

A New Method in Family Life Education

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This article is about some new educational materials for high school seniors entitled, "Milestones to Marriage." Authors of these pamphlets are Robert L. Sutherland, director of the Hogg Foundation of the University of Texas; Bernice Moore, also of the Hogg Foundation and co-author of "You and Your Family"; Loyd W. Rowland, director of the Louisiana Society for Mental Health and author of the "Pierre the Pelican" series; and Henry Bowman, of Stephens College and author of "Marriage for Moderns."

DURING the past few weeks the democracies have been using small balloons to carry bundles of printed matter behind the Iron Curtain into Czechoslovakia and Poland—an ingenious method for overcoming a difficult obstacle.

There are those who say that the curriculum of the American high school is almost as hard to get through as the Iron Curtain. Educators who want to introduce new and helpful materials into the curriculum have to use all the ingenuity they can command.

Part of the difficulty is status, and status is partly historical. Those subjects which got there first are holding ground. The charge of "fads and frills" is thrown at new subjects which have been added more recently to the high school student's bill of fare. It is within the memory of many now living that the sciences were considered an innovation, not having the same standing as Latin, mathematics and literature.

Piercing the 'Curriculum Curtain'

One such new area of instruction, for which there is almost universal rec-

ognition of need, is in the field of training for marriage and family life. But it is almost impossible to introduce a course of this type because of the curriculum curtain. Even where such courses are given, only a few persons elect to take them, either because of "requirements" or because the courses have a departmental connection such as, for example, with home economics. For such reasons most boys do not take the courses, and neither do many girls.

To surmount these difficulties the Woman's Foundation has recently prepared a new series of pamphlets entitled *Milestones to Marriage*. The pamphlets are planned for distribution to *all* seniors within a given high school or a school system, quite without regard for any formal course in the curriculum. The pamphlets are designed to emphasize the following ideas:

- The same qualities that make for success in ordinary human relationships make for success in marriage. A general improvement of personality will show results later in improved family life.



- The student's present home is setting a pattern for his future home.
- It is possible by thoughtful consideration to improve one's choice of a marriage partner. Infatuation is recognizable and tricky.
- The ideal marriage achieves the goal of *partners* who live and reach decisions together.

The late John J. Raskob advanced the notion that the best ideas on marriage and family living might be taken from such courses in colleges and secondary schools, printed in the form of attractive pamphlets, and placed directly in the hands of high school seniors at school or sent to them at home by mail.

Pamphlets Mailed to Students

Most adults, particularly those in business and professional life, welcome the postman each day with mixed emotions. He brings them so much of good news and so much of bad that they are actually entitled to their feeling. Not so the high school senior. The postman brings him mostly good news, and he still reads his second class mail! In short, he is pleased to receive his mail. As educators, we should take advantage of this fact. There is no reason why in these days when people who sit in adjoining offices write letters to each other, the school should not send educational material to its students by mail.

Some educators, however, will choose to distribute the pamphlets directly in school by some method convenient to their facilities.

Once the materials are in the hands of the students there are likely to be requests for an opportunity to have discussions. These discussion periods may be very appropriately held in senior home rooms, in club meetings, or sometimes in classes.

But even if there is no discussion period, the pamphlets will still have value as personal reading for the student. It is important, therefore, to have content which can be understood without discussion. This has been attempted in the preparation of the *Milestones to Marriage* materials.

Need for Special Material

There is a great shortage of trained teachers for the field of marriage and family life education. In fact, the principal is inclined to throw up his hands when somebody asks him for such a course. The persistent problem is the teacher. It is also difficult to find per-

sons with sufficient emotional balance to teach courses in marriage and family life.

Once the late Caroline Zachry was discussing the difficulty of securing emotionally balanced persons for work in counseling, and made the famous remark, "Honestly, sometimes when I look out at my class of guidance trainees I think I am looking into a psychopathic ward." Hence, it becomes increasingly necessary to prepare materials not dependent, initially at least, upon the services of a teacher who is trained to give courses in marriage and family life. However, it is hoped that so much interest will be generated in those schools in which all seniors receive the *Milestones to Marriage* service that a demand for more extensive work in marriage and family life will grow and become insistent. It is quite possible that by using this material, excellent judgments on the part of the student will be reached either with a teacher, through group discussions, or through independent study.

Wider Use of Discussion

In American life, and indeed in that of all countries where a democratic approach is possible, the discussion technique is finding increasing use. It educates; it introduces new ideas; it polishes off the edges of the radicals when they are forced to give the reason why. Furthermore, it gives adults an opportunity to observe the incisive wisdom of students of the high school level.

There is a need to build into our traditions the notion that it is proper and helpful for a young person, nearing the completion of high school, to consider openly, along with his fellows,

what is involved in falling in love and in establishing a home. We need to take the subject out of the field of opaque infatuation, where discussion does not seem to be possible, to the area of translucent affection, where it is possible to talk about matters and reach sensible decisions.

There is hardly a senior who is not deeply concerned about his own married future. He wants it to be successful, very successful. He wants to talk about these matters, especially if he feels it is the "thing to do" to talk about them.

Boys and girls reaching their senior year in high school need to get each other's point of view on marriage. The only close view they have had of marriage at work has been in their own homes, and we know that what they have seen is often not a very good example. Another potent source is the romanticized version of marriage which they pick up in the movies. This version is hardly typical and barely touches the day-to-day adjustments of living.

One of Life's Great Experiences

The American boy is not clear as to the role of a husband. Indeed that role is changing rather considerably. Co-education in the high school has convinced the boy, if he is alert at all, that girls are his equal in every way mentally. He may think of himself as going to "wear the pants" when he gets married, and be the "boss" in the home. Yet, he has the conflicting memory that the woman he marries is likely to be his intellectual equal. Nor does the wife like to take the subservient role in terms of decision-making. High school seniors should be given an opportunity

to sit down in groups and discuss frankly the role of husband and wife in marriage and come to approximate the democratic idea in marriage and home life as we are coming to view it in so many important areas of living.

The topic of sex has not been included. The authors frankly feel that this series is intended for use as a basis of discussion, wherever feasible. It would not be possible to discuss a pamphlet on sex in most communities and at the grade level for which these materials are prepared. The authors do not deny the importance of sex in marriage, but

they feel that other areas which have great significance for success in marriage can be explored with helpfulness to youth.

The modern school is trying more and more to get subject matter and method closer and closer to what we are pleased to call education for living. One of the greatest experiences of life is marriage and the adjustments that follow. Marriage and homes are here to stay. It is inconceivable that the better school of today, or that any school of tomorrow, should neglect this important area.

Guidance Practices for Child Socialization

AILEEN SCHOEPPE

Implications of recent studies having to do with child socialization are developed in this article. Aileen Schoeppe is assistant professor of education, Roosevelt College of Chicago, Illinois.

SOCIALIZATION is the lifelong process by which the human organism develops its primary drives and emotions into the socially controlled motivations which are expected and rewarded by his society. Thus "socialization" and "education," in its broadest interpretation, may be considered synonymous.

'Frameworks of Adjustment'

An individual's adjustment thus becomes the matter of integrating his own needs and purposes with those of his social world. This is sometimes difficult, particularly because the pattern he may be expected to learn, especially in modern intricate societies, is some-

times inconsistent. But, fortunately, "frameworks of adjustment" (12) set limits to the possibilities of adjustment.

The first of these frameworks—the consistent and repeated patterning of beliefs, values, sanctions, expectancies and pressures characteristic of the social group in which he grows and develops—limits the range of possible behavior and clarifies the direction of proper social adjustment for a given individual. Early in the individual's life there is the organization and development of the "self," which sets a second framework. The third delimiting framework is the knowledge that most of an individual's adjustments are to tasks com-

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