clubs."

60. Prof. Karen Goebel, telephone conversation with author, May 13, 2002.

61. Phi U members' email sent to author by current president of Phi U, Julie Reiss, February-March, 2003.

62. The student organizations within the School of Human Ecology are: American Society of Interior Designers (ASID), Consumer Sciences Student Association (CSSA), Financial Occupation Club for Undergrad Students (FOCUS), HDFS Graduate Student Organization (HDFS GSO), Phi Upsilon Omicron (Honorary Society), Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), Textile & Apparel Student Association (TASA), American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists, Retail Club, Wisconsin Association of Family and Consumer Sciences. Source: Student Organization Office Website, < soo.studentorg.wisc.edu > , and Sheila Etheridge, School of Human Ecology Student Academic Affairs Office.

63. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series, 99/52, Box 2, Dr. Dena Cederquist "Significance of Honor Societies Today," *Conclave Proceedings, Sixtieth Anniversary, Omicron Nu Official Publication of Omicron Nu Home Economics Honor Society*, Fall, 1971, pp. 7-9.

Illustration 8.1: A student of Parsons conducting research on the vitamin content of canned tomatoes, 1927. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 2: "Foods and Nutrition."

8

Helen Tracy Parsons (1886–1977): *A Passion for Science and Learning*

By Greta M. Zenner

Chemical life is a life for me,
A chemical cook I mean to be.
For life on this earth be it fast or slow,
Is a matter of air and H_2O.[1]

Before hosting a dinner at the University of Wisconsin (UW) Practice Cottage in 1912, Helen Tracy Parsons (1886–1977), a student, thoughtfully wrote the above rhyme on her place cards. As she placed the small cards around the table, Parsons envisioned a "bridge between science and home economics." In attendance at Parsons' dinner was Abby L. Marlatt, the dynamic and intense head of the University's Home Economics Department. Marlatt took notice of the rhyme and its intended significance and strongly encouraged Parsons to consider graduate work at the UW. Parsons initially turned down Marlatt's offer, but a year later changed her mind and decided to enroll in Wisconsin's Home Economics master's program. Eventually she became a professor of nutrition in the same department, where she remained until her retirement in 1956. Parsons' research on vitamins and anti-vitamins earned

Illustration 8.2: Helen Tracy Parsons, 1942. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Iconography Collection Series 3/1, Box 70, Folder: "Helen T. Parsons."

her a national and international reputation as a respected scientist of nutrition. In her later years, Parsons reflected upon her chemical-cooking rhyme as the beginning of her academic life as a distinguished nutrition researcher.

The passion and enthusiasm with which Parsons created and displayed the "chemical cooking" cards permeated her entire life and career. When she wrote the rhyme, Parsons imagined a melding of her interest in the "scholarly" nature of science with her experience in home economics. The young home economist felt she had a valuable vision for the future and cleverly and boldly shared it with others when she placed the rhyme-filled cards among the plates, cups, and silverware. It is this passion for science and enthusiasm for learning that we see in all her endeavors. Parsons worked hard for her education, relished the culture of scientific research, and demanded the highest quality of work from herself and those around her. She was a passionate, hard-working, goal-oriented, self-reliant, and tough woman who loved learning, science, and research.

On March 26, 1886, in Arkansas City, Kansas, Helen Tracy Parsons was born into what she described as a "scholarly" family. Her father was a physician who encouraged the young Helen's interest in natural sciences, her aunt a school principal, and her uncle-in-law the head of chemistry at the Alabama Polytechnical Institute. Perhaps a result of the values her early family life instilled in her, for the rest of her life, Parsons' high esteem of scholarly activities greatly influenced the paths she chose in her education and career.

Determined to move beyond teaching at the local country school near Arkansas City and having noticed that teaching home economics was a "budding career" for young women in the first decade of the twentieth century, Parsons decided to pursue an education in the field. She attended Kansas Teachers College and Kansas State Agricultural College, where she earned a Bachelor's of Science in general science in 1911. At Kansas State, Parsons experienced her first academic science course, which she found fascinating, and from

that point onward she chose to concentrate on the scientific component of home economics.

After graduating from Kansas State, Parsons' career in academic home economics began with her matriculation at Wisconsin. Although she initially turned down Marlatt's offer, encouragement from friends and family and her own interest in combining home economics and science made Parsons reconsider. In 1913, she packed her belongings and moved north to Madison, Wisconsin, to study for a joint master's in biochemistry and home economics under the direction of Elmer Verner McCollum (1879–1967), a prominent nutrition researcher and professor of agricultural chemistry at the UW from 1907 to 1917.

Parsons credited McCollum with teaching her how to do research. According to Parsons' oral history, during her initial experiences in the lab, the future nationally-renowned nutrition researcher was still very inexperienced and "broke precious equipment." McCollum, however, was patient with his new student. For her first few experiments he had her practice by verifying results he had already obtained. Eventually Parsons greatly improved her skills and understanding of lab research. She and McCollum worked together on vitamins and the nutritional value of various foods, and Parsons wrote her master's paper on the dietary properties of bolted wheat flour.[2]

In 1917, McCollum left the UW for a position at Johns Hopkins University. Parsons accompanied him, lured by the offer of a salaried research position, a rare find for women in science at this time. While at Johns Hopkins, Parsons worked on several topics, but she was proudest of her research on vitamin C metabolism by rats, guinea pigs, and prairie dogs. Parsons published two papers on the topic, and according to her, they made a "big splash" in the scientific communities. When Parsons returned to Madison in 1920, she and her students continued to conduct studies on various aspects of vitamin C requirements in rats and guinea pigs. Her two papers

from Johns Hopkins helped Parsons establish a respected name in nutrition research.

Several years after returning to Madison, Parsons decided she wanted to pursue a Ph.D. Encouraged by the positive experience of a female co-worker, Parsons decided that she would attend Yale University and enroll for her Ph.D. under the supervision of Lafayette Benedict Mendel (1872–1935), a physiological chemist. Mendel was known for helping and promoting women in science, and he did so in numerous ways. Partly as a result of his promotion of them in the scientific arena, many of Mendel's female doctorates went on to have very successful careers, including Parsons. In 1926, Parsons took an unpaid leave of absence and moved to New Haven, Connecticut, to pursue her goal of another advanced degree. After a difficult first year at Yale, during which time her relationship with Mendel was strained, Parsons' experience dramatically improved when, in 1927, she earned the Mary Pemberton Nourse fellowship from the American Association of University Women. In 1928,

Illustration 8.3: The rat room at Yale University, 1927. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/1/1, Box 13, "Folder: 1926-1927," letter from Parsons to the UW, 7 June 1927.

Parsons received her Ph.D. in physiology and chemical physiology and returned to Madison, where she continued as a research scientist and professor of nutrition in home economics.

In her later research in nutrition at the UW, Parsons both realized her goal of integrating science and home economics and maintained her passionate and industrious attitude. For example, Conrad A. Elvehjem (1901–1962), a close friend of Parsons in the biochemistry department, tipped Parsons off to a potentially interesting problem with vitamin B absorption and yeast. Just back from a conference, Elvehjem shared with Parsons an issue that someone had mentioned to him on his train ride home – that it was hard to test yeast for vitamins because no assay of yeast had yet been developed. Intrigued by the unanswered question, Parsons immediately took up the project and suggested that human subjects be used to test the vitamin content of live yeast. Parsons' findings would affect the consumption of yeast throughout the world.

In the thirties and forties, it was popular to drink live yeast cocktails as a source of protein and vitamins. Yeast companies advertised these cocktails and the nutritional benefits a person could obtain from quaffing such live microbial mixtures.[3] However, a 1933 paper by Reed Walker and E. M. Nelson, "Fresh and Dried Yeast as Sources of Vitamin B,"[4] cast doubt on the actual nutritional benefits of yeast. With this and Elvehjem's report in mind, Parsons began her yeast research. Unfortunately for the yeast company who funded her to support their own studies, Parsons found that live yeast actually "ate" B vitamins and prevented the body from

Illustration 8.4: Helen Parsons, 1927. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/1/0, Box 13, " Folder: 1926-1927," letter from Parsons to UW, 7 June 1927.

absorbing them. In 1942, she published the first of a series of papers about the yeast issue, "Human Utilization of Thiamin and Riboflavin in Yeast,"[5] which demonstrated that people lost much more thiamin when they consumed live versus dried yeast. In fact, Parsons discovered that people on the live yeast diet actually began to experience B-vitamin withdrawal symptoms.

These findings sparked a decade-long debate over yeast and nutrition and affected the use of yeast as a nutritional supplement. Scandals surrounding the yeast companies ensued and ultimately developed into a lawsuit. Much like the situation with tobacco companies today, yeast companies had suppressed earlier research, done by a friend of Parsons in 1913, which identified yeast as causing vitamin deficiencies.

Given that the yeast companies funded Parsons, we can admire her for her passionate perseverance toward scientific truth and fairness. She was supposed to repeat the research conducted by the yeast companies and then confirm their work. However, with her reputation, the truth, and the health of others on the line, Parsons stood up to her funding bodies and asserted her findings. She upheld her belief in science and her own research.

Parsons dedicated herself as passionately to helping her students as she did to pursuing her research. She saw science and research as exciting endeavors and strove to communicate that enthusiasm to her students. Parsons introduced her students to the culture of science and encouraged them to get involved by ensuring that they published their research, networked with other professionals in the field, and accepted stimulating and challenging jobs. As a former student of Parsons, Doris Johnson, recalled, Parsons demanded the best from her students on all levels and instilled in them the fundamentals of good scientific research. Johnson remembered Parsons as an "extremely thorough, tough, and motivating" teacher, an "equally tough" grammarian who allowed no sloppy writing, and a researcher who made very careful and attentive observations (Parsons was

Johnson's M.S. advisor.). The former student's words paint a vivid picture of Parsons, the mentor:

> She taught us one of the basic principlesin [*sic*] research - the importance of the detailed observation. In her research, Dr. Parsons generated in those of us who worked for her the excitement of discovery, of competition among investigators and of becoming acquainted with them. . . . If there was one thing she taught us it was that in all things there was a correct way by which each should be done; and being the perfectionist she was eaxh [*sic*] axtivity [*sic*] was done to the very best of one's ability. . . . Although petit [*sic*] in stature she had the energy to put many of us to shame. . . . Although she may have been a hard taskmaster at times, in her quest to teach her students how to attain their potentials, she was none the less our friend and thought of us as students for whom she felt a total responsibility.[6]

Parsons dedicated herself to her students by setting standards that were as rigorous as the ones she set for herself.

Because of Parsons' international reputation, students came from all over the globe to study with her. Her care and concern for these women are evident from student letters and Parsons' own recollections. For example, we can see expressions of sensitivity and respect on Parsons' behalf in a letter from a Thai student. For her contribution to a giant collection of letters celebrating Parsons' retirement, Sukhondha Poonpatana wrote from the University of Medical Science, School of Pharmacy, in Bangkok, Thailand, of the high esteem in which she held Parsons and of the important role Parsons played in her life. Parsons' recognition of the importance of small, personal details made a lasting impression on Poonpatana:

> I can say without hesitation that my one year study in this famous School under your supervision is one

> of the most instructive, pleasant and enjoyable in my school life. It still reminds me when I was surprised by your extraordinary ability topronounce [*sic*] foreign words, you were the first American who called my name correctly. I still remember: while I was working in the Lab, you approached me rotating your keys in one hand and saying "Good morning" (I tried to say first but in vain), and then you would often ask "Sukhondha, are there any progress in your research?"[7]

Parsons touched the young woman in a way that remained with her the rest of her life. The student-mentor bond spanned both time and place.

May S. Reynolds, who was both a student and a professor at the UW, serves as a local example of the impact Parsons made on her students. Reynolds had Parsons as a teacher and major professor in the Home Economics Department, and according to Reynolds, she was tough: "[Parsons] always encouraged me; she was not an easy person. She pushed pretty hard, but at the same time, she encouraged you."[8] As a student, the eventual UW home economics professor and prize-winning nutrition researcher did not initially enjoy research, but Parsons made sure that Reynolds always had at least a couple hours of lab work in her schedule. Even if Reynolds only had a free hour or two, Parsons sent her to Elmer Sevringhaus, Reynold's advisor, telling her that he would find something for her to do. Eventually under the tutelage of Parsons, Sevringhaus, and others, Reynolds learned to enjoy and appreciate lab work. Later in her life, in 1958, the former student of Parsons earned the Borden Award, a research award from the American Home Economics Association and the same award her major professor earned in 1944.

As an advisor, Parsons frequently consulted with faculty in other departments. Prior to 1951, UW Home Economics could grant undergraduate and master's degrees, but not its own doctoral ones.

In order to have a doctoral program, faculty in home economics "shared" students with other degree-granting schools and departments within the University, a program that began in the middle 1920s. Until 1951, Parsons and other nutrition researchers, such as Reynolds, co-advised Ph.D. students with several departments within the College of Agriculture, often with biochemistry.

While the inability of Home Economics to have its own Ph.D. students may initially seem unfortunate, faculty at the time claimed to appreciate the situation because it made it necessary for them to interact and communicate with faculty outside home economics. The joint-degree connected home economics professors to the rest of the University and helped to expand their networks. Parsons enjoyed the freedom at Wisconsin to move easily among departments, and, according to Parsons, Marlatt "was just delighted to have [her] share anything [she] could with the other departments around."

The numerous connections Parsons developed beyond the Home Economics Department demonstrate the effect the joint-degree had on those involved. Through her co-advising, Parsons became acquainted with many people outside her department and consequently developed close working relationships with other faculty in the College of Agriculture, including Elvehjem and Edwin Broun Fred (1887–1981).

Wis Country Mag
10-44

MISS HELEN PARSONS
RECEIVES THE
1944 BORDEN AWARD

Left to right:
W. A. Wentworth, representing the Borden Company, Miss Parsons, and Mrs. Jessie Harris, president of the American Home Economics Association.

Parsons - H. L.

U. W. Scientist Wins Borden Award

IF, as is proclaimed, food will win this war, the people of Wisconsin may feel that they have put a large measure into the fight and the victory. A better-fed nation is the result of the progress made in the food industry by continuous experiment and research at the University of Wisconsin.

To give appropriate recognition to those who have made outstanding contributions in these fields, and to stimulate further research, the Borden Company established in 1936 the Borden Awards.

Of 36 scientists who have won the gold medal and $1,000 prize since that time, eleven have been connected with the University of Wisconsin, either as faculty members or as graduates.

The recipients, outstanding for work in the fields of food chemistry, dairy industry, human and animal nutrition, and physiology and genetics, agricultural products, and other fields, are selected by five leading scientific organizations. They are: the American Chemical Society, the American Dairy Science Association, the American Home Economics Association and the Poultry Science Association. The American Institute of Nutrition also will administer a Borden Award beginning in 1944.

Miss Helen T. Parsons, at the June meeting of American Home Economics Association, was awarded the 1944 Borden Award. Miss Parsons trained for her work as a teacher and scientist at Kansas, Wisconsin, and Yale. She joined the home economics staff at the University of Wisconsin in 1913. From 1917 to 1920 she worked with E. V. McCollum at Johns Hopkins University, and returned to the University of Wisconsin in 1921. She was appointed full professor of home economics in 1935. She is a member of the Society of Biological Science, Wisconsin Academy of Science, New York Academy of Science, the American Dietetic Society, and the Biochemical Society of Great Britain. In giving Miss Parsons the Borden Award, high praise was given her work on biotin, pantothenic acid, and riboflavin balances.

Others who have received this award have been members of the University faculty staff: Edwin B. Hart, professor of biochemistry; Kenneth G. Weckel, associate professor of dairy husbandry; Hugo Henry Sommer, professor of dairy industry; and Amy Louise Daniels, formerly research professor of nutrition here.

Virgius Samundur Asmundson, formerly a University of Wisconsin instructor in poultry husbandry, received the award in 1942 for research in poultry. Ronald M. Bethke, a graduate assistant at the University of Wisconsin from 1920-1923, received the Borden Award in 1941 for research in poultry nutrition.

Ralph Edward Hodgson, now principal dairy technologist, Bureau of Dairy Industry, U. S. D. A., received the award in 1939 for research on nutrient values in connection with feeding of dairy cattle.

The other winners have been:

Mrs. Julia Outhouse Hobson, who received her M.S. degree at the University of Wisconsin in 1920;

Leer Alfred Rogers, who has done graduate work at the University of Wisconsin;

Charles W. Turner, recipient in 1940 of the Borden Award in Dairy production;

Carl F. Huffman, who received his Ph.D. degree at the University of Wisconsin in 1933.

WISCONSIN COUNTRY MAGAZINE

Illustration 8.5: Helen Parsons receiving Borden Award, 1944. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Biographical Files, "Parsons, Helen T."

However, before discussing Parsons' relationships with these two men, it is important to understand gender relations

within the academic setting. During the central years of Parsons' career, from the 1920s to the beginning of World War II, women in the sciences experienced an apparent paradox in relation to their participation at the university. While the statistics suggest that more women were entering scientific fields, the environment in which they found themselves was not favorable to female academic scientists. Gender relations in the university created an atmosphere of inequality and discrimination against women. When and if they could obtain positions as academic scientists, women earned less recognition and less money than men, regardless whether they occupied the same positions as men or if they entered fields that were regarded as traditionally feminine, such as home economics. In Parsons' working relationships with Elvehjem and Fred, we can see these gender dynamics at work.

As co-advisors for the joint biochemistry-home economics degree, Parsons and Elvehjem interacted frequently. Parsons respected Elvehjem as a researcher and liked him as a person, and it is clear from their interactions that Elvehjem also held Parsons in high regard. Celebrating the occasion of Parsons' retirement, he wrote to his friend and fellow scientist:

> You must be proud of the truly basic principles which you have so firmly established in the field of nutrition, but those of us who have been fortunate enough to work more closely with you think more of your enthusiasm and your ability to try new approaches in nutritional research. The University, the state and the entire world owe you a deep debt of gratitude for your many accomplishments.[9]

Elvehjem also staunchly advocated for home economics. He played an instrumental role in helping the Home Economics Department become a School in 1951. He also gave several talks that addressed home economics and its future, including one at the Land-Grant College Meeting in 1957 and another at the UW Agriculture and

Home Economics Banquet in 1958. Elvehjem titled the former "The Forward Look in Home Economics Research," and in it he offered his opinions on what home economics and home economists needed to do in the coming years in order to remain effective. Parsons recognized all her friend had done on behalf of her field when she called him the "saint of home economics."

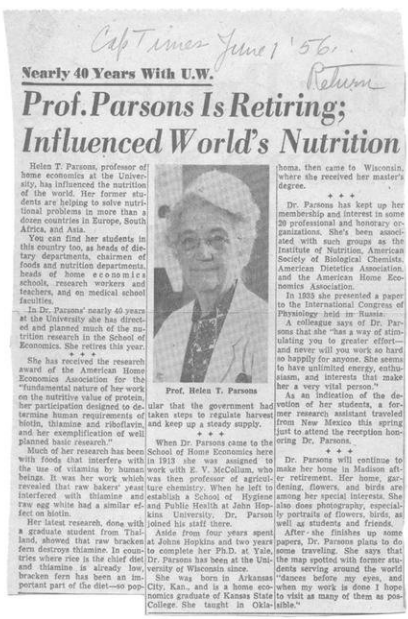
Despite this evidence of his support of women in science, Elvehjem did little to encourage the equal integration of women into his own department. As chair of biochemistry, Elvehjem did not push for women to be professors on its faculty. Blanche Riising Platz was an assistant instructor in the Agricultural Chemistry/ Biochemsitry Department for seventeen years, but she was never promoted to a higher rank. Like many other male scientists, including Mendel, Elvehjem supported women in science, but only to a certain extent. Although he allowed the department to hire a woman as an instructor, Elvehjem did not consider women equal members of the Agricultural Chemistry Department.

Like Elvehjem, E.B. Fred, an agricultural bacteriologist at the UW from 1913 until his retirement in 1958, also frequently interacted with Parsons. He helped her with a variety of issues, ranging from scientific papers to student academic troubles, and he had a reputation as a man who was willing to help women in science.

Fred helped Parsons and other women with their UW careers, but not all his lab and administrative practices were admirable. In addition to requiring long hours and no music, he also liked everything in his lab to be red – containers, paint, and women's clothing. Parsons noted that Fred "liked women in red." If women were going to work for him, they were there partly as decoration. As decorations, though, Fred believed that women should not be distracting in their presence. In his oral history, he commented on the effect a young female assistant had in his lab: "The only objection to her was very sound. It was that she was too pretty. The boys all wanted to wait on her, work with her. I found her one day sitting

up on a stool and the boys were busy washing the dishes for her. I got after her about that." According to Fred, women were at fault for diverting the men's attention from their lab duties.

When Fred did approve of female students and faculty members, he expressed his sentiments in unusual terms. Fred was known to ask, "What about the fillies? Why haven't we more blue ribbon fillies?" According to one of his former students, Elizabeth McCoy, this remark was a compliment coming from Fred, who grew up on a farm and rode horses as a boy. Similarly, Martha Peterson, another of Fred's former students, noted that when he praised one of his female students, he called her "Bessie," saying that his family "had had a very good cow by that name." Despite Fred's good intentions, however, his farm-inspired complements made women uncomfortable. Fred may have encouraged women in science, but his manner of doing so and his view of women as lesser created a contrasting, and likely confusing, hostile environment.



Cap Times June 1 '56.

Nearly 40 Years With U.W.

Prof. Parsons Is Retiring; Influenced World's Nutrition

Helen T. Parsons, professor of home economics at the University, has influenced the nutrition of the world. Her former students are helping to solve nutritional problems in more than a dozen countries in Europe, South Africa, and Asia.

You can find her students in this country too, as heads of dietary departments, chairmen of foods and nutrition departments, heads of home economics schools, research workers and teachers, and on medical school faculties.

In Dr. Parsons' nearly 40 years at the University she has directed and planned much of the nutrition research in the School of Economics. She retires this year.

+ + +

She has received the research award of the American Home Economics Association for the "fundamental nature of her work on the nutritive value of protein, her participation designed to determine human requirements of biotin, thiamine and riboflavin, and her exemplification of well planned basic research."

Much of her research has been with foods that interfere with the use of vitamins by human beings. It was her work which revealed that raw bakers' yeast interfered with thiamine and raw egg white had a similar effect on biotin.

Her latest research, done with a graduate student from Thailand, showed that raw bracken fern destroys thiamine. In countries where rice is the chief diet and thiamine is already low, bracken fern has been an important part of the diet—so popular that the government has taken steps to regulate harvest and keep up a steady supply.

Prof. Helen T. Parsons

+ + +

When Dr. Parsons came to the School of Home Economics here in 1913 she was assigned to work with E. V. McCollum, who was then professor of agriculture chemistry. When he left to establish a School of Hygiene and Public Health at John Hopkins University, Dr. Parson joined his staff there.

Aside from four years spent at Johns Hopkins and two years to complete her Ph.D. at Yale, Dr. Parsons has been at the University of Wisconsin since.

She was born in Arkansas City, Kan., and is a home economics graduate of Kansas State College. She taught in Oklahoma, then came to Wisconsin, where she received her master's degree.

+ + +

Dr. Parsons has kept up her membership and interest in some 20 professional and honorary organizations. She's been associated with such groups as the Institute of Nutrition, American Society of Biological Chemists, American Dietetics Association, and the American Home Economics Association.

In 1935 she presented a paper to the International Congress of Physiology held in Russia.

A colleague says of Dr. Parsons that she "has a way of stimulating you to greater effort—and never will you work so hard so happily for anyone. She seems to have unlimited energy, enthusiasm, and interests that make her a very vital person."

As an indication of the devotion of her students, a former research assistant traveled from New Mexico this spring just to attend the reception honoring Dr. Parsons.

+ + +

Dr. Parsons will continue to make her home in Madison after retirement. Her home, gardening, flowers, and birds are among her special interests. She also does photography, especially portraits of flowers, birds, as well as students and friends.

After she finishes up some papers, Dr. Parsons plans to do some traveling. She says that the map spotted with former students serving around the world "dances before my eyes, and when my work is done I hope to visit as many of them as possible."

Illustration 8.6: Helen Parsons' retirement, 1956. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Biographical Files, "Parsons, Helen T."

Parsons retired from her career as a nutrition researcher and UW professor of nutrition in home economics in 1956. To celebrate the occasion, McCollum commended his former student, "Throughout the forty years I have known you[,] you have manifested belief in something worthwhile, worthy desires and commendable ambition. You had the urge to understand. You had vision, energy, courage and a sense of purpose." Helen Tracy Parsons lived with passion. Her early education, graduate studies,

scientific work, and student and faculty relationships all demonstrate the enthusiasm with which Parsons led her life. Participating in the culture of science, including both its positive and negative aspects, was a dream for the internationally acclaimed nutritionist. For Parsons, life in science included working hard, thinking creatively, and answering the unanswered questions. Completely in love with the ideals and practice of science, she centered her life on the pursuit of scientific research and helping others to enjoy and understand this passion.

Notes

1. Helen Parsons, oral History by Stephen Lowe, tape recording, 1972, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Oral History Project.

2. Helen T. Parsons, "The Nature of the Dietary Deficiencies of Bolted Wheat Flour," Master's thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1916.

3. Indeed, dried yeast containers today still advertise the health benefits of adding yeast to your diet – including your morning coffee. There are no health risks associated with this, however, because live yeast is what prevents the absorption of vitamin B.

4. Reed Walker and E. M. Nelson, "Fresh and Dried Yeast as Sources of Vitamin B," *American Journal of Physiology*, 1933, 103: 25-29.

5. Helen T. Parsons and Jean Collard, "Human Utilization of Thiamin and Riboflavin in Yeast," *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 1942, 18: 805-810.

6. Doris Johnson to UW, Hamden, Conn., 17 January 1978 (memorial letter about Parsons), University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Biographical Files: "Parsons, Helen T."

7. Sukhondha Poonpatana to Parsons, Bangkok Thailand, 10 April 1956, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/6, Box 3, "Your Volume of Friends." "Your Volume of Friends" is a collection of letters written to Parsons from faculty, friends, and former students celebrating her retirement.

8. May S. Reynolds, oral history by Donna Taylor, tape recording, 1977, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Oral History Project.

9. Elvehjem to Parsons, Madison, Wisconsin, 15 April 1956, "Your Volume of Friends," University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/6, Box 3.

Illustration 9.1: Helen Louise Allen, as a child, weaving. Source: Helen Louise Textile Collection, Drawer: Background Information; Folder: "Photos."

9

The Legacy of Helen Louise Allen

by Andrea Kolasinski Marcinkus

Helen Louise Allen died unexpectedly on August 14, 1968, shocking the faculty and students who loved her. She continues to live through her legacy: a vast collection of textiles and textile books bequeathed to the University of Wisconsin with enough money set aside in a trust to ensure her collection's continued existence, exposure to the public, and use by the University's students. The Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection reflects her principle: "A collection that counts brings knowledge, a losing of self in the sorting and arranging, a huge enjoyment in showing the collection, and the acquiring of many new friends both in making and showing of it."[1] In life, Helen Allen devoted herself to the research and study of textiles around the world. Today, the Collection remains true to its founder's goals. And it has grown, becoming one of the best textile collections of its kind in the United States.

Helen Allen was born in 1902 into a family whose women nurtured Allen's interests in textiles and travel. Allen told the story of an olive green potholder she made in the second grade to an interviewer for the *Wisconsin Alumnus* magazine.[2] Her second grade teacher contacted Allen's parents because of the unusual color choice for Allen's age. The teacher felt that it was a sign of Allen's strong creative spirit.[3] This creativity and ability to see the world in a different way developed early. Helen Allen

Illustration 9.2: Helen Louise Allen teaching weaving. Source: Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection, Drawer: Background Information; Folder: "Photos."

also remembered another early experience with making textiles. "I was taught to knit, crochet and embroider by my grandmother. I knew most of the stitches before the first grade."[4] Although not much is known about Allen's mother, there is a photo of her teaching a lace-making class. Helen Allen's interest in textiles came from these sources. Allen's love of travel also came from her family. Her uncle lived in China and would send textiles back to her.[5] When she was in the fourth grade, Allen's family moved to Turkey where she habitually "haunted" a silk weaving workshop.

Helen Allen's years at the University of Wisconsin were lively and fruitful. She arrived in 1927 after attending the University of Michigan, and the University of Chicago, with additional graduate study at New York University. In the University of Wisconsin School of Home Economics she taught classes on weaving, history of interiors, furniture, and textiles, and gave short courses on creative stitching and embroidery. During the span of her career, she wrote numerous articles on historical and ethnic textiles, and weaving. Helen Allen also published a book *American and European Handweaving* in 1935.[6] During the summer and semester breaks throughout her career at the UW, Helen Allen traveled the world adding to her collection of textiles and teaching slides. Over the years, she journeyed to countries such as Poland, India, Guatemala, and Nigeria. Helen Ryall Briggs, a student of Allen's who graduated in 1946, remembers:

Illustration 9.3: Helen Louise Allen's mother teaching. Source: Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection, Drawer: Background Information; Folder: "Photos."

> One reason she could bring back so many cloth artifacts was that she traveled light–one or two dresses and a minimum

> of whatever else she deemed necessary, leaving her plenty of room for the fabrics she collected. On one summer trip that she took with her mother to South America – it must have been about 1944 – she had one dress. It would have been one of the early synthetics . . . guaranteed not to wrinkle and to dry overnight. However, the seams kept giving out – she laughed that she had remade the entire dress several times over during the course of the summer, by hand, of course.[7]

Allen always shared interesting stories about how she would acquire her textiles. She had connections with textile and antique dealers, as well as some foreign dealers of a questionable nature. Agatha Norton, a 1948 graduate of home economics and later a professor in the Related Art and Environment, Textiles, and Design departments, remembers how Helen Allen acquired the ancient Peruvian textiles, now some of the oldest textiles in the Collection.

> One day she [Allen] had brought to class a bundle of Peruvian textiles . . . She had described entering the shop where she had previously bought historic

Illustration 9.4: Helen Louise Allen's mother - Turkey. Source: Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection, Drawer: Background Information; Folder: "Photos."

> Peruvian textiles. The shop owner seeing her enter said, "Oh, I have some new ones you'll like – I just got some mummies. They're in the back room." She continued, "So, I just sat on the floor in the back room unrolling them . . . I found some good ones, and brought them back in my suitcase. When I opened the suitcase – OH! Did it smell!"[8]

Helen Allen's collection continued to grow from both her own travels and the travels of her friends, family, students, and colleagues who would also bring back textiles from their journeys and donate them to Helen Allen's ever-expanding collection.

Helen Allen is remembered as idiosyncratic. Many students recall her as inspiring, witty, creative, patient, and eccentric. Her teaching style was unconventional. At a time when lecturing was not filled with visual aids, Allen illustrated her talks with numerous textiles that the students could handle. She viewed these textiles as cultural evidence, through which social values and norms indicative of the person or group that produced them could be seen. This is now a philosophy integral to the field of material culture. Although Allen was conscious of the fashion world, she was never concerned with fitting into its predetermined mold. "She was of medium height and rather plump with squinty smiling blue eyes peering over her lowered crooked glasses and she always looked disheveled – most certainly not a 'fashion plate'," wrote Helen Poulsen Wood, a 1948 home economics graduate.[9]

Illustration 9.5: Helen Louise Allen wearing her collie fur coat. Source: Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection, Drawer: Background Information, Folder: "Photos."

Helen Allen often wore her own hand-woven clothing, loud jewelry, and ethnic clothing from around the world. Students and colleagues remember her wearing what might have been her most eccentric article: a collie dog fur coat. Others also remember that she had her DeSoto painted bright red after she purchased it so she could easily find it in the parking lot; it was the only red car on campus.[10] This eccentric attitude won over her students and fellow faculty, and she became a well-loved and respected figure on campus.

Love for the unconventional eventually spread into her ideas about the importance of an education in textiles and other visual arts. She sought to display her historic and ethnic textiles in exhibitions around the state. In 1966, she allowed many of her textiles to be exhibited in a show at the Madison Art Center, titled *Contemporary Folk Art of Poland*.[11] Helen Allen also pressed for a permanent exhibition space on the University of Wisconsin campus, where faculty, staff, and other students could view textiles and student projects. This goal was first realized after her death during the space allocation and remodeling project that the Home Economics building underwent during the mid-1970s. Unfortunately, the requested addition to the building was never executed; however the Collection was given more space for storage and work on the third floor of the building and a room on the fourth floor was converted into a gallery space. It was not until 1990 that the Gallery of Design was established and given a large space on the first floor of the building. Undergraduate and graduate student displays, independent artist shows, and the biannual Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection exhibition occur today in this space.

The Collection continues to display its textiles nationally, loaning textiles for exhibitions in museums and art centers.[12] In 2000, six interior fabrics appeared in *From Post-War to Post-Modern: Interior Textiles, 1946–1976*, which was housed at the Headley-Whitney Museum in Lexington, Kentucky. This exhibition explored "how technology, the economy, and global and aesthetic factors

transformed the development and use of mid-twentieth century textiles" [13] that were used commonly in the home and in places of business. The Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection was able to loan textiles from important designers such as Jack Lenor Larsen, and Marimekko to this exhibit because Helen Allen had the foresight to deem these fabrics as evidence of American culture in the twentieth century.

Helen Allen also taught outside of the University. She was active in the Madison Weavers Guild and Embroiderers Guild. During the 1950s she taught many women that weaving could yield functional objects for the home as well as provide additional income. Helen Allen and some of the women who took these weaving classes wove a tapestry to hang in the Frank Lloyd Wright designed Unitarian Meeting House in the Shorewood Hills neighborhood in Madison.[14]

Illustration 9.6: Newspaper article about Helen Louise Allen's tapestry in the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Unitarian Meeting House, Madison, WI, August 1, 1951. Helen Allen, second from left. Source: Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection, Drawer: Background; Folder: "Clippings."

Again, Helen Allen was ahead of her time. "Fiber Art," as it was to be called, first became widely popular in the mid to late 1960s.

Helen Louise Allen bequeathed her textile collection, books on textiles, and the bulk of her estate to the Regents of the University of Wisconsin.

> I give, devise and bequeath all the rest, residue and remainder of my estate, whether real, personal or mixed, where ever the same may be situated, including my textile collection and books on weaving, unto the Regents of the University of Wisconsin . . . It is my wish that the Regents of the University of Wisconsin establish a textile collection to be known as the "Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection" and that they utilize the funds which the residue of my estate will make available to them for the purpose of research and instruction in the study of textiles, for the purpose of adding to said collection from time to time and for the purpose of preserving and displaying the same to the best advantage in the promotion of the study of textiles, including the payment therefrom of salaries or stipends to faculty members or graduate students participating in the study of the history of textiles.[15]

On Friday, September 6, 1968, the Regents accepted the gift.[16] On March 12, 1971, the income of Helen Allen's estate (valued at $300,000) and $85,000 worth of textiles were distributed to the School of Home Economics.[17]

Interestingly, controversy surrounded the formation of the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection. In a letter to the Regents, Dean Glenn Pound suggested that due to the wording of the will, the Collection need not be housed in the School of Family Resources and Consumer Science, the contemporary name of the School, but could and should be housed in his school: the College of

Agriculture.[18]Associate Dean Louise A. Young suggested that the departments of Art History, Art Education, and the Elvehjem Museum might vie for the privilege of housing and maintaining the Collection as well.[19] There is no record of the Regents' reply, but since the Collection is maintained by the School of Human Ecology, it can be assumed that other requests went unheeded.

Curators of the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection:

Ruth Harris: 1969–1977
Ruth Morrissey: 1977–1982
Blenda Feminias: 1982–Spring 1988
Beverly Gordon (Director): Fall 1988
Dawn VanWiegard: 1989–1994
Mary Ann Fitzgerald: July 1994–Present

The Collection's early years were fruitful and productive. Its first Advisory Committee was called to order at two in the afternoon on May 20, 1971. The Committee was composed of Agatha Norton (professor in the Related Art Department), as Chair, Larry Edman (assistant professor in the Related Art Department), Thurman Fox (director of the Wisconsin Historical Society Museum), Ruth Harris (professor in the Related Art Department and curator of the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection), Shirley Ribelin (lecturer in the Related Art Department), Fannie Taylor (professor and director of the Arts Program), and Theodore Zillman (associate director of the University of Wisconsin Foundation).[20] The following year Edman, Ribelin, and Taylor were replaced by Arthur Blumenthal (curator of the Elvehjem Art Center), Jane Graff (associate professor in Related Art and Extension Services), Emma Jorde (professor in Textiles and Clothing), and Otto Thieme (assistant professor in Related Art).[21]During these early Committee meetings the purpose and

direction of the Collection solidified. In comparison to the collection in the Wisconsin State Historical Society and the Elvehjem Museum, and in consideration of the Collection's current strengths, the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection focused on ethnic textiles and designer interior fabrics. Under the eye and the direction of the Advisory Committee, Ruth Harris initially curated the Collection until 1977. During her tenure as curator, graduate students continued the cataloging, labeling, and identifying of the 4,000-piece collection under the system that Helen Allen developed. This system emphasized type of textile, technique, and country of origin rather than donor and date of acquisition as other collections and museums did at that time. This style of catalog allowed researchers and students to easily look up needed information.[22] A similar version of this system is still in use today.

From the beginning, the Collection ranked as one of the best of its type in the country. In 1973, Harris sent out a survey to other university-based textile collections around the country to see how the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection compared to them. Harris found that the Collection was one of the highest in her rating system, which quantified amount of textiles, public and scholarly access, funding, and ability to display parts of the collection. The Collection was second only to the University of Rhode Island in terms of number of textiles. The Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection also ranked highest in funding, staffing, and the ability to display work both locally and across the country.[23] The Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection became one of the best textile collections in the country only five years after its foundation. Spurred on

Illustration 9.7: Ruth Ketterer Harris, curator of the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection, 1968–1977. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 3/1, Box 4, Negative# x 25 3373.

by this knowledge, a project proposal was submitted to the National Endowment for the Arts in 1975 for photographing the entire collection in black and white photographs and color slides.[24] The proposal was funded; work began on January 1, 1976 and was finished one year later. Meanwhile, former students and friends of Helen Allen and other faculty members continued to donate interesting textiles from around the world expanding the Collection even further.

Under the curatorial watch of Ruth Morrissey, the ART Search and TIRIS database projects began. Pat Mansfield, a professor in the Textiles and Clothing Department, began ART Search in the early 1980s. ART Search used the newest technology at the time to develop a videodisc database program to access information and images of textiles housed in the Collection.[25] Michael Mansfield, Pat Mansfield's husband, created and programmed this retrieval system. Textile collections, museums, and schools around the country bought this searchable videodisc to enhance the study of textiles.[26] This videodisc, which is still used in the Collection, is a great tool to view textiles housed in storage before removing the article, thus preventing unnecessary handling of delicate textiles. At the same time the ART

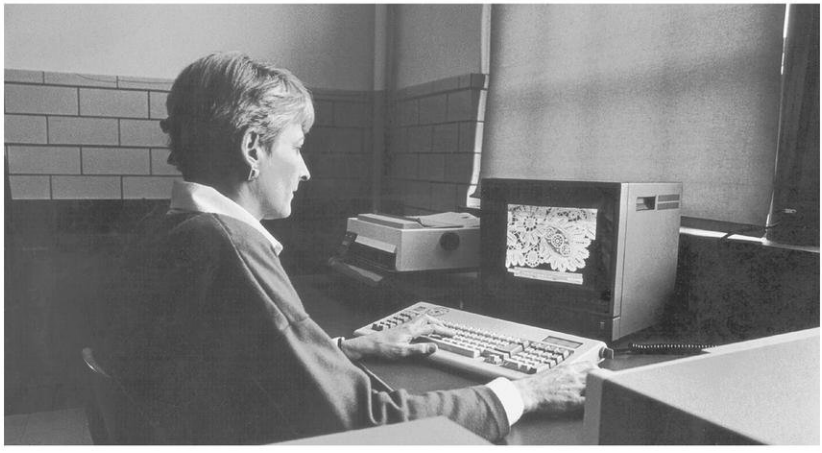


Illustration 9.8: Professor Patricia Mansfield working with the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection data base. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 202, Folder 8: "Textiles and Fashion."

Search project was designed, Dean Hamilton McCubbin funded the TIRIS system.[27] This system, also presently used in the Collection, is a searchable database that combines ART Search images with more detailed information. TIRIS searches and retrieves information stored in over thirty different entry fields for each textile including name, date, technique, donor, and storage location. ART Search and TIRIS together, although state-of-the-art for their time, are quickly becoming outdated. Currently, the staff of the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection works toward the culmination of a new database project. This current project has already been funded, the system designed, digital photos taken of most of the Collection's holdings, and data entry and data transfer from the TIRIS system is already underway.

Under the curatorial guidance of Blenda Feminias and the Advisory Committee of 1984, the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection began reaching to a wider audience. The Friends of the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection formed during a meeting on December 13 of that year.[28] The already existing mailing list greatly expanded that year, and the Collection sent a general brochure and the first annual newsletter requesting member-ship to the Friends of the Collection. The brochure de-tailed the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection's mission to the study of textiles, the facilities on campus, academic and public programs, current publications and exhibitions, and the ART Search database. Also, during 1984, the Collection's Committee persuaded the School of Human Ecology to contribute money to support the salary of the curator.[29] The Collection

THE HELEN L. ALLEN TEXTILE COLLECTION

University of Wisconsin-Madison

The Helen Allen Textile Collection (HATC) is a vast compendium of textiles and costumes, representing hundreds of eras, places, and techniques. With 12,000 objects, it is one of the largest U.S. university collections. Its size, scope, and programs make it an outstanding resource for scholars, designers, students, and the public.

Textiles serve as primary sources of information about the people and the cultures that produce them, and thus are important indices of the life experience. The mission of the Allen Collection is to provide educational resources that further the understanding of human beings within their material and social environment through the study of textiles of artistic, cultural, and historic significance. To accomplish this mission, HATC acquires textiles, costumes, and related objects; preserves, cares for, and catalogs objects and publications; provides exhibitions and public programs, and supports research projects.

The Collections

HATC spans a broad spectrum of temporal, geographical, and technological diversity. The oldest pieces are Pre-Columbian and Late Roman (Coptic) archaeological textiles, and the newest are fiberworks by contemporary artists including Peter Collingwood and Claire Zeisler. There are major holdings of 19th-century American and European coverlets, quilts, and needlework. Other special strengths include ethnographic textiles from South and Southeast Asia, Latin America, and Turkey. Both handmade and industrially produced objects are featured, displaying a wide range of weaving, printing, lacemaking and embroidery techniques, and the works of noted designers like Jack Lenor Larsen and Dorothy Liebes.

The Founder

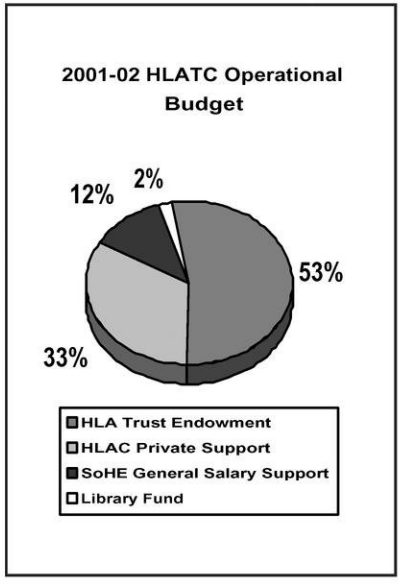
Helen Louise Allen taught at UW-Madison from 1927-1968 and amassed an outstanding private textile collection. During her 41 years at Wisconsin, she shared her expertise in the history of textiles and interiors, and the techniques of weaving and embroidery with thousands of students. She was the author of *European and American Handweaving* (1935) and a revised edition (1959), which explored her particular fascination with applying ancient and traditional techniques to expressing contemporary themes. Miss Allen's collection was a bequest to the University and forms the basis of today's Allen Collection. Her philosophy was: "A collection that counts brings knowledge, a loving of self in the sorting and arranging, a huge enjoyment in showing the collections, and the acquiring of many new friends both in making and in showing it."

Illustration 9.9: First brochure mailed for the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection. Source: Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection.

established a stronger financial foundation.

Since then, the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection has published a newsletter every year detailing the progress of the Collection as well as numerous scholarly articles written by students, faculty, and staff. Mary Ann Fitzgerald, the current curator of the Collection, developed a "wish list" section allowing members to see what items, other than money, can be donated to the Collection. Recent "wish list" items received by the Collection were a digital camera and a high-quality color printer. The *Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection Newsletter* also continues to inform its readers about new acquisitions to the Collection and the Ruth Ketterer Harris Library.

In addition to the newsletter, the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection launched its website in 1997 to further expand the Collection's reach.[30] The site contains basic information about the Collection, such as membership information, location, and access. It also contains several galleries of textiles from the Collection. The first gallery is a sample of textiles that the Collection has to offer. The other two are online versions of biannual exhibits. The latest, *Pixels and Textiles: Digital Close-ups and Objects from the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection*, was displayed in the Gallery of Design from October 4 to December 16, 2001, and now has a longer life on the Internet with the full text and images from the show.



The Friends program provides a great source of funding for the Collection today. In the 2001/2002 academic year, the

Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection's Operational Budget was $105,324.[31] The Allen Trust funds about fifty-three percent of the budget and the Library Fund finances two percent; twelve percent of the budget is given by the School of Human Ecology. The rest, thirty-three percent, comes from donations and memberships, many from local corporate sponsors such as the Pleasant T. Rowland Foundation Inc.[32] The *Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection Newsletter*, as well as bi-annual shows, and the annual guest lecturer are responsible for keeping the Friends of the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection active and generous to the Collection.

Helen Allen dreamed of actively involving students in her collection. Allen often asked students to help her with cataloguing textiles. She felt that it was an excellent way for students to get hands-on experience in curatorial and conservation work. Ruth Harris continued to employ graduate students to catalogue and photograph the collection. Currently, the Collection employs both graduate and undergraduate students to do a variety of tasks as Curatorial Assistants. These students, working both during the academic year and the summer, are responsible for cataloguing new textiles, conducting some basic conservation, and "pulling" textiles from storage into the display room for conservation work or display for classes or researchers. In 2000, a graduate position for a project assistant, currently filled by Ph.D. candidate Kirsten Lombard, was

Illustration 9.10: Unidentified woman working on Indian printed textile in the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 8: "Slide Sheet."

developed to help with the annual lecture and grant writing. Katia Marshall, a 2000 graduate in design studies in the School of Human Ecology, was also employed by the Collection. She believes the Collection "opened up [her] eyes to different cultures and the ways that [other cultures have] designed fabrics . . .or express their culture through fabrics."[33] This is the same response that Allen's students had to her Collection, proving that the current Collection is meeting Helen Allen's goals.

Students also utilize the collection in their classes both in and out of the School of Human Ecology. From the beginning of the Collection, instructors have taken students to view textiles that illustrate technique or ethnic and historic characteristics. Classes such as Print Design view the collection to see block print techniques from around the world, or a History of Fashion class will view sixteenth and seventeenth century velvets and lace. However, there has been a change in the trend of how the students view the

Illustration 9.11: Kirsten Lombard entering information into the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection data base. Source: Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection.

Collection. Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, entire classes have gone to view relevant pieces pulled from the collection; this is only done today in the smaller classes that the School offers.[34] For example, although Professor Virginia T. Boyd, brings her entire Twentieth Century Interiors class into the Collection to view interior fabrics in an effort to get the students to look more closely and interact intimately with the textiles, several professors have developed individual or small group assignments that address a specific textile.

There seems to be a rise of this type of use of the Collection. Katia Marshall explains that in Structural Enrichment, a course taught in the fall 2002 semester by Professor Sonya Clark, she was assigned to use one piece from the collection as an inspiration in technique or "style" for a project.[35] Marshall looked at examples of pre-Columbian Peruvian netting as inspiration for an evening bag. Professor Beverly Gordon also gives her History of Fashion class a

Illustration 9.12: College for Kids at the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection, 2002. Source: Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection.

group project in which students must analyze a garment in the collection addressing construction, how it might fit the body, and its cultural significance.[36] Gordon recently developed a graduate level course, Researching and Interpreting Textiles, which uses the Collection extensively. When the course was offered during the fall semester of 2000, graduate students researched objects such as Victorian wreaths, Turkish embroidered textiles, a painted nineteenth century quilt, and eighteenth century dress silks. Some of these graduate students presented papers at the Ars Textrina Nineteenth Annual Conference on Textiles in 2001, while others have been published.[37]

Other researchers and groups outside of the university have also used the Collection. For example, in 1995 doctoral candidate Helen Sheumaker, working on her dissertation, *The Braid That Love Entwines: Victorian Hair Objects and Women,* in the American Studies Program at the University of Kansas, viewed the Collection's assemblage of hair wreaths and bouquets from the nineteenth century.[38] Sheumaker is working on a book based on the same research. A wide variety of groups also utilize the collection, which has open its facilities to younger children as well, such as the UW College for Kids. Other groups that visit the Collection most often are those that are interested in making textiles. The Madison Needlepoint Guild and the Madison Weavers Guild have visited the Collection regularly over the past twenty years. In May of 2001, the Spindle and Dyepot Guild of Milwaukee visited the Collection for the first time. This visit impressed Joan McFadyen, one of the Guild's members:

> It was very exciting. And it was exciting to us because we knew that not a lot of people saw what we saw. It allowed us, as textile artists, to look at the past up-close. That [viewing the textiles] allowed me to reevaluate what I do and how I do it. It brought me back to my first love: natural dyes or naturally colored fibers. As a whole, I

> think that the membership of the guild was influenced by the Collection in the same way. We began to revisit the foundation ideas of why we first became interested in textiles.[39]

Helen Allen's hope that her Collection would be used to further research in the study of textiles is continually being fulfilled.

The Collection's mission today still resounds with Helen Allen's objective: a goal so important to her that she bequeathed her collection to the Regents of the University of Wisconsin in the hopes that others could glean knowledge from the textiles she collected throughout her life. As Mary Ann Fitzgerald, the current curator, explains: the on-going mission for the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection is to "provide educational resources that further the understanding of human beings within their material and social environment and support the academic department through the study of textiles of artistic, cultural and historical significance." [40] Today, the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection continues to live up to the lofty charge of its namesake. Expanded greatly in holdings from its initial establishment, the Collection has become a nationally known source of ethnographic textiles and fiber art. It still reflects Helen Allen's lifework of service and education through textiles, touching the lives of students, faculty, organizations, and independent researchers throughout the United States.

Notes

1. Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection, "Discover the Helen L. Allen Textile Collection," Madison, ca 1980s.

2. Harriette Moyer, "A Legacy of Beauty," *Wisconsin Alumnus*, August-September 1968: 12-15.

3. Moyer, "A Legacy of Beauty," 12.

4. Moyer, "A Legacy of Beauty," 15.

5. Moyer, "A Legacy of Beauty," 13.

6. A revised edition of this book was published 1939.

7. Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection, "Memories of Helen Allen 30th Anniversary Celebration of the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection," Madison, Wisconsin, 1999.

8. Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection, "Memories of Helen Allen."

9. Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection, "Memories of Helen Allen."

10. Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection, "Memories of Helen Allen."

11. "Contemporary Folk Art of Poland," *The Wisconsin State Journal*, 3 July 1966.

12. Looking at the records for textile loans, approximately fifty-eight loans have been made to outside organizations since 1968. Of these, almost eighteen percent were textiles that went to places outside of Wisconsin. These textiles went as far as Arizona, South Dakota, and Virginia among other states.

13. *2000 Exhibitions,* 9 May 2002.
http://www.headley-whitney.org/00previous.html#textiles

14. Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection, "Memories of Helen Allen," "Hands Join Labor of Love," *The Capital Times,* [Madison, Wisconsin], 1 April 1951.

15. "Last Will and Testament of Helen L. Allen," 1968, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/7, Box 11, Folder: "Helen Allen Textile Collection, Will and Bequest 1968–69."

16. "Regents Accept $8,363,280," *The Capital Times*, [Madison, Wisconsin], 6 September 1968.

17. Regents' Meeting Notes, 12 March 1971, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/7, Box 11, Folder: "Textile collection, addition 1973–1975."

18. Glenn Pound, Letter to the Regents of University of Wisconsin, 1968, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/1, Box 3, Folder: "Helen Allen Textile Collection, Will and Bequest 1968–69."

19. Louise A. Young, Letter to Regents of University of Wisconsin, 1968, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/1, Box 3, Folder: "Helen Allen Textile Collection, Will and Bequest 1968–69."

20. Minutes of the Allen-Related Art Textile Collection Advisory Committee, 20 May 1971, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 94/6, Folder: "Helen Allen Textile Collection Committee Minutes 1971–1975 & 1984."

21. Minutes of the Allen-Related Art Textile Collection Advisory Committee, 1972–1973.

22. "The Allen-Related Art Textile Collection-Purpose and Organization," No date, ca. 1970's, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/7, Box 11, Folder: "Textile Collection, addition 1973–1975."

23. Pat Hilts and Ruth Harris Report on a Survey Conducted by the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection for the Purpose of Determining the Availability and Use of Textile Collections in Land Grant Colleges and State Universities, 1974, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 94/6, Folder: "Helen Allen Textile Collection Reports 1970's and 1987."

24. "Grant Application to National Endowment for the Arts," 1975, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Series 10/1, Box 3, Folder: "Progress Report, Helen Allen Textile Collection, bibliography 1975."

25. Mary Ann Fitzgerald (Curator of the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection), Interview with author, 5 March 2002.

26. Mary Ann Fitzgerald. Interview.

27. Mary Ann Fitzgerald. Interview.

28. Minutes of the Helen Allen Textile Collection Advisory Committee, 13 December 1984, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 94/6, Folder: "Helen Allen Textile Collection Committee Minutes 1971–1975 & 1984."

29. Minutes of the Helen Allen Textile Collection Advisory Committee, 13 December 1984.

30. The web site can be found at http://www.sohe.wisc.edu/depts/hlatc/ as of March 3, 2003.

31. Bobette Heller, "HLATC Donors . . . Helping to Maintain the Collection's Preeminence," *Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection Newsletter*, Fall 2002: 20-1.

32. Bobette Heller, "HLATC Donors" and "Thank You Year 2001 Members," *Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection Newsletter*, Fall 2001: 22-23. Graph adapted from this article.

33. Katia Marshall (graduated May 2002), Interview with author, 25 April 2002.

34. Textile Pull Sheets from the Helen Louise Allen Textile collection, 1980 to 2001, Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection. These were looked at in five-year segments, and the type of users were counted to see who used the collection and how.

35. Marshall, interview.

36. Beverly Gordon (Professor in Environment Textiles and Design, Folklore and Woman's Studies), Interview with author, 14 April 2002.

37. Sherri Shokler's (graduated May 2000) research on the Collection's dress silks was published in the Fall 2001 *Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection Newsletter*, and Melissa Maley Zinn (graduated May 2001) was asked to publish her paper on Turkish embroidered textiles in *Fabric of Life: Cultural Transformations in Turkish Society*, by the State University of New York. More information about this class can be found in Beth Blahut's article: "Researching and Interpreting Textiles: Students Examine Piece in the HLATC," *Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection Newsletter*, Fall 2001: 16-18.

38. Textile Pull Sheets, 1995.

39. Joan M. McFadyen (Member of the Spindle and Dyepot Guild of Milwaukee since 1981 and former President, Vice President, and

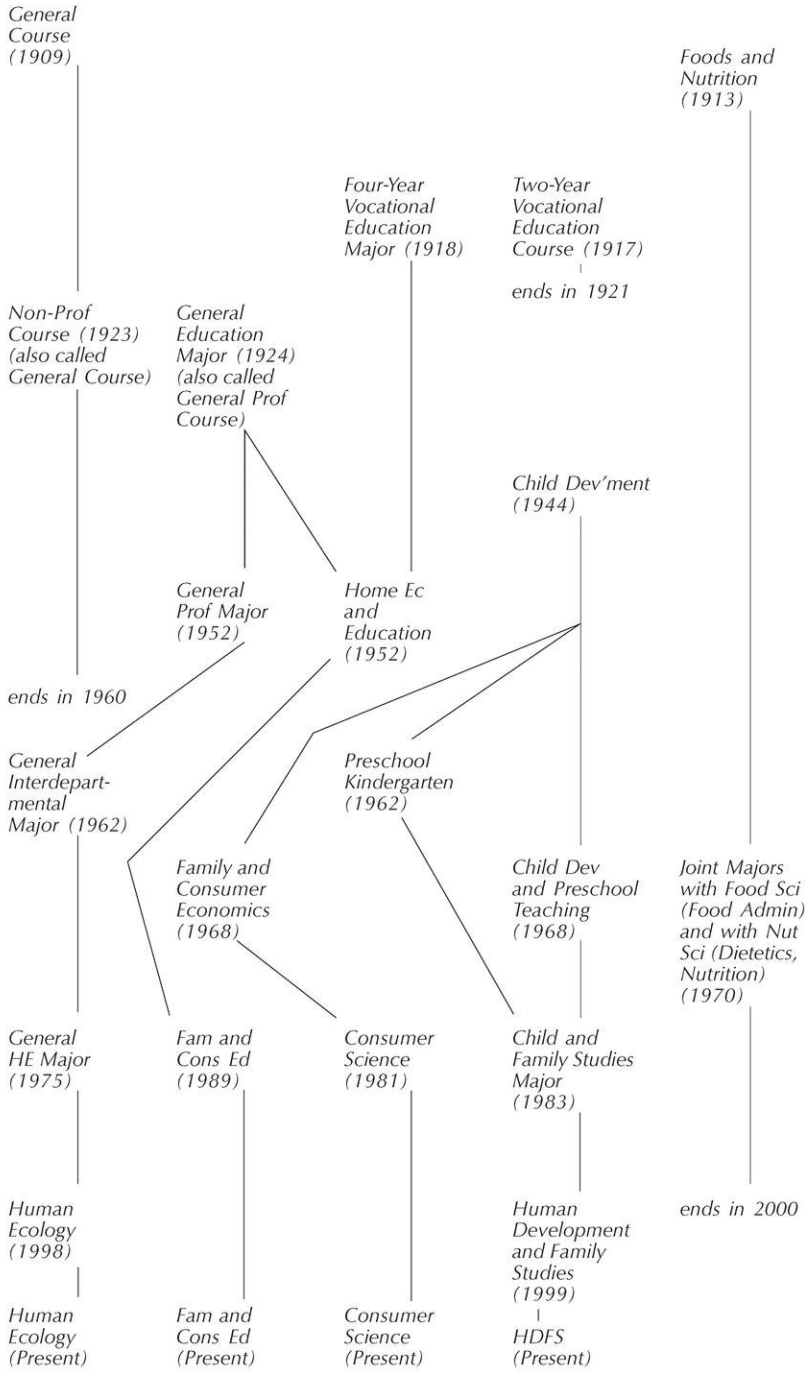
Activities Coordinator of the Guild), Interview with author, 6 April, 2002.

40. Mary Ann Fizgerald, "Curator Notes," *Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection Newsletter*, Fall, 2001: 3.

Appendix A: *Chronology of Administrators*

Caroline L. Hunt	Professor	1903–1908
Abby L. Marlatt	Professor and Director	1909–1939
Frances Zuill	Professor and Director (later Associate Dean)	1939–1961
Josephine H. Staab	Professor and Associate Dean	1961–1965
Rita L. Youmans	Professor and Associate Dean	1965–1968
Louise A. Young	Professor and Acting Associate Dean	1968–1969
William H. Marshall	Professor and Associate Dean	1969–1973
Rose M. Chioni	Professor and Acting Associate Dean (also Associate Dean, Nursing)	1973–1974
Elizabeth J. Simpson	Professor and Dean	1974–1985
Hamilton I. McCubbin	Professor and Dean	1985–1999
Robin A. Douthitt	Professor and Dean	1999–

Note: From 1903 to 1908, home economics was a department housed in the College of Letters and Science at the University of Wisconsin. From 1909 to 1973, home economics was housed in the College of Agriculture, first as a department headed by a director (1909–1951)and then as a dependent School within the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) headed by an associate dean of CALS (1951–1973). In 1968, the School was renamed the School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences (FRCS). In 1973, FRCS became an independent school within the University of Wisconsin–Madison, headed by a dean. In 1996, FRCS was renamed the School of Human Ecology.


General Course (1909)
Foods and Nutrition (1913)
Four-Year Vocational Education Major (1918)
Two-Year Vocational Education Course (1917)
ends in 1921
Non-Prof Course (1923) (also called General Course)
General Education Major (1924) (also called General Prof Course)
Child Dev'ment (1944)
General Prof Major (1952)
Home Ec and Education (1952)
ends in 1960
General Interdepart-mental Major (1962)
Preschool Kindergarten (1962)
Family and Consumer Economics (1968)
Child Dev and Preschool Teaching (1968)
Joint Majors with Food Sci (Food Admin) and with Nut Sci (Dietetics, Nutrition) (1970)
General HE Major (1975)
Fam and Cons Ed (1989)
Consumer Science (1981)
Child and Family Studies Major (1983)
Human Ecology (1998)
Human Development and Family Studies (1999)
ends in 2000
Human Ecology (Present)
Fam and Cons Ed (Present)
Consumer Science (Present)
HDFS (Present)

Appendix B:
Majors in Home Economics / FRCS / Human Ecology

(Dates based on biennial course catalogs)

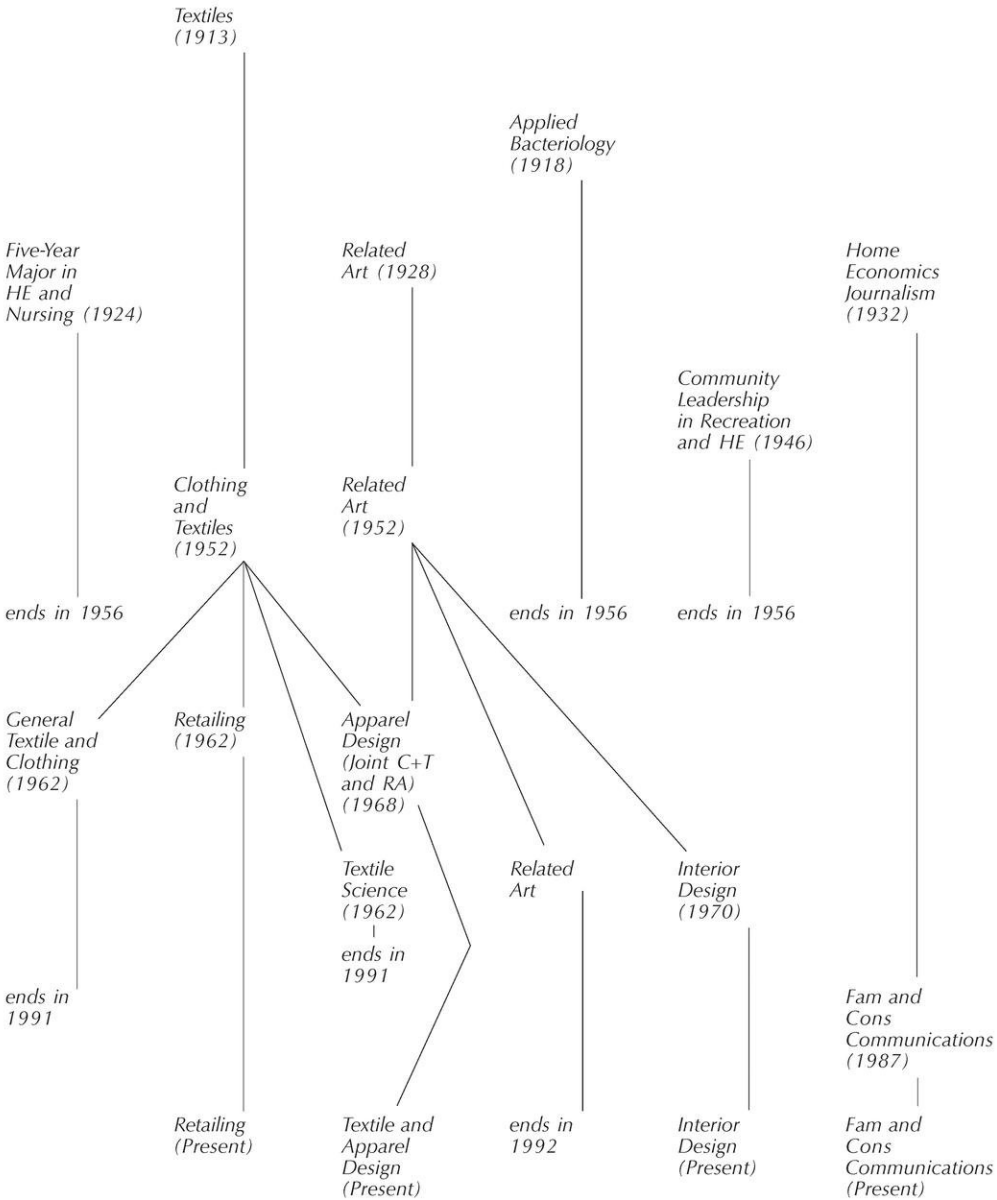


Illustration C.1: Clothing Laboratory, c. 1920. According to the 1920–21 catalog of home economics courses, "This junior course in clothing includes not only the comparative study of cost of material, cost of labor, and living conditions in the garment working trades, but offers laboratory practice in the technique of the clothing industry." Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 202, Folder 7: "Textiles and Fashion."

Illustration C.2: Interior design study, 1948. A brochure published for high school students explained that in interior design "the home economist integrates art studies in space, color, and texture with courses in sociology, history, and economics to develop standards and satisfactions so vital to the environment of the human being." Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/40.

Appendix C: *Department/ProgramDescriptions*

Environment, Textiles and Design (includes the former departments of Clothing and Textiles and Related Art)

During the Marlatt years, textiles and clothing grew in importance in the curriculum, beginning with the first required course in the spring of 1910 that introduced the students to the chemistry, economics, and aesthetics of clothing and fabrics. In 1913–1914, when Marlatt redesigned the curriculum, students enrolled in introductory courses and then had the option of following a separate track specializing in textiles. By 1924, these courses were combined into the formal Department of Clothing and Textiles. At the same time, the program area of Applied Art, which in 1927 was renamed Related Art, was also consolidated into a department. Clothing and Textiles and Related Art remained separate, popular departments over the subsequent decades, the former attracting students interested in fashion, clothing construction, and careers in merchandising, the latter serving students with courses in areas such as occupational therapy, interior design and costume design.

Over the years, the courses and faculties of the two Departments grew. By the 1960s, the character of these Departments had also changed, reflecting growing career opportunities. Administrators responded to students' interest in these expanding professions by introducing options (later majors) in apparel design and interior design. A significant component of the apparel design major, a joint program of the Related Art and Clothing and Textile Departments, was an internship with the Fashion Institute of Technology, New York City. In addition to courses that prepared students for positions in retailing, the Clothing and Textiles Department increasingly emphasized research among its faculty. Research and teaching began

to extend beyond Western fashion to embrace a more international perspective, a perspective underscored by the establishment and expansion of the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection.

With the School's reorganization in 1974, Clothing and Textiles and Related Art were combined in a single department, the Department of Environment and Design, shortly after renamed Environment, Textiles, and Design. The scope of this Department encompassed areas such as apparel design, interior design, textile science, and retailing. In 1993, the retailing area moved to the Department of Consumer Science. Today, the Department offers two undergraduate majors: interior design and textile and apparel design; and a graduate degree in design studies.

Illustration C.3: Gladys Stillman, c. 1920s. Stillman was an extension foods specialist who travelled throughout the state. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 3/1, Box 85.

Illustration C.4: Farm and Home Week, 1950. Dorothy Jutton and Doris Johnson, students of nutritionist Helen Parsons, at the Liver Exhibition. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 3: "Foods and nutrition."

Family Living Education (formerly Home Economics Extension)

The Wisconsin Idea has long encouraged members of the university community to reach out to the citizens of the state. Such a goal is reflected in the often-repeated phrase, "the boundaries of the campus are the boundaries of the state." Home economics extension has played an important role since shortly after the creation of the Home Economics Department in 1903. In 1905, Caroline Hunt offered a Housekeepers' Conference to bring the latest information about home economics to farm women from around the state. Extension activities dramatically expanded after 1914, when the Smith-Lever Act made federal funds available for extension.

Beginning in the late 1910s and early 1920s, home economics extension specialists in four areas (clothing, food, home management, and the milk campaign) traveled around the state in order to bring knowledge from the university to the state's citizens. Before a specialist arrived at a locale, the county agent for that area would gather a group of interested women, and after learning about the chosen subject, those community representatives would return to their communities to teach their friends and neighbors. It was an arrangement that allowed the specialist to reach more people than she or he otherwise would have, and provided leadership opportunities for homemakers around the state. Community members usually welcomed the knowledge brought to them, which might help them plan nutritious but inexpensive meals, improve the health of their families, or renovate their homes. During emergencies such as the Depression and the Second World War, the lessons focused on food conservation, home gardening, canning, and meat curing. The renovation of old clothing was also a popular subject.

In later years, additional subjects were added, including child development and parent education. Beginning after the Second World War, consumer education became an important area within home

economics extension in response to Wisconsin residents' new questions about consumer issues, credit, and financial planning. Topics in recent decades have included energy conservation and health insurance.

Extension personnel have employed a variety of technologies to reach their audiences. Beginning in 1929, the Homemakers Program, hosted from 1933 until 1965 by Aline Hazard, provided one means for communicating information to citizens. Later it was renamed Accent on Living, with host Norma Simpson. The 1960s and 1970s featured the introduction of several new technologies. In 1965, the Educational Telephone Network was established to facilitate conferences and training; other means of communication used included dial access telephone programs and commercial television and radio. Home economics extension was renamed during these years; in 1967 it became the Center for Women's and Family Living Education, which was later shortened to Family Living Education.

Family living education has undergone countless transformations over the century in response to changes in the structure of the School and of the university and to fluctuating funding levels. Such changes have resulted in a constant shifting of the relationship between extension faculty and resident faculty. In 1951, some specialists were made faculty of resident departments within the newly formed School of Home Economics. Fourteen years later, the Cooperative Extension Service and University Extension Division were merged into a new division (University of Wisconsin–Extension) that was treated as a parallel but separate campus from UW–Madison. The relationship between extension and resident faculty changed once again in the mid 1980s, when extension was reintegrated into the School.

Illustration C.5: *Wisconsin Country Magazine staff*, 1935. From 1907 to 1959, the magazine published many articles by home economics students about the academic and social life of the department, its students, and faculty. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography, Series 13/2/1, Box 169, Folder 2: "Agriculture Academic Groups."

Illustration C.6: Home economics journalism class, 1975. Professor Nellie McCannon directs two students as they prepare to photograph a cake. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 3/1, Box 61.

Family and Consumer Communications (formerly Family and Consumer Journalism; formerly Home Economics Journalism)

Even before the introduction of a major in Home Economics Journalism in 1933, some students had prepared for careers in journalism by completing majors in other fields of home economics and taking electives in the Journalism or Agricultural Journalism departments. Among these early graduates was Nell Nichols, who earned a masters in foods and nutrition with a minor in journalism in 1917, and who went on to write for and later edit *Women's Home Companion* in addition to authoring numerous cookbooks. During the early decades of the Home Economics Journalism major, students could choose to enrich their formal studies by writing for the *Wisconsin Country Magazine*, the student newspaper of the College of Agriculture. Students also gained experience in broadcasting by appearing on the WHA Homemakers Program under Aline Hazard's supervision. There they might present a talk on interior decorating, on better buying, or on how to plan a buffet supper.

Between 1951 and 1974, the home economics journalism major was included in the Home Economics Education and Extension Department. In 1974, with the introduction of the Home Economics Communications (later renamed Family and Consumer Communication) Department, the major finally achieved a greater degree of prominence. In addition to teaching students to employ an ever-expanding range of communication technologies, faculty members and students within the department have conducted research on the ways in which families and consumers use and respond to these media.

Illustration C.7: High school home economics class, c. 1925. The teacher is an unidentified, early graduate of home economics at the University of Wisconsin. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 1: "Classroom and Lab Scenes-General."

Illustration C.8: Home economics education, c.1940s. Published in a promotional brochure, the caption of this photograph reads: "The opportunity to teach in high schools and vocational schools provides a close contact with youth and the vital problems that concern them." Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/40.

Family and Consumer Education (formerly Home Economics Education)

With their inclusion of courses on the teaching of home economics in the earliest curriculum, Caroline Hunt and Abby Marlatt both designed their programs for women planning to teach at the secondary level. After the curriculum was redesigned in 1913, the General Course in Home Economics included a required Teachers' Course in the senior year. Passage of the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917 provided federal funds for training vocational education teachers, increasing the attention given to this component of the School. The initial two-year training certificate program was soon replaced with a four-year degree program which enrolled many students.

Teacher training remained a popular track for home economics students. In fact, the first home economics Ph.D. was in the area of home economics education: Julia Frank Nofsker in 1932 for her thesis "A Study of Home Economics Education in the Public High Schools of Wisconsin." This pedagogic focus and the large number of students studying to become teachers did not, however, lead quickly to the creation of a Home Economics Education Department. Rather, students combined their home economics courses with selected courses in the School of Education. The principal faculty member in the area from the 1920s through the 1950s was Ruth Henderson, who held a joint position in the Department of Home Economics and the School of Education, as well as at Wisconsin High School. Many of the home economics education students did their student teaching at Wisconsin High under her supervision.

In 1955, the Department of Home Economics Education was established, with Julia Dalrymple as its chair. Until 1974 it included the major in home economics communications. Over its history, the Department has worked jointly with several other units of campus: Home Economics Extension, the Department of Continuing and

Vocational Education, and the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. Today, it is known as family and consumer education and is housed in the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies in Human Ecology.

Illustration C.9: Food chemistry laboratory, 1909. This is one of the earliest photographs of the department of home economics, probably taken during the fall of 1909. Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 2: "Foods and Nutrition."

Illustration C.10: Dietetics class, 1948. Published in a promotional brochure, the caption reads: "Hospitals, business firms, schools and welfare agencies include specialists in nutrition to manage dietary departments and conduct education programs. Demand and diversification of opportunities are increasing." Source: University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 2003/40.

Foods and Nutrition

From the beginnings of home economics on the Madison campus as well as around the country, the curriculum stressed the nutritional sciences. In many institutions, nutrition was the most prominent of home economics departments, its faculty conducting research as well as holding courses on cooking and food sanitation. In times of national emergency such as World Wars, it was the nutrition faculty who led food conservation programs.

The initial requirements for a home economics degree at UW included forty-six credits of chemistry, physics, physiology, and bacteriology as the foundational sciences for courses such as "microscopical examination of food products and fibers" and "food analysis." For many years, dietetics, described as "Dietary standards; balanced rations; diet as influenced by age, sex, and occupation; construction of dietaries and service meals; dietetic treatment in disease and principles of home nursing," was a popular major for students who aspired to careers as dietitians in hospital or school cafeterias. Some of their laboratory study was conducted in the Practice Cottage. They also had the opportunity to gain experience in Stella Patton's course on tea room management. Other students elected to conduct research on nutrition, which involved working in the animal lab in the basement of the Home Economics Building. An additional group of students majored in experimental foods after it was introduced in the mid 1940s. Faculty also prepared extension publications on food safety and cooking techniques and frequently lectured for extension short courses.

The study of nutrition remained an important home economics major for many decades. In 1951, when the Department of Home Economics was re-organized as the School of Home Economics in the College of Agriculture, one of its four new departments was Foods and Nutrition. In 1968, however, when the School was again

re-organized and renamed the School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences (FRCS), the nutrition faculty moved into the newly created Department of Nutritional Sciences in the College of Agriculture. Some students interested in nutritional sciences and food administration continued to graduate with degrees from FRCS, later the School of Human Ecology. The School stopped admitting students to nutritional science in 2000.

Illustration C.11: Summer lab school, 1941. The children are attending the summer session of the PreSchool. Source: University of Wisconsin-Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 4: "Child and Family Studies," Negative# 23740-C.

Illustration C.12: Home management and family living class, c. 1964. Students are studying the topic of budgeting. Source: University of Wisconsin-Madison Archives Iconography Collection, Series 14/3, Box 201, Folder 5: "Consumer Science."

Home Management and Family Living (later Consumer Science and Human Development and Family Studies)

Long before the formation of the Department of Home Management and Family Living in 1951, the home economics program prominently featured a concern for the welfare of families and consumers. Abby Marlatt expanded the required curriculum with courses in the Economic Problems of Food Supply, which discussed the purchase and manufacture of foods as well as pure food laws; Household Management, which included topics like the organization of the household and the care of the house and family; and her own course Humanics, which covered issues like the development of the individual from infancy to adolescence, problems of hygiene and mental development as influenced by heredity, and habit formation. Courses such as these were part of the newly established Department of Foods and Administration in 1924. The Department's course offerings in these areas grew as faculty increased. After the Dorothy Roberts Nursery School (later renamed the PreSchool Laboratory) moved to campus in 1927, students observed children as part of their Humanics course. This type of work was expanded after the introduction of the first child development course in 1943. Similarly consumer and family economics courses were added throughout the years. In 1944, May Cowles taught the first family economics course on campus.

Formed in 1951, the Department of Home Management and Family Living included courses in these two subdisciplines and areas such as housing and home management. Over the years, the two strands became more clearly defined as child development and family relations, and family economics and management. With the increasing professionalization of home economics and the development of new majors, such as family and consumer economics in the mid-1960s,

interest grew in a more formal division between the two, one that would give each greater prominence. It was not until the 1974 reorganization, however, that the faculty of Home Management and Family Living were transferred to two new departments. Consumer Science was designed as professional education for leadership positions related to the consumer interest in government, education, business, and the media. It was also intended to further the School's goal of preparing educated consumers. Internships in agencies such as the State Attorney General's Office of Consumer Protection provided students with hands-on experience in consumer affairs. Child and Family Studies maintained its focus on preparing students for careers in early childhood and preschool and kindergarten teaching, while it also broadened its scope with courses such as Sex Differences, Sex Roles, and Society and The Afro-American Family. Both departments reflected social and professional changes in the next several decades. The retailing major moved from the Department of Environment, Textiles, and Design to the Department of Consumer Science in 1993. In 1999 to better reflect its shifting curriculum, Child and Family Studies changed its name to the Department of Human Development and Family Studies.

1895

Helen Campbell gives a series of lectures titled "Synoptical Lectures in Household Economy" at the suggestion of Professor Richard Ely. The following year her lectures are published under the title *Household Economics: A Course of Lectures in the School of Economics of the University of Wisconsin*.

1900

1901

The Wisconsin Federation of Women's Clubs votes to petition the legislature to establish a chair of domestic science and art at the state university. The following year the Madison Woman's Club endorses the movement to establish a chair of domestic science at the university and appoints a committee to present the subject to the legislature

1903

May The Wisconsin Legislature enacts Chapter 344, providing the UW Board of Regents with $7,500 for "domestic science and allied sciences." This amount is half of the amount originally requested by the Regents.

June The Board of Regents names Caroline L. Hunt professor of home economics, with her instructional work to begin in the second semester of the 1903–04 year.

1904

January The Regents vote to make Domestic Science a Department in the College of Letters and Science.

February The Home Economics Department offers its first classes. The Department is housed in South Hall.

September The Board of Regents appoints Ellen Alden Huntington as instructor of home economics.

Appendix D: *Timeline for the History of the School of Human Ecology, University of Wisconsin–Madison*

1905

February The first Housekeepers Conference is held. These one-week courses are offered every February to the wives of farmers in conjunction with Farm Week (later Farm and Home Week).

1908

Research in home economics begins with Ellen A. Huntington's publication, *The Fireless Cooker*.

June 16 The Regents transfer the Department of Home Economics from the College of Letters and Science to the College of Agriculture.

June 17 The Board of Regents accepts the (forced) resignation of Caroline Hunt, effective July 1, 1908. Classes are suspended for one year.

1909

April The Regents appoint Abby L. Marlatt professor of home economics, to take effect July 1, 1909.

Fall Classes begin once again. The department of Home Economics is temporarily housed in Agriculture Hall in Professor E.B. Hart's chemistry laboratory in the basement. Leona Hope is instructor of applied arts, and Alice Loomis, a graduate fellow and half-time assistant in foods.

1911

February The women's short course (Housekeepers Conference) is expanded to two weeks, the first consisting of lectures and demonstrations, and the second of laboratory practice. Attendance for the first week is more than 500, and 73 women attend the second week, although many others are refused admission due to lack of space.

The department moves into two rooms on the fourth floor (attic) of Lathrop Hall, the woman's clubhouse and gymnasium which had opened the previous year. In the fall, two more rooms are secured, giving the department one lecture room and three laboratories (food, clothing, applied design). The rooms are above the women's physical education department.

1910

Sarah Sutherland becomes the first graduate of the program when she earns a B.S. degree, with a thesis entitled "A Study of the Methods of Cooking the Rump of Beef Showing Cost, in Market Cost, in Preparation and Loss in Cooking."

Katherine Agnes Donovan earns an M.S. in home economics, making her the first recipient of a graduate degree in home economics at the University of Wisconsin. The title of her thesis is "A Study of Infant Mortality of Madison."

The Euthenics club is started.

July The Regents resolve "That the departments of Home Economics and University Extension be housed in a building to cost approximately $115,000 and to be located east of Agricultural Hall and north of the mall." They expect that University Extension's tenure in the building will be temporary, but in fact Extension ends up staying until 1962.

The University purchases a small house near Agriculture Hall. Once remodeled, it becomes the Practice Cottage. Students probably start using it in the fall of 1912.

1913

Fall The course in home economics broadens. Previously the department had offered only a general major. Beginning in the 1913–14 year, students can major in the general course, foods, or textiles.

1914

Fall The department moves into the east wing and fourth floor of the newly completed Home Economics and University Extension Building.

Passage of the Smith-Lever Act signals the beginning of home economics extension.

Home economics research is re-initiated with Dr. Amy Daniels. She uses graduate students to begin experimental work on the effects of preparation methods on nutrients in food. She moves to the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station in June 1918.

1915

Omicron Nu is established in Wisconsin, with UW as the Eta chapter.

1917

The Home Economics Alumni Association is established with Hazel Manning as its first president.

The University War Committee is organized. Members of the sub-committee on women's service—L.K. Mathews (Dean of Women), Emma Conley, and Abby L. Marlatt—present a course of emergency lectures and demonstrations for all university students. Topics include conservation of food, clothing, and health.

Passage of the Smith-Hughes Act provides federal funds for vocational education. A two-year course for vocational teachers in home economics is offered. It is continued for two years, and is then replaced with a four-year course.

1918

October Students in the Home Economics Department help care for influenza patients.

1920

1923

A tea room and cafeteria is established in the Home Economics Building to provide practical training in institutional management. Students had previously gained experience by working in the Lathrop Hall cafeteria, the Chadbourne Hall kitchen, and the tea room in Wingra Park, known as The Rendezvous.

June The Regents approve the "Non-Professional Course in Home Economics." The following year, the title is changed to General Major in Home Economics.

1924

June The Regents approve the creation of a new course combining nursing and home economics. The course leads to a certificate of Registered Nurse and a B.S. (Home Economics) with a major in nursing.

The Home Economics Department is divided into three departments: Administration and Foods, Clothing and Textiles, and Applied Arts.

1925

Phi Upsilon Omicron chapter is established.

The federal government grants Purnell research funds to the Home Economics Department.

1926

The Euthenics Club votes to affiliate with the American Home Economics Association.

Dorothy Roberts Nursery School is established. After spending a year in Luther Memorial Church, it moves in 1927 to a living porch added to the Practice Cottage.

1926-29

The first Homemakers Programs are broadcast during these years. By 1929, the program is aired five times a week on WHA.

1930

1930

Spring The Practice Cottage moves from the corner of Linden Drive and Randall Avenue to a new site at the corner of Linden Drive and Lorch Street to make way for a children's hospital. The nursery school remains in the basement.

1932

February Joint major between home economics and agricultural journalism approved.

May First Ph.D granted to Julia Frank Nofsker, in Education and Home Economics. The title of her thesis is "A study of home economics education in the public high schools of Wisconsin."

1938

Most home economics students sign a petition asking for more space for the Home Economics Department.

1939

Abby Marlatt retires. Frances Zuill is named director.

1940

January The Wisconsin Utilities Association, an association of investor-owned utilities, offers the Board of Regents $20,000 to construct a new home management house, with a provision for supplemental grants if necessary for equipment and furniture.

1943

The legislative committee of the Home Economics Alumni Association writes a letter to the alumni explaining the need for more space for the Department. Among the reasons cited is that the space was intended for 250 students in 1914, but by 1941 there are 675 students.

A major in child development is introduced as a joint program between several departments including Home Economics.

1940

1941

Spring The Home Management House is finished. The Dorothy Roberts Nursery School stays in the old Practice Cottage on Lorch Street. The Home Management House continues to be used for practical live-in training until the early 1970s.

1942

Spring Three home economics students run a Clothes Clinic to teach conservation. The Clinic teaches students to repair and renovate old clothing, with the goal of helping to "win the war."

1948

May At the suggestion of the members of the Euthenics Club, Phi Upsilon Omicron and Omicron Nu, the first Open House is held for high school students. Students view exhibits, tour the home economics building and nursery school, and hear various talks on career opportunities in home economics. Two hundred and thirty students attend the first Open House. By 1951, 800 students visit.

1950

Because the bids for Memorial Library are lower than expected, Governor Rennebohm releases funds for construction of the west wing of the Home Economics and University Extension Building. The Regents vote in November to seek construction bids.

1950

April The Regents vote to re-organize the Department into a School of Home Economics effective July 1, 1951. Frances Zuill is named Associate Dean in the College of Agriculture as well as Director of the School which has four departments: Clothing and Textiles, Foods and Nutrition, Home Management and Family Living, and Related Art. Several extension specialists become members of resident subject matter departments.

1951-53

The west wing of Home Economics Building is built at a cost of $975,000. The school moves in May 1953.

1955

The School adds a fifth department: Home Economics Education and Extension.

1957

The present Pre-School Laboratory is built between Ag Hall and the Home Management House.

1960

1961

Frances Zuill retires. Dr. Josephine Staab is named Associate Dean.

1962

University Extension vacates the center portion of the Home Economics Building.

1964

Dr. Josephine Staab resigns because of illness. Dr. Rita L. Youmans serves as Acting Associate Dean.

The Euthenics Club changes its name to the Home Economics Club.

1965

February Rita Youmans is named Associate Dean.

1967

July Rita Youmans begins holding a joint appointment at UW–Madison and UW–Milwaukee.

December A campus-wide advisory committee conducts a review of home economics. Its report advises that the School place more emphasis on research, focus on improving its graduate program, and adopt a name without the negative connotations of home economics. It also recommends that the School be established as an independent unit within the university, separate from the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

1968

May The name of the school changes to the School of Family Resources and Consumer Science (FRCS).

July The Department of Foods and Nutrition is repositioned in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. FRCS is organized into four program areas: home economics education and extension; home management and family living; related art; textiles and clothing. Rita Youmans transfers entirely to the UW–Milwaukee. Louise A. Young is named interim associate dean.

August Helen Allen dies. She bequeaths her collection of textiles to the university.

1969

August Dr. William H. Marshall is named associate dean and director of the School.

1970

March Marshall writes a letter to the director of the Wisconsin Utilities Association informing him of his wish to abandon the use of the Home Management House as a live-in practice cottage and instead to use it for office space and classrooms.

1970

1973

April Marshall is dismissed from his deanship by Dean of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, Glenn Pound, effective July 1.

The Report of the Ad Hoc Committee to Evaluate the Status of the School of Family Resources and Consumer Science recommends that the School be made an autonomous unit.

July 1 The School becomes an autonomous unit, administered by a dean. In July, Dr. Rose Marie Chioni is named acting dean of the School.

1974

July The school is reorganized into departments: Child and Family Studies, Consumer Science, Environment and Design (later Environment, Textiles and Design), Home Economics Education, and Home Economics Communications.

September Dr. Elizabeth Simpson is named dean.

1977

September The Minority Program Office of the School is opened under the direction of Professor Marion Brown.

1979

September The School marks its seventy-fifth anniversary with a celebration at the Sheraton Inn.

The Home Management House changes its name to the Child and Family Studies Center.

1980

1984

FRCS graduate student Grace Tonge publishes *Ten Dynamic Women* with funding from the Meta Schroeder Homemaker Fund. One of the women she features is Professor May Reynolds.

1985

Elizabeth Simpson steps down May 31. Dr. Hamilton McCubbin is named dean as of August 1.

1987

The Center for Retailing Studies is established with funding from May Department Stores, Federated Department Stores, and Main Street Stores.

1989

An estate gift endows Audrey Rothermel Bascom Professionships in the School.

1990

1991

A Jean Manchester Biddick gift establishes program support for the Center for Family Excellence.

Fall The Gallery of Design opens.

1992

Fall The Ruth Ketterer Harris Book Collection is dedicated.

1995

Helen Zepp Flexman estate gift establishes a fund to support educational programs related to women and philanthropy.

1996

A gift from James and Kathryn K. Vaughan endows the Vaughan Bascom Professionship in Women and Philanthropy.

July 1 The name of the School is changed to the School of Human Ecology.

1997

The Apparel Design 2 class designs a sweater for the university's sesquicentennial. The sweater is sold ccommercially.

1998

Fall The Arts Institute is established as an inter-college unit of the College of Letters and Science, the School of Education, and the School of Human Ecology.

1999

April

Hamilton McCubbin steps down as dean, effective July 1. Robin Douthitt named interim dean.

Elizabeth Metz of Marinette bequeaths almost half a million dollars to the school.

2000

A second pre-school site, the Bethany Preschool Center, is established. This site provides care for infants as well as toddlers.

2000

2001

Robin A. Douthitt is named dean.

Resources

Curti, Merle Eugene, and Vernon Carstensen, *The University of Wisconsin: A History, 1848–1925*, 2 vols. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1949)

Dickie, Ruth, "Women and Cooperative Home Economics Extension," in *University Women: A Series of Essays*, vol. II, Marian J. Swoboda and Audrey J. Roberts, eds. (University of Wisconsin, 1980), pp. 89-100

East, Marjorie, *Caroline Hunt, Philosopher for Home Economics* (Pennsylvania State University, [1982])

Glover, W. H., *Farm and College; The College of Agriculture of the University of Wisconsin, A History* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1952)

Jenkins, John W., *A Centennial History: A History of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at the University of Wisconsin–Madison* (University of Wisconsin–Madison, College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, 1991)

McGrath, Hazel F., "'The Brides' Course' Turns 75," *Wisconsin Alumnus Magazine*, May 1978, 79: 4-9, 29.

McIntyre, Elmwood R., *Fifty Years of Cooperative Extension in Wisconsin, 1912–1962* [Madison, WI: 1962?]

Petrich, Beatrice, "Home Economics at University of Wisconsin–Madison to 1939," unpublished typescript dated 1991, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives, Accession no. 99/17, Box 1.

Rossiter, Margaret, *Women Scientists in America: Before Affirmative Action, 1940–1970* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995)

Rossiter, Margaret, *Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982)

Stage, Sarah and Vincenti, Virginia B., eds., *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997)

Thorstad, Laureen Seefeldt and Jordre, Emma, "School of Family Resources and Consumer Sciences: Home Economics–Its Challenging Past, Present, and Future," pp. 87-99 in *A Resourceful University: The University of Wisconsin–Madison in its 125th year* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1975)

University of Wisconsin–Madison, "Home Economics to Human Ecology: A Centennial History at the University of Wisconsin–Madison: A collection of digitized images."
http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/SoHECent

University of Wisconsin–Madison Oral History Project.
http://archives.library.wisc.edu/oral/oral.htm

University of Wisconsin–Madison, School of Human Ecology, "History of the School of Human Ecology."
http://www.sohe.wisc.edu/depts/history/

Weigley, Emma Seifrit, "It Might Have Been Euthenics: The Lake Placid Conferences and the Home Economics Movement," *American Quarterly*, 1974, 26 (1): 79-96

Zenner, Greta M., "The Career of Helen Tracy Parsons (1887–1977): Balancing Home Economics and the Broader Scientific Community," M.A. paper, History of Science Department, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2003.

INDEX

"The Challenge of Constantly Changing Times"

A history of the School of Human Ecology at the

by Rima D. Apple

with Joyce Coleman
Susan R. King
Andrea Kolasinski Marcinkus
Judith E. Pasch

In 1903, with an appropriation from the legislature for a department of domestic science, home economics arrived at the University of Wisconsin. Its first director, Caroline L. Hunt, developed a science-based, liberal arts program to prepare women for their roles as wives, mothers, and citizens of the state. But her vision was much broader than that: to disseminate useful knowledge to Wisconsin farm women, the epitome of the Wisconsin Idea.

This small beginning of two faculty, fifty-two students, all women, and seven on-campus classes has grown into today's School of Human Ecology with a faculty of more than fifty-five who teach in five departments encompassing nine majors and enrolling more than 1,000 students, both women and men preparing for academic and professional careers in areas as diverse as education, communications, the arts, consumer protection, consumer affairs, child development, and family policy. These developments reflect the changing scope and content of home economics, now termed human ecology, on the national as well as the state level.

This book tells the story of the people and events that, in the words of Dean Frances Zuill, faced "the challenge of constantly changing times" to make the School the vibrant educational and research institution it is today.

Parallel Press
University of Wisconsin–Madison Libraries