

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MARRIED AND SINGLE  
HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS IN RELATION TO  
PERSONAL AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT  
AND EARLY DATING PRACTICES

By

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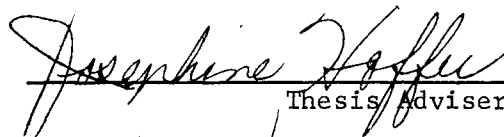
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Chapter   | Page |
|---|------|
| I. THE PROBLEM AND ITS IMPORTANCE. . . . .  | 1    |
| Need for the Study . . . . .  | 3    |
| Purposes of the Study. . . . .  | 5    |
| Hypotheses . . . . .  | 6    |
| II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE. . . . .   | 7    |
| Early Dating . . . . .  | 7    |
| Early Marriage . . . . .  | 12   |
| Family Background of Married High School Girls . . . . .                                    | 16   |
| Education Goals and Rate of Dropout for Married<br>High School Students . . . . .           | 18   |
| III. PROCEDURE . . . . .  | 22   |
| The Development of the Questionnaire . . . . .  | 22   |
| Selection of the Personality Test. . . . .  | 23   |
| Selection of the Subjects. . . . .  | 24   |
| IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA. . . . .   | 25   |
| Description of Subjects. . . . .  | 26   |
| Dating Practices for Married and Single High<br>School Girls . . . . .                      | 29   |
| Subjects' Reaction to Parents' Attitudes Toward<br>Girls' Behavior and Activities . . . . . | 35   |
| Subjects' Responses Concerning Parental Objections . . . . .                                | 41   |
| Educational Goals. . . . .  | 45   |
| Girls' Friendships . . . . .  | 47   |
| V. SUMMARY . . . . .  | 49   |
| Recommendations. . . . .  | 51   |
| A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY. . . . .  | 54   |
| APPENDIX A . . . . .  | 57   |
| APPENDIX B . . . . .  | 66   |

| Chapter              | Page |
|----------------------|------|
| APPENDIX C . . . . . | 70   |
| APPENDIX D . . . . . | 73   |

LIST OF TABLES

| Table  | Page |
|--|------|
| I. t Values Reflecting Significance of Differences of Responses of Married and Single Girls to the <u>California Test of Personality</u> . . . . . | 25   |
| II. Age and Grade Placement for Subjects. . . . .  | 27   |
| III. Place of Residence for Married and Single Girls . . . . .   | 27   |
| IV. Years at Present Address for Subjects . . . . .  | 28   |
| V. Parents' Occupational Levels. . . . .   | 28   |
| VI. Number of Siblings per Subject. . . . .  | 29   |
| VII. Age for First Steady Dating . . . . .   | 30   |
| VIII. Parents' Permission for Steady Dating at Age Indicated. . . . .  | 30   |
| IX. Parents' Attitudes Toward Steady Dating . . . . .  | 31   |
| X. Number of Steady Boyfriends . . . . .   | 32   |
| XI. The Meaning of Steady Dating. . . . .  | 33   |
| XII. Girls' Evaluation of Dating Practices . . . . .   | 34   |
| XIII. Girls' Evaluation of Steady Dating As Related to Popularity. . . . .   | 35   |
| XIV. Parents' Attitudes Toward Daughters' Education. . . . .   | 36   |
| XV. Girls' Responses Concerning the Importance of Parents' Approval of Boys Dated. . . . .   | 36   |
| XVI. Parents' Interest in Meeting Boys, Their Daughter's Date. . . . .   | 37   |
| XVII. Permission and When to Date . . . . .  | 37   |
| XVIII. Age for First Car Dating. . . . .   | 38   |
| XIX. Permission to Date at Age Indicated . . . . .   | 39   |

| Table   | Page |
|---|------|
| XX. Parents' Interest in Place for Date and Hours for<br>Coming Home . . . . .                    | 39   |
| XXI. Parents' Perceptions Toward Amount of Dating. . . . .  | 40   |
| XXII. Parents' Objections to Daughters Dating Boys Older<br>(3-5 Years) Than Themselves . . . . . | 41   |
| XXIII. Girls' Dating of Boys 3-5 Years Older . . . . .  | 42   |
| XXIV. Parents' and Daughters' Disagreements on Choice of<br>Dates . . . . .                       | 43   |
| XXV. Parents' Reasons for Daughters Not Dating Certain Boys. .                                    | 43   |
| XXVI. Girls' Reactions to Parents' Rules for Dating . . . . .                                     | 44   |
| XXVII. Parents' Evaluation of Boys Dated . . . . .  | 45   |
| XXVIII. Educational Goals of Married and Single High School<br>Girls . . . . .                    | 46   |
| XXIX. Importance of a High School Education to the Girls. . . .                                   | 46   |
| XXX. Girls' Friendships. . . . .  | 47   |
| XXXI. Number of Friends Who Married During Past Year. . . . .                                     | 48   |

## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND ITS IMPORTANCE

This research was designed to compare the personality and dating practices of married and single high school students. Many researchers have expressed the view that early marriages concern all of society. Marriage while in high school may obstruct basic goals of the individuals who have entered the marriage, and almost always brings to an end the educational pursuit of a diploma.

Since high school marriage is not considered desirable in American middle-class families, school policies encourage delay in marriage while providing some way to satisfy the educational goals and rights of married students.

Burchinal (8) found that current concern about young marriage provides a powerful basis for defending existing marriage and family life education programs and for proposing their expansion. Young marriage is an important issue. It touches several basic American values: norms of premarital chastity, the value of strong home and family life, and the importance of an adequate education. Because young marriage is generally seen as a threat to these values, strong opinions about young marriage are widespread.

Many parents are not able or willing to provide their children with adequate preparation for and guidance during their dating and courtship experiences. One reason for this is that many parents are



not prepared intellectually or emotionally to discuss and guide their children in these matters.

Havighurst (20) has called for "heroic action" on the part of family life educators to design programs that provide useful knowledge for children from inadequate homes characterized by ignorance, rejection, or neglect. He sees the need for special understanding of these students, and the need for special educational programs for these youth, many of whom will have dropped out of school either before or after entering an early marriage. Education for these youth would have to be conducted by persons who combine homemaking skills and social work competency. Efforts must be made to break the vicious circle in which these youth are caught, if the next generation is not going to repeat the process of the present generation.

Genne (17) in the Family Life Coordinator stated, "Early marriage and any other aspect of modern marriage and family life can be regarded as a problem only as it impedes or obstructs the attainment and fulfillment of certain goals." (p. 67) One of these goals is the personal fulfillment, and the continual growth and development of all family members. This includes the specific goals of personality development, educational attainment, occupational achievement and parenthood. Therefore, when the responsibilities and obligation of marriage are undertaken too early, or when adverse conditions exist, the possibility of achieving these goals of personal growth and fulfillment are lessened.

Early marriage is not only a personal or individual concern, it is a concern for the society. For the welfare of children, marriage as a basic and primary social unit should be stable and responsible, economically sound and productive, while discovering, conserving, expanding

the highest social values. Whenever a marriage cannot exist as such, it is then regarded as a societal matter as well as humanitarian concern.

#### Need for the Study

Through a better understanding of the girls who marry while in high school, better programs of family life education can be planned, and parents can be aided in learning to understand their early married daughters. Concern with early marriage grows out of the fact that a higher than average proportion of these early marriages fail to obtain the goals that the married couple hope to attain. Marriage while in high school is a concern for families, educators, and society in general.

Herman (21) found the practices of steady dating is now appearing in the upper grades and junior high levels, where it may be considered as evidence of immaturity and insecurity in many cases. With steady dating becoming more common, it appears that many grade and junior high pupils are pushed too quickly into relationships they are unable to handle. In most cases the children are apparently encouraged by their parents who may have romantic goals and status ambitions which they are trying to attain vicariously through their children.

There is a need to understand more about the parental and peer pressures that guide these young children into early paired relationships. A look at needs that are not being met by family and friends but are being met by a steady dating partner may help explain some of the early dating practices.

Christensen (12) believes teen-age marriages are a symptom of a changing pattern of marriage, about which there is concern on the part of parents, teachers, and social workers. A better understanding of the youth who marry early may help educators help them to adjust to their new role. There is a high drop-out rate for girls who have married during high school. This high drop-out rate may have been encouraged by the ill defined and rather negative attitudes of some school officials toward student marriages. Many administrators have the fear that married students will influence unmarried students to marry early. When a student wife becomes pregnant she is usually pressured or requested to withdraw from school.

Courses in family life education could help prepare youngsters for the future and by contributing to their understanding of the effects of early and usually ill advised marriages. But too many high schools make no attempt in that direction, or the high schools that do offer courses in family living are not certain as to who should be taught, and what should be taught.

Christensen (12) believes it is probably no accident that the increasing divorce rate in the United States is paralleled by the decreasing age at marriage. The age at marriage is highly related to socioeconomic status. Early marriage is more prevalent among the lower socioeconomic groups. Burchinal (8) found that approximately two-fifths of the girls of high school age in the lowest socioeconomic homes married early. These girls have special educational needs that cannot be met in conventional, middle-class family living classes. Teachers of these disadvantaged students need to make special effort to gain knowledge of the causes and outcomes of early marriages, and

seek to understand more about their special problems.

One of the most consistently reported findings regarding early marriage has been that of a strong relationship between early marriage and poor adjustment to marriage. This indicates that those who marry early are more likely to experience greater marital discord, including less marital satisfaction and more marital dissolution than those who marry during their twenties.

#### Purposes of the Study

The investigator believes there is a need to understand the young high school girl in relation to her apparent desire or need for early marriage. The purposes of this research will be related to the personality and dating practices of a selected group of high school married girls, and a selected group of high school single girls.

The overall purpose of this study is to ascertain if the girl who marries while in high school is different in personality and dating practices from the girl who delays marriage for college or career.

Specifically the purposes of the study were stated as follows:

1. To ascertain if married girls' responses to their parents' attitudes and practices toward early dating are different from those who delay marriage.
2. To ascertain married and single high school girls' views concerning early marriage and education.
3. To compare the personality adjustment of high school married girls to the personality adjustment of high school single girls.

## Hypotheses

The hypotheses to be tested in this study were:

1. The total personality scores of married girls are no different from those of single girls.
2. The total personal adjustment scores of married girls are no different from those of single high school girls.
3. The social adjustment scores of married girls are no different from those of single high school girls.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### Early Dating

The dating process has been viewed as an educational experience which aids the individual in developing criteria for mate selection. Those who maintain this position may often promote early dating as an important means to avoid later personal and social handicaps. Others have a contrasting view, maintaining that early dating has robbed young people of their childhood, and forced them to grow up too soon. Bayer (3) reported that early dating is assumed to lead to early marriage and subsequent increased probability of marital discord.

Dating and, eventually, mate selection for most people in the American society is a gradual process that starts with casual dating and moves through the engagement process. Moss (30) indicated that younger age levels at beginning dating and steady dating are associated with our society. That young people date earlier and meet more often is a reflection of the general cultural conditions of the United States. These conditions are seen as increased opportunity for the youth to meet and meet intimately. The city anonymity and lack of surveillance by the adults coupled with increased opportunities of transportation and communication make earlier and more frequent dating available.

Mudd and Hey (32) indicated that high school students who start early in heterosexual involvements which lead to marriage may be

expected to plan to marry earlier than those who have not dated from an early age. They also reported that adolescents with low aspiration levels and inadequate self-concepts may be expected to fall in love and have strong drives toward marriage as an escape from an unpromising life situation.

Kirkpatrick (24) observed that young people of dating age fully expect sooner or later they will be caught in the magic spell of love and experience the pangs and delights which seem as inevitable as growing older or being mortal. Because marriage is of great importance in American society, especially for the girl, love must be encouraged so that marriage will occur during the accepted age period. Staton (33) noted that it is usual for the girl to focus on the romantic aspects of love. When the adolescent girl projects her thoughts into her future marriage, she may have an unrealistic view of the role she will fulfill.

A significant trend in our changing culture is the acceleration of adulthood. Broderick and Fowler (6) found that heterosexual relationship customs once reserved for early adulthood are now widely practiced by the very young. Not infrequently, dating and going steady start in junior high school. There is an increase in cross-sex friendships, involving romantic attachments, in the upper grades. With these friendships more cross-sexual experimentation, an increase in early marriage rates, and greater difficulties in finding clearly defined and generally accepted sex roles may be expected. Many adolescents today reflect this eagerness to become adults without the awareness that physical development and adult-like activities do not endow one, automatically with adult status.

Mead (28) reported early group dating to be a pattern that is spreading over the United States in the junior high school and in some cases the upper elementary grades. Under this system, dances, parties, and other functions are arranged for groups, but the students are encouraged to pair off. Since girls mature more quickly than boys, often girls take the initiative in making the arrangements. Once a pattern develops to the point that everyone must date in order to belong, the pressure is evident.

Cavan (11) reported that in the average junior high school today some random dating takes place. She reported that nineteen percent of the boys and sixteen percent of the girls in her study had begun to date in the seventh grade. Hollingshead (22) found in his study of Elmtown's Youth, fifty-eight percent of the girls and forty-three percent of the boys had at least one date during grade school. Group pressure to date is now so common that most students will try to date at least occasionally. Lowrie (27) found early dating to occur in homes that were permissive, liberal, more adaptable to change, where there had been a social climate, and parent-adolescent relationships offering guidance, understanding, and some direction.

Landis (25) found parental opposition to be a problem in relation to dating. Several issues divided parents concerning the teenager and the question of dating. One of these issues is the first date. In a study, less than half the boys and three-fourths of the girls had to secure permission for the first date. Both the number of dates and the time limits posed some intense conflict. Difficulties arose between parent and daughter over choice of boyfriend and her degree of acquaintance with him. There were also disagreements about the kinds of



activities encompassed by the date.

Cavan (10) examined class differences in the dating practices of high school youth. The upper-class youth do not necessarily use dating as a status device. These youth have status by virtue of family origin. They associate with the opposite sex on a casual, noncommittal precourtship level. Adults exercise more control over the young people by indirect methods than do other class levels, especially the lower class. Many lower class youths in contrast to the upper class and middle class youths, tend to drop out of high school early and accept low-paying jobs. They resist parental control, and insist on their own control of premarital behavior. Many dates are not prearranged; couples pair off at centers where youth congregate. Sexual intimacy is typical on dates which develop in this fashion. In more stable working class families, parents exercise more control over the dating process, especially regarding hours to be kept, places to be visited, and other limitations.

Duvall (15) observed that young people today are more experienced and knowledgeable than a generation ago. They are doing so because of wider travel and higher mobility than ever before. They have far more social poise, as well as more difficulty in certain areas of life. These young people have grown up in a time of history and in a country of unparalleled affluence. She stated, "Today's young people are growing up faster, maturing at earlier ages, socially and physically." Boy-girl dating begins at much earlier ages today than a generation ago, oftentimes with parental approval or even pressure. Many of our young people are staying out far later at night without their families knowing where they are. Youngsters are going steady at an earlier age

and almost as soon as dating begins. Going steady is their way of coping with the early dating situation, before they have the time, skills, and readiness for this relationship.

Herman (21) found going steady the dating norm for junior and senior high school years. He identified two types of going steady in junior and senior high school. The one group is college orientated and the going steady is a dalliance relationship and is not expected to eventuate in marriage. To the noncollege oriented group the going steady relationship may be more serious. The benefits of going steady that the students identified in his study were: (1) status and peer group recognition, (2) guarantee for a partner for social affairs, (3) alleviation of the competition struggle for dates.

Merrill (29) in Courtship and Marriage, stated,

Whatever its ultimate orientation, the practice of going steady is widespread. General evidence indicates that it is starting earlier and becoming more evident all the time.  
(p. 69)

In agreement with this, LeMasters (26) found that the going steady complex has replaced random dating as the preferred dating relationship for American young people, at the junior and high school levels.

Ehrmann (16) found after World War II (during the 1940's), dating and marriage became the basis for companionship in which couples sought understanding, friendship, love, emotional security. Thus, going steady became a common custom among all ranks of adolescents and young adults, by which male and females learned to understand and to have more confidence in themselves and in one another.

Dating fulfills many important factors in the socialization of youth, and as such, may best be considered as a gradual developmental

process based on progressively greater experience, all of which ideally should help youth to make more intelligent selections of marriage partners (Lowrie, 27). But when this development is cut short by a premature early marriage, the couple may find problems in their marriage they did not experience as two individuals.

### Early Marriage

Burchinal (8) identified some characteristics for the youth who marry. Among the generalizations concerning characteristics of young marriage and young spouses are the following: (1) youthful marriages predominantly involve young females and their slightly older husbands, (2) approximately one-third to over one-half of all young marriages involve premarital pregnancies, (3) young marriages are not elopements; instead, they reflect the characteristics of conventional weddings; (4) educational levels of young husbands and wives are lower than those for single persons of comparable ages; estimated rates of drop-out for married girls range from fifty to ninety percent, and few of these students ever re-enter school; (5) students who marry before they have graduated from high school generally have lower measured intelligence scores and have lower grades than the unmarried girls; (6) young marriages usually involve persons from lower-or-working class backgrounds; (7) with lower levels of education and with employment largely limited to unskilled and semiskilled jobs, young marriages generally are established and maintained on a meager economic basis; (8) parental financial assistance represents an important contribution to the economic livelihood of the young couple.

Havighurst (19) found that there are two types of girls who marry early. One type is the girl in the upper-lower or the lower-lower class who is socially maladjusted in school and is doing poor school-work. For this kind of girl, whose progress is blocked along the lines she sees her classmates following, marriage is the best solution. It is a chance at something she wants, though in reality it may be different from what she expects. The other type of girl who marries early is a girl in the lower-middle class, the upper-middle, or the upper-lower class. She gets along well in school but prefers marriage immediately after high school graduation or before graduation from high school. For this type of girl, high school has been a satisfactory pathway to growing up, but marriage is the desirable course as soon as possible.

Ehrmann (16) noted that the great increase in the number of teenage marriages was and is yet a manifestation of the search for the social security offered by the institutionalization, and also the legal sanctions, of the male-female relation. In addition, and of great personal and social significance, was the fact that youth was desperately trying to achieve both the independence of adulthood and the security of a protected emotional and social relation, and that marriage offered, or appeared to offer, a solution to both these youthful quest.

Burchinal (7) reported early and serious dating generally promotes movement toward increased physical involvement, with the result that premarital pregnancy often becomes the precipitating factor in marriage decisions. Estimates of premarital pregnancy rates among young marriages range from over thirty percent to nearly ninety percent when both spouses are of high school age in comparison with approximately

twenty percent of brides of all other ages.

Burchinal (7) found that for girls who have not completed high school, marriage clearly confers adult status apart from or in addition to any other institutionalized means available to the girls. As adolescents, girls have school, community, family, dating, and courtship roles, but marriage permits a new set of adult and marital roles. Girls who marry before the completion of high school, in effect, reject adolescent role behavior. Rejection of the adolescent role would likely occur (1) when present role satisfactions are less than present role expectations, or (2) when present role satisfactions are less than anticipated marital role satisfactions. Thus early marriage is taken as an index of role change.

Moss and Gingles (31) reported in 1961 that girls who marry early are emotionally less stable than those who marry later, and early and steady dating practices are associated with earlier marriages. The emotional difficulties of girls who marry early are more difficult than for those who marry later. Evidently, adjustment difficulties of girls who marry early are more related to their personal than to their social adjustment. Another finding was that early married girls began to date and go steady at an earlier age, had a greater number of steadies or dates than the corresponding single girls. This fact may be interpreted as an adolescent's means of striving for adulthood. Moss and Gingles also found that a factor which may result in early marriage for adolescents might be the knowledge of marital life they gain from friends who marry early. Early married girls have more close friends who marry early than girls who do not marry early. The difference is minor for the non-premaritally pregnant girls, while it is larger and

statistically significant for the premaritally pregnant girl.

Burchinal (7) identified ten social conditions believed to contribute to young marriages: (1) the insecurity of our times, which has created needs among young people to find someone with whom they can have unquestionable loyalty and love, (2) the cult of personal happiness and the rejection of intellectualism and achievement; (3) the "Bandwagon Effect" one marriage contributes to another, and soon everyone is doing it; (4) the impact of World War II, the Korean War, and the continuation of the draft; (5) an escape from an unhappy home, school, or community situation; (6) an attempt to resolve personal or social adjustment problems; (7) the reduction of economic risks in marriage as a result of current prosperity; (8) encouragement from romantic and glamorous images of marriage and the corresponding unrealistic over-evaluation of marriage; (9) acceleration of adult status as reflected in advanced levels of heterosexual interaction at a younger age; (10) stimulation of sexual drives by sex appeals and intense physical expressions of affection in mass media, with the result that premarital pregnancy becomes a precipitating factor in many, if not most, youthful marriage decisions.

Burchinal (7) also found that idealized images of marriages, are held by both adolescents and young adults. The impulsiveness of many young marriages include the brief period of acquaintanceship or engagement preceding most young marriages, their meager economic basis, and the fact that such marriages often occur despite parental opposition, and their greater degree of departure from religiously endogamous norms.

Zurback's (35) factors which high school youth considered important in choices of a marriage mate are more related to personal

qualities, such as: (1) emotional love, (2) emotional maturity, (3) agreeable personality, (4) same religion, (5) physical attractiveness, (6) common interest, (7) financial responsibility, (8) intelligence, (9) family background. Emotional love according to the high school students meant physical, sexual love. Emotional love, confused with physical love, therefore becomes to them the most important factor in the selection of a marital partner. He also found, "To the extent that it represents an immature reaction, the ensuing marriage may be an immature relationship" (p. 77). Maturity to many adolescents means not a developmental process but a state to be reached as soon as possible. They do not want to be thought of as children. Feeling insecure in the period of rapid physical and emotional change, they may seek emotional maturity, through early marriage, as a panacea for their present inadequacies. He further points out a consequence of the romantic complex is that high school students tend to place family background last in factors of importance to them in marriage.

#### Family Background of Married High School Girls

Stephens (34) identified a shift from a patriarchal family to one more democratically oriented to the present day practices of dating, going steady, and finally love and marriage. In the United States today, great stress is placed on the individual's right in the determination of his spouse, and the rationale of romantic love seems to provide the individual with an orientation for mate selection. Stephens reports a possible explanation for the importance of romantic love is that it "has filled an ideological vacuum, caused by the disappearance of arranged marriages " (p. 129). Bell (4) indicated, however, that

parents still have some influence on the selection of their offspring's spouse. Parents influence their offspring by passing on the values in a variety of indirect ways, such as encouraging their children to interact with one group of children and discouraging their interaction with other children. These overt and indirect attempts to control the dating and courtship behavior of their children often reflect parental desperation. The ultimate and strongest proof of the indirect influence of parental values is that a majority of young people do eventually marry within the same social class, race and religion, and ethnic background of their parents.

Moss (30) found certain types of family relationship patterns that are thought to be related to early marriage. The lack of parental control is part of the cause for early marriage; the dissolution of social and emotional ties of the young with parents, with siblings, and relatives. This could be due to the rising proportion of working wives and mothers, more interest away from the home, and more homes becoming chiefly a consuming unit instead of a productive unit.

Burchinal (7) in his Iowa study, found high school marriages more common among girls of lower socioeconomic backgrounds and that the educational level of parents for the married groups was lower than that for the single group.

Havighurst (19) states that learning of roles is basically a factor of family relationship patterns; then early married girls perhaps see their life's role as the traditional role of wife and mother. Kelley (23) gives evidence to this idea with the fact that high school marriages are sometimes motivated by a desire to escape from unpleasant or hostile home environments or are an expression of reaction against



society and its mores. If a girl finds that most of her time at home is spent babysitting for younger brothers and sisters so that her mother can seek employment or other interests outside the home, early marriage seems more attractive than her present situation.

#### Education Goals and Rate of Dropout for Married High School Students

Moss and Gingles (31) found future vocational and educational goals of early married girls are not as clearly defined as for those girls who do not marry early. The future plans of early married girls revealed little concern for formal or vocational education. College plans of early married girls as compared with college plans of single girls are about one-half as complete. Differences between parents of the single girl and early married girl on interest in college education was nearly twice as great in the single girl's family.

Lowrie (27) reported several factors that help account for the frequency of high school marriages. Perhaps the prime motivation is the desire for adult status and recognition. The American social pattern sets teenagers apart, as a subculture, and establishes definite limits upon their freedom. The high school student can drive an automobile in most states, can participate easily in public entertainment and recreation, has freedom to smoke and often to drink in public, can hold a part-time job paying good wages, and so on. But normally, he is expected to live at home, to meet such standards for study and behavior as are suggested by his parents and to limit his heterosexual relationships to the "going steady" pattern. His primary financial dependence is still upon his parents. The basic restriction upon most

high school students lies in the fact that they are living at home and are thus still partially under the control of their parents. An early and serious courtship moves them away from this control. Marriage for a high school boy or girl, either with or without parental approval, represents a "step up" to adult status.

A strong motivation for high school marriages is sexual satisfaction. There is no evidence of any change in human biological makeup in the last fifty years, but there is evidence for changes in our social patterns and overt behavior concerning sex. There is far more open recognition of sexual feelings, and a more open expression of them is acceptable. Dating begins earlier, and there is less restrictions upon the partners. Adolescent boys find it possible to satisfy their sexual curiosities and desires more easily, and adolescent girls may discover that they respond sexually in equal measure to their partners. Lowrie (27) found that this mutual sexual satisfaction is fully recognized in our society only in marriage. It is not surprising that many high school marriages are forced marriages, because the couple have already begun sexual intercourse while still in the steady-dating relationship.

Bayer (3) reports one of the most consistently demonstrated findings in family research has been that of a strong relationship between early marriage and poor adjustment to marriage. Those who have experienced early marriage are considerably more likely to experience greater marital discord, including less marital satisfaction and more marital dissolution than those who marry at a later age. It is also those in the lower socioeconomic strata who experience the greatest marital disruption. It may be that those with the poorest chance for achieving a satisfying marriage are more likely to marry early.

Glick (18) found marital instability is greater for high school dropouts than for persons who graduate from school. Bernard (5) suggests that this difference might be produced because dropouts and persons who have had unstable marriages may have similar social psychological characteristics which were acquired before school or marriage. He also found that dropouts are more likely to experience marital instability than graduates. Persons who first marry at a young age are more likely to drop out of school than persons who do not first marry at a young age. Persons who first marry at a young age were more likely to experience marital difficulty than persons who do not marry at an early age.

In many cases, marriage while in high school is a consequence of premarital pregnancy; the relationship between marriage resulting from premarital pregnancy and marital instability is not too well documented by research done in the area of early marriage. The girls of high school age who marry and drop out are more likely to be premaritally pregnant than those who marry during high school and graduate. Bauman (2) indicates that the most common reason for female dropout is pregnancy, and most girls of high school age who become pregnant leave school before graduation. Therefore, dropouts may have higher instability rates of marriage than graduates because they include a much higher proportion of females who are pregnant before marriage.

Kelley (23) summarized the factors that concern high school marriages, and these need to be considered by anyone working with young women in the high schools. A basic concern is one of immaturity. Marriage requires a broad range of adjustment across many areas of life. There are adjustments in the routines of daily living, sexual

adjustments, financial adjustments, religious adjustments, relationships with in-laws, and other new responsibilities. If neither husband nor wife has finished high school, the probabilities are great that they are not mature enough to meet all of these new responsibilities. They may be overly dependent upon each other, defensive in relations to others at work or school, or unable to meet the crises thrust upon them by economics, parenthood, and other new experiences. This is the most common failing of these youthful marriages.

A second major problem centers around the couple's lack of education. There is little to prevent a couple married in their teens from continuing their education at night school or a nearby community college, if such is available. The cost is not nearly so great as in a resident college. In this way they could complete work for the high school diploma and begin a college career.

A third difficulty arises with parenthood. The teenage mother may be quite happy in her new role, which arouses the interest and support of her family, girlfriends, and neighbors. She may be so absorbed in this role that she neglects to cultivate her role as a wife. However, even if she handles this new responsibility capably, the problems of adjustment for her husband may be more serious.

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURE

#### The Development of the Questionnaire

There was no instrument available to assess the reactions of married and single high school girls to dating and early marriage. To develop such an instrument was the first task of the investigator. A review of the literature indicated that (1) early dating was related to early marriage, (2) parents had less control over the early dating of those marrying early than did parents of the single high school girls, and (3) there was a marked difference in the educational goals of early married girls as compared with the single girls. A trial checklist for high school girls' reactions to dating and early marriage was developed on the basis of the three areas which the literature indicated of importance. This checklist was pretested on six high school students. Three students were from a rural high school and three students from a city high school in Oklahoma. The six students were instructed to read and complete the questionnaire and then to discuss and report to the investigator any questions and items they thought should be changed, added, or deleted. No changes were recommended in the original checklist.

To facilitate responses of the subject and aid the investigator, the checklist was designed to have a simple method of answering.

(Checklist, Appendix A)

The data for this research were provided by one hundred eighty-seven matched pairs from a total of 1,552 female high school students' responses. The factors for matching the married and single girls were age, grade placement, place of residence, parents' occupations and number of siblings. Each participating home economics teacher was sent the California Test of Personality, the questionnaire, and a letter of instructions; also, a letter of instruction to each student was attached to each questionnaire (Appendix A).

The home economics teacher administered the personality test and the checklist to each student in her classes and returned the test materials to the investigator.

#### Selection of the Personality Test

The California Test of Personality, Secondary form AA was selected as the instrument to be used to measure the personal and social development of the adolescent high school female student. This test was selected because: (1) the secondary form of the test has standardized scores for grades nine through twelve, (2) the test is arranged so that it is easily administered and scored, (3) the test is most applicable for research purposes to compare scores between individuals, (4) the California Test of Personality appears to be among the better tests available for high school students (Buros, 9).

The California Test of Personality consists of one hundred eighty questions to be answered "yes" or "no." The test is divided into two main sections, Personal Adjustment, and Social Adjustment. Under each section are included six components which are measured by fifteen questions. The twelve components in the California Test of Personality and

their definitions as listed in the manual are found in Appendix B.

### Selection of the Subjects

At the August Conference (1968), in Stillwater, Oklahoma, of Vocational Home Economics teachers with the permission of Miss Blanche Portwood, State Supervisor of Vocational Home Economics Education in Oklahoma, approximately 400 questionnaires were distributed to home economics teachers to identify those schools that would be willing to cooperate in the research project. The questionnaire was designed to seek information as to the willingness of the teacher in the home economics department to cooperate and to learn the estimated enrollment of girls in their schools. In addition, the questionnaire requested an estimate of the number of girls who married and remained in school and would subjects be available outside the homemaking classes. Two hundred and twenty-five questionnaires were returned. (See Appendix A for questionnaire.)

The schools that returned the questionnaires were divided into the four districts as designated by the Vocational Home Economics Department of Oklahoma. (See map in Appendix C.) Five schools from each district were selected at random to receive the materials necessary to participate in the study. These materials were the questionnaire and personality tests. All subjects were enrolled in a public high school and were in grades freshman through senior. Schools and the cooperating teachers selected from the four Vocational Home Economics Districts are presented in Appendix C.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data were analyzed to determine significant differences in personality between married and single girls. Also, frequency of responses of the married and single girls to the questionnaire are presented.

TABLE I

t VALUES REFLECTING SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES OF RESPONSES OF MARRIED AND SINGLE GIRLS TO THE CALIFORNIA TEST OF PERSONALITY

|                        | Married<br>Mean | Single<br>Mean | t    | Level of<br>Significance |
|------------------------|-----------------|----------------|------|--------------------------|
| Personal<br>Adjustment | 60.97           | 60.95          | 0.02 | n.s.                     |
| Social<br>Adjustment   | 63.77           | 65.90          | 1.56 | n.s.                     |
| Total<br>Personality   | 124.89          | 126.76         | 0.74 | n.s.                     |

The findings in relation to difference in personality development are:

1. There is no significant difference in the total personality



scores of married and single high school girls.

2. There is no significant difference in the social adjustment of married and single high school girls. Havighurst (19) found the girl who is in the upper-lower or lower-lower class who is socially maladjusted and is doing poor school work to be the typical early married student. The data from the California Test of Personality in the present study did not show significant difference in the social adjustment of married and single high school girls.

3. There is no significant difference in the personal adjustment of married and single high school girls. Moss and Gingles (31) found that girls who marry early are emotionally less stable than those who marry later. Adjustment difficulties of girls who marry early are more related to their personal than to their social adjustment. The data from the California Test of Personality in the present study did not show significant difference in the personal adjustment of married and single high school girls.

#### Description of Subjects

Tables II, III, IV, V, and VI present the distribution by age, grade placement, length of residence at present address, and occupation of parents for both groups of the subjects.

TABLE II  
AGE AND GRADE PLACEMENT FOR SUBJECTS  
(187 Matched Pairs)

| Age for Girl | <u>Freshman</u> |   | <u>Sophomore</u> |    | <u>Junior</u> |    | <u>Senior</u> |    |
|--------------|-----------------|---|------------------|----|---------------|----|---------------|----|
|              | M               | S | M                | S  | M             | S  | M             | S  |
| 14           | 4               | 4 |                  |    |               |    |               |    |
| 15           | 2               | 3 | 39               | 39 |               |    |               |    |
| 16           | 1               |   | 7                | 7  | 34            | 34 |               |    |
| 17           |                 |   | 3                | 3  | 13            | 13 | 58            | 58 |
| 18           |                 |   | 2                | 2  | 4             | 4  | 15            | 15 |
| 19           |                 |   |                  |    |               |    | 2             | 2  |
| 20           |                 |   |                  |    |               |    | 3             | 3  |

TABLE III  
PLACE OF RESIDENCE FOR MARRIED AND SINGLE GIRLS  
(187 Matched Pairs)

| Age for Girl | <u>City</u> |    | <u>Rural</u> |    |
|--------------|-------------|----|--------------|----|
|              | M           | S  | M            | S  |
| 14           | 2           | 2  | 2            | 2  |
| 15           | 22          | 23 | 16           | 16 |
| 16           | 25          | 24 | 17           | 17 |
| 17           | 50          | 50 | 24           | 24 |
| 18           | 14          | 14 | 10           | 10 |
| 19           |             |    | 2            | 2  |
| 20           | 3           | 3  |              |    |

TABLE IV  
YEARS AT PRESENT ADDRESS FOR SUBJECTS  
(187 Matched Pairs)

| No. of Years at Present Address | Married (187) | Single (187) |
|---------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| 0-1                             | 51            | 27           |
| 2-3                             | 34            | 22           |
| 4-5                             | 18            | 37           |
| 6-10                            | 31            | 39           |
| 11-15                           | 27            | 20           |
| 15 years or more                | 26            | 39           |
| No response                     |               | 3            |

TABLE V  
PARENTS' OCCUPATIONAL LEVELS\*

| Occupational Levels | Married (187) | Single (187) |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Professional        | 1             | 1            |
| Proprietors         | 2             | 2            |
| Business            | 13            | 13           |
| White Collar        | 40            | 40           |
| Blue Collar         | 21            | 21           |
| Service Workers     | 76            | 76           |
| Farm People         | 34            | 34           |

\*McGuire, Carson, and George White, Measure of Social Status, Austin, Texas, University of Texas, 1952 (Appendix D).

TABLE VI  
NUMBER OF SIBLINGS PER SUBJECT

| No. of Siblings    | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Only children      | 10               | 10              |
| Sibling            | 33               | 53              |
| 2-3 siblings       | 80               | 61              |
| 4-5 siblings       | 40               | 43              |
| 6 or more siblings | 24               | 13              |

The average number of siblings for each subject was 3.3 siblings for the married subjects and 2.7 for the single subjects.

Dating Practices for Married and Single  
High School Girls

Tables VII and VIII indicate the age of first steady dating and the parental permission granted for steady dating. The married group began dating at an earlier age four times as often as did the single group. Forty subjects of the single group, as compared with only three of the married group reported they had dated steady. Parental permission was granted for steady dating in the married group by forty-three of the parents, while only nine of the single group reported they could steady date with parental permission.

TABLE VII  
AGE FOR FIRST STEADY DATING

| Age for Girl     | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 12-14            | 60               | 15              |
| 14-17            | 123              | 130             |
| 18 and older     | 1                | 1               |
| No steady dating | 3                | 40              |
| No response      |                  | 1               |

TABLE VIII  
PARENTS' PERMISSION FOR STEADY DATING  
AT AGE INDICATED  
(187 Matched Pairs)

| Age for Girl | Yes |     | No |    |
|--------------|-----|-----|----|----|
|              | M   | S   | M  | S  |
| 12-14        | 43  | 9   | 16 | 9  |
| 14-17        | 109 | 108 | 14 | 20 |
| 18 and older | 4   | 21  | 1  | 19 |
| No response  | 1   | 4   |    |    |

Three married students reported permission was not given for steady dating. Nineteen single students indicated they did not have permission for steady dating.

Parental attitude toward steady dating is presented in Table IX. Of the answer choices, the married group checked "Have not said anything," more often, and the single group checked most often that of "Feel it is all right." The responses of the married girls indicate that they feel they had approval for steady dating either by verbal permission or by parents not saying anything prior to their marriage.

TABLE IX  
PARENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD STEADY DATING

| Parental Attitude                              | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|--|------------------|-----------------|
| Too young to go steady                         | 5                | 20              |
| Want me to date others                         | 33               | 48              |
| Object to my going steady<br>with certain boys | 17               | 24              |
| Feel it is all right                           | 71               | 49              |
| Have not said anything                         | 61               | 40              |
| No response                                    |                  | 6               |

Table X indicates the number of steady boyfriends that subjects of each group had was higher in the married group, sixty of the married subjects had more than five steady dating partners, while only twenty-four of the single group reported five steadies. The most frequently checked answer by the subjects in the single group was that of one.

TABLE X  
NUMBER OF STEADY BOYFRIENDS

| Number of Steady Boyfriends | Married (187) | Single (187) |
|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| One                         | 30            | 50           |
| Two                         | 51            | 38           |
| Three                       | 22            | 29           |
| Four                        | 23            | 13           |
| Five or more                | 60            | 24           |

The meaning of steady dating for one hundred seven of the married group is getting married or engaged soon. Ninety-seven single girls believe that going steady means getting engaged or married soon. Interestingly, thirty-two of the married group as compared with twenty-three of the single group checked steady dating meant dating just for fun.

TABLE XI  
THE MEANING OF STEADY DATING

| Responses  | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|--|------------------|-----------------|
| Dating just for fun                                | 32               | 23              |
| Having a sure date for special events and weekends | 15               | 24              |
| Getting engaged soon                               | 20               | 57              |
| Getting married soon                               | 87               | 40              |
| Other reasons                                      | 33               | 53              |

Table XII presents the data reported by both married and single girls in response to the question "What are most of the girls in your school doing in regard to dating?" Responses to this question indicated that a majority of the girls in high school are involved in steady dating.

The literature indicated that steady dating was perhaps an avenue to popularity, and subjects in this study also saw steady dating as an aid to becoming more popular. One hundred thirty-five of the married group, and one hundred seventeen of the single girls indicated going steady was an aid to popularity (Table XIII).

In summary,

1. Married girls started steady dating at ages twelve to fourteen, four times as often as did the single girls.
2. Married girls had parental permission for steady dating at



ages twelve to fourteen nearly five times as often as did the single girls.

3. Married girls had had more steady boyfriends than did the single girls.

4. Going steady is the most popular dating practice in Oklahoma high schools, and was seen as an aid to popularity.

TABLE XII  
GIRLS' EVALUATION OF DATING PRACTICES

| Responses                                   | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|---|------------------|-----------------|
| Not dating anyone                           | 18               | 21              |
| Going steady                                | 79               | 66              |
| Engaged                                     | 9                | 6               |
| Dating several boys                         | 25               | 43              |
| Dating only one boy but<br>not going steady | 14               | 33              |
| Don't know                                  | 42               | 18              |

TABLE XIII  
GIRLS' EVALUATION OF STEADY DATING  
AS RELATED TO POPULARITY

| Belief That Steady Dating<br>Is an Aid to Popularity | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|--|------------------|-----------------|
| Yes  | 135              | 117             |
| No   | 52               | 70              |

Subjects' Reaction to Parents' Attitudes Toward  
Girls' Behavior and Activities

One hundred forty-one of the subjects in the married group reported that their parents found education very important as compared to one hundred fifty-three of the single groups (Table XIV). Ninety-one of the married respondents reported they found parental approval of the boys' dates important as compared to one hundred twelve of the single group (Table XV). The majority of both groups stated that their parents were interested in meeting all the boys they dated (Table XVI).

Table XVII presents the number of responses indicating the restrictions parents place upon the time and amount of dating done by the daughter. A difference may be seen between the married subjects' responses and the single subjects' responses in the "Week-night" category. Ninety-three of married group and fifteen of the single group reported they could date any week-night. The single group (one hundred thirty-two) most often responded "on weekends only."

TABLE XIV  
PARENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD DAUGHTERS' EDUCATION

| Responses              | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Very important         | 141              | 153             |
| Important              | 30               | 33              |
| Not very important     | 12               | 1               |
| Have not said anything | 4                | 0               |

TABLE XV  
GIRLS' RESPONSES CONCERNING THE IMPORTANCE OF  
PARENTS' APPROVAL OF BOYS DATED

| Responses          | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Very important     | 83               | 112             |
| Important          | 91               | 60              |
| Not very important | 12               | 5               |

TABLE XVI  
 PARENTS' INTEREST IN MEETING BOYS,  
 THEIR DAUGHTER'S DATE

| Responses                | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| All of them              | 133              | 143             |
| Some of them             | 28               | 29              |
| None of them             | 13               | 2               |
| Have never said anything | 2                | 11              |
| No response              | 1                | 3               |

TABLE XVII  
 PERMISSION AND WHEN TO DATE

| Restrictions Placed<br>on Dating | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| On weekends only                 | 56               | 132             |
| On special activities nights     | 28               | 29              |
| On any week-night                | 93               | 15              |
| Do not allow me to date          |                  | 9               |
| No response                      | 9                | 2               |

Seventy-four of the married group and twenty-eight of the single group had their first car date at age twelve to fourteen. The majority of responses for both groups were in the fourteen to seventeen age group. One hundred ten of the married group as compared with one hundred two of the single group reported car dating at age fourteen to seventeen (Table XVIII).

TABLE XVIII  
AGE FOR FIRST CAR DATING

| Age for Girl             | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 12-14                    | 74               | 28              |
| 14-17                    | 110              | 142             |
| At age 18 or older       | 3                | 11              |
| Did not allow me to date | 0                |                 |

Parental permission for car dating at age of first car date was obtained more than twice as often for the married group as for the single group. Single girls indicated permission to car date at a later age than did the married girls (Table XIX).

Ninety-six of the single group reported that their parents had hours to be home at all times, while only seventy-one of the married group reported that their parents had hours for them to be home from a date "just some of the time" (Table XX).

TABLE XIX  
 PERMISSION TO DATE AT AGE INDICATED

| Age for Girl | Married<br>(187) |    | Single<br>(187) |    |
|--------------|------------------|----|-----------------|----|
|              | Yes              | No | Yes             | No |
| 12-14        | 56               | 18 | 20              | 8  |
| 15-17        | 94               | 16 | 131             | 11 |
| 18 or older  | 2                | 1  | 9               | 2  |

TABLE XX  
 PARENTS' INTEREST IN PLACE FOR DATE AND  
 HOURS FOR COMING HOME

| Responses                | All of<br>the Time |     | Most of<br>the Time |    | Some of<br>the Time |    | Never Discussed<br>It With Me |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-----|---------------------|----|---------------------|----|-------------------------------|---|
|                          | M                  | S   | M                   | S  | M                   | S  | M                             | S |
| Place for date           | 103                | 96  | 40                  | 66 | 35                  | 15 | 8                             | 5 |
| Hours for<br>coming home | 68                 | 118 | 71                  | 52 | 31                  | 9  | 15                            | 3 |

The literature indicated that early marriage is associated with early and more frequent steady dating. In this study, thirty-eight of the married group reported that their parents felt they dated too much, while only twenty-one of the single group reported their parents had this feeling (Table XXI).

TABLE XXI  
PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARD AMOUNT OF DATING

| Parents' Perceptions               | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Too much                           | 38               | 21              |
| About average                      | 69               | 59              |
| Do not date enough                 | 15               | 30              |
| Have never discussed<br>it with me | 66               | 77              |

A comparison of responses of married and single girls regarding their parents' feelings revealed the following:

1. Parents of the single subjects more often found education very important than did the parents of the married subjects.
2. Girls in the single group reported that their parents more often found meeting the boy they dated very important than did the girls in the married group.

3. The single group reported more parental interest in meeting the boys they dated than did the married group.

4. The married group had greater freedom concerning when to date than did the single girls.

5. Girls in the married group had their parents' permission, and car dated earlier than did the single group.

6. More parents of the married group than parents of the single group felt they dated too much.

#### Subjects' Responses Concerning Parental Objections

Responses of single and married students concerning their perceptions of parental objections to dating older boys were similar. The subjects in both groups reported most frequently that they had never discussed dating older boys with their parents (Table XXII).

TABLE XXII

#### PARENTS' OBJECTIONS TO DAUGHTERS DATING BOYS OLDER (3-5 YEARS) THAN THEMSELVES

| Responses   | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|---|------------------|-----------------|
| Some boys this much older, I cannot date          | 49               | 52              |
| Most boys this much older, I cannot date          | 30               | 35              |
| I cannot date any boy this much older than myself | 18               | 23              |
| Have never discussed it with my parents           | 89               | 77              |



Table XXIII indicates the frequency of dating boys three to five years older than the subjects. Eighty-six of the married girls reported that they often dated boys three to five years older than themselves, with eighty-eight of the single girls reporting they never dated boys older.

TABLE XXIII  
GIRLS' DATING OF BOYS 3-5 YEARS OLDER

| Responses | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|-----------|------------------|-----------------|
| Never     | 43               | 88              |
| Sometimes | 58               | 57              |
| Often     | 86               | 42              |

Eighty-one of the married group and sixty-nine of the single group reported that they sometimes disagreed with parents on the choice of boys to date. More single than married subjects reported disagreement with parents on choice of boy to date. This parental disagreement may indicate parental control (Table XXIV).

The married group reported three times as often as the single girls that parents refused to let them date a certain boy because he was too old for her. Interestingly, more subjects in both the married and single groups reported their parents had never refused to let them date a boy (Table XXV).

TABLE XXIV  
 PARENTS' AND DAUGHTERS' DISAGREEMENTS  
 ON CHOICE OF DATES

| Responses                  | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|----------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| We disagree often          | 12               | 21              |
| We disagree sometimes      | 81               | 69              |
| We disagree very little    | 24               | 33              |
| We have never discussed it | 70               | 64              |

TABLE XXV  
 PARENTS' REASONS FOR DAUGHTERS NOT  
 DATING CERTAIN BOYS

| Responses                                  | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|--|------------------|-----------------|
| The boy is too old<br>for me to date       | 18               | 6               |
| He is not well-known<br>to my parents      | 39               | 35              |
| He has a bad reputation                    | 24               | 25              |
| Have never refused to<br>let me date a boy | 58               | 52              |
| Do not tell me their<br>reasons            | 15               | 13              |
| Other reasons                              | 26               | 29              |
| No response                                | 3                | 9               |

Both the married and single group reported that they felt their parents were fair in setting up rules for dating. However, the married group responded more often in the answer choice of fair, while the single group responded more often in the "very fair" answer choice. The responses for both groups indicate that a majority of parents have set up rules for dating (Table XXVI).

TABLE XXVI  
GIRLS' REACTIONS TO PARENTS' RULES FOR DATING

| Responses              | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Very fair              | 52               | 109             |
| Fair                   | 57               | 37              |
| Not very fair          | 14               | 14              |
| Not fair at all        | 13               | 13              |
| Have not said anything | 19               | 9               |
| No response            | 1                | 5               |

Seventy-nine of the married subjects reported their parents were critical of some of the boys they dated, as compared with fifty-three of the single group. Both groups reported similar answers in all categories of this question (Table XXVII).

TABLE XXVII  
PARENTS' EVALUATION OF BOYS DATED

| Responses                   | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Critical of all of them     | 15               | 16              |
| Critical of some of them    | 79               | 53              |
| Not critical of any of them | 44               | 53              |
| Have not said anything      | 46               | 65              |
| No response                 | 3                |                 |

Parents' concern about boys' dates is reflected in the following findings:

1. Married girls more often than single girls dated boys three to five years older than themselves.
2. More single subjects than married subjects reported disagreement with their parents on choice of boy to date.
3. Single subjects more often than married subjects found their parents very fair in dating rules.

#### Educational Goals

One hundred forty-five of the single group reported they had plans to complete high school, while only seventy-seven of the married group reported they planned to complete high school (Table XXVIII).

TABLE XXVIII  
EDUCATIONAL GOALS OF MARRIED AND SINGLE  
HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS

| Responses                                     | Yes |     | No  |    |
|---|-----|-----|-----|----|
|   | M   | S   | M   | S  |
| Plans to complete high school                 | 77  | 145 | 96  | 37 |
| Plans to attend college or<br>training school | 72  | 137 | 115 | 40 |

The importance of a high school education for both married and single subjects was evident; however, more of the married indicated that education was not very important (Table XXIX). Even though more married girls thought it was important, they indicated they did not plan to further their educational goals (Table XXVIII).

TABLE XXIX  
IMPORTANCE OF A HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION  
TO THE GIRLS

| Responses          | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Very important     | 101              | 171             |
| Important          | 72               | 10              |
| Not very important | 14               | 7               |

In relation to education the findings indicate:

Twice as many single girls as married girls reported plans for completing high school, and also indicated plans to attend college or training school.

#### Girls' Friendships

The majority of both groups reported their friends were in high school, however, the married group indicated that sixty-five of their friendships were with those out of school as compared to nineteen of the single subjects. Single subjects had more friends in college than did the married group (Table XXX).

TABLE XXX

#### GIRLS' FRIENDSHIPS

| Responses     | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|---------------|------------------|-----------------|
| High school   | 112              | 151             |
| Out of school | 65               | 19              |
| College       | 10               | 17              |

The married subjects had more friends who were married than did the single group (Table XXXI). The single group (seventy-nine) reported they had no friends who were married.

TABLE XXXI  
 NUMBER OF FRIENDS WHO MARRIED DURING PAST YEAR

| Responses   | Married<br>(187) | Single<br>(187) |
|-------------|------------------|-----------------|
| None        | 32               | 79              |
| One         | 32               | 51              |
| Two         | 33               | 23              |
| Three       | 23               | 13              |
| Four        | 23               | 11              |
| Five        | 24               | 6               |
| Over Five   | 20               | 1               |
| No response |                  | 3               |

Findings related to friendships indicated that:

More married girls than single girls reported that their best friends were out of school, and the married girls reported more close friends who married during the past year than did single girls.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY

The major purposes of this study were to ascertain if the girl who marries while in high school is different in personality and dating practices from the girl who delays marriage for college or a career. Specifically, the purposes of this study were as follows:

1. To compare the personality adjustment of married high school girls to the personality adjustment of single high school girls.
2. To ascertain if married girls' responses to their parents' attitudes and practices toward early dating are different from those who are single.
3. To ascertain, both married and single high school girls' views concerning early marriage and education.

The hypotheses of this study were:

1. The total personality scores of married girls are no different from those of single girls.
2. The total personal adjustment scores of married girls are no different from those of single high school girls.
3. The social adjustment scores of married girls are no different from those of single high school girls.

A questionnaire was devised by which both married and single girls of high school age, indicated their dating practices. The California



Test of Personality was selected to measure personality of the girls.

The questionnaires and tests were given to both married and single high school girls and their responses comprise the data for this study. The major findings were:

1. There was no significant difference in the personality of married and single high school girls.
2. There was no significant difference in the social adjustment of married and single high school girls.
3. There was no difference in the personal adjustment of married and single high school girls.
4. Four times as many married girls began steady dating at ages twelve to fourteen, as did the single girls.
5. Five times as many married girls had parental permission for steady dating at ages twelve to fourteen, as did the single girls.
6. Married girls had had more steady boyfriends than did the single girls.
7. Going steady is the most popular dating practice in the Oklahoma high schools, and was an aid to popularity.
8. Parents of the single subjects more often found education very important than did the parents of the married subjects.
9. More girls in the single group reported that their parents found meeting the boy they dated very important than did the girls in the married group.
10. The single group reported more parental interest in meeting the boys they dated than did the married girls.

11. The married group had greater freedom concerning when to date than did the single girls.
12. Girls in the married group had their parents' permission and car dated earlier than did the single group.
13. More parents of the married girls than parents of the single group felt they dated too much.
14. More married girls than single girls dated boy three to five years older than themselves.
15. More single subjects than married subjects reported disagreement with their parents on choice of boy to date.
16. More single subjects than married subjects found their parents very fair in dating rules.
17. Twice as many single girls as married girls reported plans for completion of high school, and also indicated plans to attend college or training school.
18. More married than single girls reported that their best friends were out of school.
19. More married girls had close friends who married during the past year than did single girls.

#### Recommendations

The findings of this research indicate that dating begins early. This points to a need for family life education at the junior high level that continues throughout high school. Young people are having serious relationships with members of the opposite sex at earlier ages, with more parental approval. Family life education may help them to

understand these relationships and to handle them for more effective living.

Home economics teachers and family life educators could help young students to learn to communicate effectively with their parents on areas of dating and marriage. Many girls in this study reported they had never discussed several topics of dating with their parents, and had no understanding of each other's views on such matters as going steady and even marriage.

Home economics teachers should do all that is possible in their classwork to emphasize the importance of a strong family unit, and the important role the wife-mother figure plays in having a strong family unit. They could help students to understand that a wife-mother needs a good education for her role in the supervision of family and household. A home economics teacher and family life educator could help young girls realize that marriage is an important step and should be based on good judgment and understanding of the factors involved in a good marriage.

Education for parenthood should be stressed as early as possible in both junior and senior high school curriculums. Learning to care and be concerned for children may begin at young ages, and should be part of each year's work in home economics and family life classes. This is necessary because so many young mothers are girls who never finish high school and go to college.

Further research is recommended in relation to the following questions:

1. How may potential "Early Marrieds" be identified so they may be helped through their school curriculum to prepare for an

early marriage?

2. Are special schools and classes needed for the early married student?
3. What can be done about the high rate of dropouts by early married students and how can they be encouraged to return to school?
4. Since dating practices are related to early marriage, could parent education classes aid in the guidance of their daughters at this stage of development?
5. What are some teacher education classes that could be offered to undergraduate students to prepare them for teaching early married students in a home economics or family life class.

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APPENDIX



## QUESTIONNAIRE TO HOMEMAKING TEACHERS

- \_\_\_ 1. I will participate in the proposed study.
- \_\_\_ 2. How many years have you taught in the school where you will be collecting data?
3. My enrollment will be approximately:
- |                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| ___ Freshmen   | ___ Juniors |
| ___ Sophomores | ___ Seniors |
4. Based on past records, there are approximately \_\_\_ girls each year enrolled in homemaking who drop out because of marriage.
5. Based on past records, there are approximately \_\_\_ girls who will not attend college.
6. Approximately how many of your homemaking students marry and remain in school? \_\_\_
7. Would it be possible for you to administer the tests to girls other than those enrolled in homemaking in your school?
- (Circle One)    Yes        No
- If the answer is yes, approximately how many? \_\_\_

Dear Homemaking Student,

We are glad you have chosen Home Economics as part of your study plan, and we are anxious to improve the homemaking curriculum for you.

The attached questionnaire and personality test are part of a graduate study being done in order to find out more about how we can help homemaking teachers meet the needs of students like yourselves.

Please read the questions carefully and think them through before you answer each one. There is no right or wrong answer for any of the questions; you are free to make your own choice.

All information will be kept confidential and used for this study only. Thank you for helping us. We will let your homemaking teacher know the results as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

CHECKLIST FOR HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS -- REACTION TO  
DATING AND EARLY MARRIAGE

FAMILY BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- \_\_\_ 1. Name \_\_\_\_\_
2. Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ 3. Grade in school: (1) 9; (2) 10; (3) 11; (4) 12
- \_\_\_ 4. Do you live within the:
- (1) City limits  
(2) Or in a nearby rural area
- \_\_\_ 5. How long have you lived at your present address?
- \_\_\_\_\_
6. What are your parents' occupations?
- Father \_\_\_\_\_
- Mother \_\_\_\_\_
7. Please give the names and ages of your brothers and sisters; starting with the oldest and list to the youngest, putting your own name where it belongs.

| Name  | Age   |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

DATING INFORMATION:

- \_\_\_ 8. At what age did you start "steady dating?"
- (1) 12-14 years old  
(2) 14-17 years old  
(3) 18 and older  
(4) have not gone steady

- \_\_\_ 9. Did you have your parent's permission to go steady at the age indicated above?
- (1) Yes
  - (2) No
- \_\_\_ 10. How do your parents feel toward your going "steady?"
- (1) too young to go steady
  - (2) want me to date others
  - (3) object to my going steady with certain boys
  - (4) feel it is all right
  - (5) have not said anything
- \_\_\_ 11. How many steady boyfriends have you had?
- (1) One
  - (2) Two
  - (3) Three
  - (4) Four
  - (5) Five
  - (6) More than five
- \_\_\_ 12. In your school, does going "steady" mean?
- (1) dating just for fun
  - (2) having a sure date for special events and weekends
  - (3) getting engaged soon
  - (4) getting married soon
  - (5) other reasons
- \_\_\_ 13. Are most of the girls in your school?
- (1) not dating anyone
  - (2) going steady
  - (3) engaged
  - (4) dating several boys
  - (5) dating only one boy but not going steady
  - (6) don't know
- \_\_\_ 14. Is there a material symbol that signifies a couple is going "steady" in your school?
- (1) ring
  - (2) pin
  - (3) letter jacket
  - (4) drop
  - (5) other things
- \_\_\_ 15. Do you think girls who go steady are more popular?
- (1) Yes
  - (2) No

- \_\_\_ 16. Are you:
- (1) dating; but not going "steady"
  - (2) married
  - (3) planning on being married before you complete high school
  - (4) engaged, but planning on being married after completing high school
  - (5) going steady
  - (6) not dating anyone

PARENT-ADOLESCENT INTERACTION

- \_\_\_ 17. My parents consider education:
- (1) very important
  - (2) important
  - (3) not very important
  - (4) have not said anything
- \_\_\_ 18. My parents allow me to date:
- (1) on weekends only
  - (2) on special activities nights
  - (3) on any week-night
  - (4) do not allow me to date
- \_\_\_ 19. When did you first start "car" dating?
- (1) at age 12-14
  - (2) at age 15-17
  - (3) at age 18 or older
  - (4) I am not allowed to date
- \_\_\_ 20. Did you have your parent's permission to start dating at the age indicated above?
- (1) Yes
  - (2) No
- \_\_\_ 21. Do you think it is important for your parents to approve of the boys you date?
- (1) very important
  - (2) important
  - (3) not very important
- \_\_\_ 22. Are your parents interested in meeting the boys you date?
- |                  |                              |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| (1) all of them  | (3) none of them             |
| (2) some of them | (4) have never said anything |

- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. Do your parents want to know where you will be going on a date?
- (1) all of the time
  - (2) most of the time
  - (3) some of the time
  - (4) never did ask me where we were going
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. Do you have certain hours to be home from a date?
- (1) all of the time
  - (2) most of the time
  - (3) some of the time
  - (4) have never discussed it with my parents
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. Do your parents feel that you date:
- (1) too much
  - (2) about average
  - (3) do not date enough
  - (4) do not discuss it with me
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. Do your parents object to your dating boys 3-5 years older than yourself?
- (1) Some boys this much older, I cannot date
  - (2) Most boys this much older, I cannot date
  - (3) I cannot date any boy this much older than myself
  - (4) have never discussed it with my parents
- \_\_\_\_\_ 27. Did you ever date anyone older than yourself by 3-5 years?
- (1) never
  - (2) sometimes
  - (3) often
- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. Have you and your parents disagreed on your choice of dates?
- (1) We disagree often
  - (2) We disagree sometimes
  - (3) We disagree very little
  - (4) We have never discussed it
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. What is the usual reason parents give when they refuse to let you date certain boys?
- (1) The boy is too old for me to date
  - (2) He is not well-known to my parents
  - (3) He has a bad reputation
  - (4) Have never refused to let me date a boy
  - (5) Do not tell me their reasons
  - (6) Other reasons

\_\_\_ 30. Concerning rules they have set up for dating, do you feel that your parents are:

- (1) very fair
- (2) fair
- (3) not very fair
- (4) not fair at all
- (5) have never set up any rules for dating

\_\_\_ 31. Are your parents critical of the boys you date?

- (1) critical of all of them
- (2) critical of some of them
- (3) not critical of any of them
- (4) have not said anything

\_\_\_ 32. What are your TWO favorite school subjects?  
(Check TWO)

- \_\_\_ (1) Mathematics
- \_\_\_ (2) History
- \_\_\_ (3) English
- \_\_\_ (4) Physical Education
- \_\_\_ (5) Science
- \_\_\_ (6) Homemaking
- \_\_\_ (7) Music
- \_\_\_ (8) Typing
- \_\_\_ (9) Speech
- \_\_\_ (10) Others \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ 33. Do you plan to complete high school?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

\_\_\_ 34. What would you like to do when you complete high school?

- (1) I plan to go to college
- (2) I plan to get married
- (3) I want to have a career
- (4) I have no plans at the present time

\_\_\_ 35. Will your choice of occupation require that you go to college or a training school?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

\_\_\_ 36. Which school organizations do you belong to?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

37. Which school sponsored activities that are outside the school do you like best?

- |       |                  |       |             |
|-------|------------------|-------|-------------|
| _____ | (1) School Plays | _____ | (4) Dances  |
| _____ | (2) Basketball   | _____ | (5) Parties |
| _____ | (3) Football     | _____ | (6) Other   |

\_\_\_\_\_ 38. Do you think getting a high school education is:

- (1) very important
- (2) important
- (3) not very important

\_\_\_\_\_ 39. My best friends are in:

- (1) high school
- (2) out of school
- (3) college

\_\_\_\_\_ 40. How many of your close friends married during the last year? (This could be married friends that are in school, and married friends out of school.)

- (1) None
- (2) One
- (3) Two
- (4) Three
- (5) Four
- (6) Five
- (7) If over five, how many?



## CALIFORNIA TEST OF PERSONALITY

Definitions of the Components.<sup>1</sup>

The following components are not names for so-called general traits. They are, rather, names for groupings of more or less specific tendencies to feel, think, and act.

Personal Adjustment

- 1A. Self-Reliance- An individual may be said to be self-reliant when his overt actions indicated that he can do things independently of others, depend upon himself in various situations, and direct his own activities. The self-reliant person is also characteristically stable emotionally, and responsible in his behavior.
- 1B. Sense of Personal Worth- An individual possesses a sense of being worthy when he feels he is well regarded by others, when he feels that others have faith in his future success, and when he believes that he has average or better than average ability. To feel worthy means to feel capable and reasonably attractive.
- 1C. Sense of Personal Freedom- An individual enjoys a sense of freedom when he is permitted to have a reasonable share in the determination of his conduct and in setting the general policies that shall govern his life. Desirable freedom includes permission to choose one's own friends and to have at least a little spending money.
- 1D. Feeling of Belonging- An individual feels that he belongs when he enjoys the love of his family, the well-wishes of good friends, and a cordial relationship with people in general. Such a person will as a rule get along well with his teachers or employers and usually feels proud of his school or place of business.
- 1E. Withdrawing Tendencies- The individual who is said to withdraw is the one who substitutes the joys of a fantasy world for actual successes in real life. Such a person is characteristically sensitive, lonely, and given to self-concern. Normal adjustment is characterized by reasonable freedom from these tendencies.

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<sup>1</sup>Louis P. Thorpe and Willis W. Clark, Manual, California Test of Personality, California Test Bureau, Del Monte Research Park, Monterey, California, 1953, pp. 3-4.

- 1F. Nervous Symptoms- The individual who is classified as having nervous symptoms is the one who suffers from one or more of a variety of physical symptoms such as loss of appetite, frequent eye strain, inability to sleep, or a tendency to be chronically tired. People of this kind may be exhibiting physical expressions of emotional conflicts.

### Social Adjustment

- 2A. Social Standards- The individual who recognizes desirable social standards is the one who has come to understand the rights of others and who appreciates the necessity of subordinating certain desires to the needs of the group. Such an individual understands what is regarded as being right or wrong.
- 2B. Social Skills- An individual may be said to be socially skillful or effective when he shows a liking for people, when he inconveniences himself to be of assistance to them, and when he is diplomatic in his dealings with both friends and strangers. The socially skillful person subordinates his or her egoistic tendencies in favor of interest in the problems and activities of his associates.
- 2C. Anti-Social Tendencies- An individual would normally be regarded as anti-social when he is given to bullying, frequent quarreling, disobedience, and destructiveness to property. The anti-social person is the one who endeavors to get his satisfactions in ways that are damaging and unfair to others. Normal adjustment is characterized by reasonable freedom from these tendencies.
- 2D. Family Relations- The individual who exhibits desirable family relationships is the one who feels that he is loved and well-treated at home, and who has a sense of security and self-respect in connection with the various members of his family. Superior family relations also include parental control that is neither too strict nor too lenient.
- 2E. School Relations- The student who is satisfactorily adjusted to his school is the one who feels that his teachers like him, who enjoys being with other students, and who finds the school work adapted to his level of interest and maturity. Good school relations involve the feeling on the part of the student that he counts for something in the life of the institution.

- 2F. Community Relations- The individual who may be said to be making good adjustments in his community is the one who mingles happily with his neighbors, who takes pride in community improvements, and who is tolerant in dealing with both strangers and foreigners. Satisfactory community relations include as well the disposition to be respectful of laws and of regulations pertaining to the general welfare.

APPENDIX A

HIGH SCHOOLS AND HOME ECONOMICS TEACHERS FROM THE  
FOUR VOCATIONAL HOME ECONOMICS DISTRICTS

## NORTHWEST DISTRICT

Mary Barth  
Buffalo High School

Deanna Tate  
Edmond High School

Joyce Smith  
Mustang High School

Stella Heath  
John Marshall High School  
Oklahoma City

Fleta Haskins  
Stroud High School

## SOUTHEAST DISTRICT

Freda Brisman  
Asher High School

Mrs. Gertrude Emerson  
Cameron High School

Betty White  
Panama High School

Claramae Chatham  
Smithville High School

Lucila Walta  
Whitesboro High School

## SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

Mrs. Naomi Coleman  
Amber-Posasset High School

Ann Humphery  
Duncan High School

Berneice Duncan  
Gould High School

Margie McMahan  
Lawton High School

Dorothy Olson  
Moore High School

## NORTHEAST DISTRICT

Carol McCord  
Chelsea High School

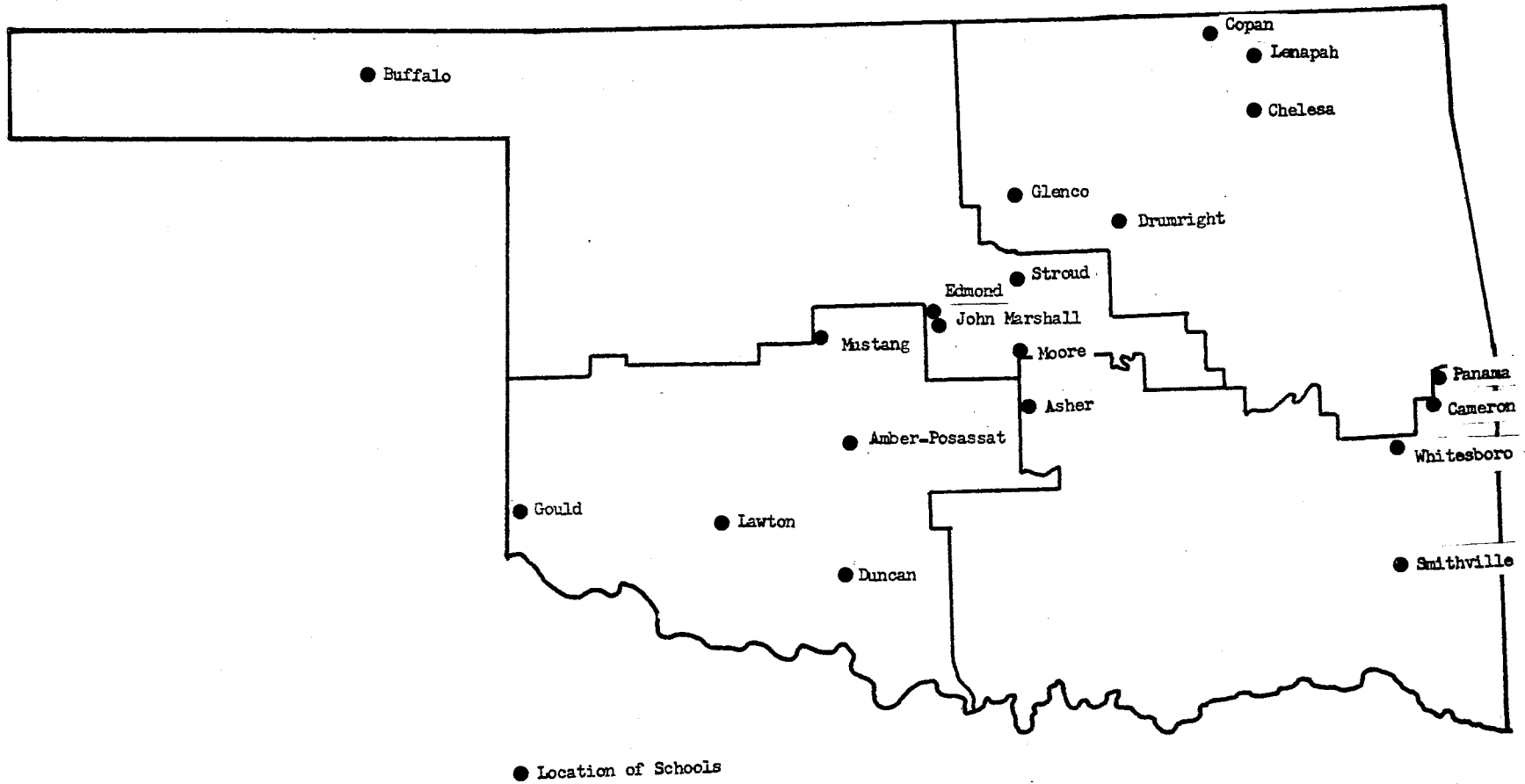
Sue Reynolds  
Copan High School

Mable Stovall  
Drumright High School

Maxine Chaffin  
Glenco High School

Cloyann Fent  
Lenapah High School

LOCATIONS OF SCHOOLS THAT PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY



APPENDIX B

OCCUPATIONS: LEVELS AND KINDS\*

| Rate | Professionals  | Proprietors  | Business  | White Collar   | Blue Collar  | Service  | Farm People   |
|------|--|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| 1    | Lawyer, judge, physician, engineer, professor, school supt., et al.      | Large business valued at \$100,000 or more depending on community. | Top executives, presidents of corporations, banks, public utilities.              | CPA, editor of newspaper, magazine; executive secretary of status organization.                  |  |  | Gentlemen farmers or landowners who do not supervise directly their properties. |
| 2    | High school teachers, librarians, and others with 4-year degrees.        | Business valued at \$50,000 to \$100,000.                          | Asst. office and dept. manager or supervisor; some mfg. agents.                   | Accountant; insurance, real estate stock salesmen; editorial writers.                            |  |  | Land operators who supervise properties and have an active urban life.          |
| 3    | Grade school teachers, registered nurse, minister without 4-year degree. | Business or equity valued from \$10,000 to \$50,000.               | Managers of small branches or buyers and salesmen of known wuse.                  | Bank clerks, auto salesmen, postal clerks, RR or tel. agent or supervisor.                       | Small contractor who works or supervises his job.              |  | Farm owners with "hired help" operator of leased property who supervise.        |
| 4    |  | Business or equity valued from \$5,000 to \$10,000.                | Stenographer, bookkeeper; ticket agent, sales people in department stores, et al. |  | Foreman; master carpenter, electrician, et al., RR engineer.   | Police captain, tailor, railroad conductor, watchmaker, et al.     | Small landowner; operators of rented property hiring "hands."                   |
| 5    |  | Business or equity valued from \$2,000 to \$5,000.                 | Dime store clerks, grocery clerks; telephone and beauty operators, et al.         |  | Apprentice to skilled trades; repairmen; med. skilled workers. | Policemen; barbers; practical nurse; brakemen.                     | Tenants on good farms; foremen; owners of farms who "hire out."                 |
| 6    |  | Business or equity valued at less than \$2,000.                    |   | Semi-skilled factory and production workers; assistants to skilled trade warehousemen; watchmen. |  | Taxi and truck drivers; waiter or waitress; gas station attendant. | Sharecroppers; established farm laborers; subsistence farmers.                  |
| 7    | "Reputed Lawbreakers"  |  |   | Heavy labor; odd-jobs men; mine and mill hands; unskilled workers.                               |  | Domestic help; bus boy; scrub women; janitor's helper.             | Migrant workers, "squatters" and "nesters."                                     |

\*McGuire, Carson, and George White, Measure of Social Status, Austin, Texas. University of Texas, 1952.



VITA

Bettye Lou Lively Glasgow

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MARRIED AND SINGLE HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS IN  
RELATION TO PERSONAL AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT AND EARLY DATING  
PRACTICES

Major Field: Family Relations and Child Development

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Bokoshe, Oklahoma, November 7, 1942,  
daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Lively, married Don W. Glasgow,  
April 2, 1965. Daughter, Ladonna Lynn, born August 17, 1969.

Education: Attended Flower Hill Elementary School; graduated from  
Spiro High School in 1960; received the Bachelor of Science  
degree in Home Economics Education from Oklahoma State Uni-  
versity in 1964; completed requirements for the degree of  
Master of Science in Family Relations and Child Development  
in May, 1971.

Professional Experience: Taught Vocational Home Economics in  
Bokoshe, Oklahoma, from 1964-1970. Taught Head Start in  
Summer of 1965.

Professional Organizations: Oklahoma Education Association,  
American Home Economics Association, Oklahoma Home Economics  
Association, American Vocational Association, Oklahoma Vo-  
cational Association, Oklahoma Council on Family Relations.