

MARRIAGE ROLE EXPECTATIONS OF ADOLESCENT
GIRLS FROM HOMES BROKEN BY
DIVORCE AND UNBROKEN HOMES

By

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CHAPTER I

PRESENTATION OF PROBLEM

The effects on family life which have resulted from the impact of urbanization and industrialization have created problems which are not completely resolved. On the one hand, pessimists would have one believe that the family unit is disintegrating and with it, civilization itself. On the other hand, a more optimistic look reveals only a changing family structure. This change might best be described as a turn from a patriarchal-traditional type with rather clearly defined family member roles and a basis of sex-dictated division of labor, to an equalitarian-companionship type in which the roles of the husband and wife are no longer institutionalized (9). The latter type of organization in which family members attempt to work out their own role definitions would, it is believed, result in a strengthened family unit and be one which would be better adapted to living in a democratic society.

No consensus is found among reports of research regarding the topic of role interpretation. It is suggested by Becker and Hill (16) that role expectations are brought to marriage, both consciously and unconsciously, by each man and woman. Burgess and Locke (4) state that the conceptions of family roles which a man and a woman brought to marriage in the institutional family of the past were primarily those of their own parents. They continue that with the companionship

family of present-day American society, conceptions of family roles held by engaged and newly married couples may be widely different from those of their parents (4). Mangus (20) believes that learned role expectations, in varying degrees, define for each family member the rights and duties which devolve upon each as occupant of his position as husband, wife, parent, child, or sibling. He says that when these roles are internalized in the person they provide the main bases of that person's conceptions of himself as a marriage partner or family member.

An examination of the available literature seems to reveal an awareness of the importance of role expectations. If it is true as Cottrell states that the kinds of roles that marriage partners bring to the marriage will determine the nature of the marriage relationship and the degree of adjustment that will be achieved, it would appear to be important to know more about the nature of these expectations than is presently known. It is believed that role expectations are largely conditioned by childhood experiences, early education, and environment (9). These factors which serve as conditioners need further attention.

Family living courses taught at the secondary school level are common although quite varied. In the course offerings, attention is given to the area of preparation for marriage. Most homemaking curricula provide this study during the 11th and 12th grades which is sometimes referred to as Homemaking III or IV (23). Some trend is found in which specialized courses in Home Economics for the college-bound students are given and in such courses marriage preparation is most common (23).

Students who are enrolled in such courses often represent varieties of family structures. As a result the teacher of such a course is required to instruct these students who are products of highly diversified backgrounds. An increasingly high percentage of students are from homes broken by divorce (11). Should this present trend continue the percentages will likely remain high. A possible result of a home broken by divorce is that a child is reared in a one-parent home. Should the home be broken during the child's early development and remain a one-parent home during the remaining maturation process, the possibility arises of confusion in the role concept formation, particularly with regard to the specific roles of a husband and a wife in marriage. The altered family structure leaves the child of divorce with unique problems compared to a child reared in an unbroken, two-parent home (26).

The precise conceptions of marriage roles held by children who come from homes broken by divorce has not yet been fully determined. Studies involving the conceptions of marriage role expectations for high-school boys' and girls' have proved helpful (9, 22). However, research is needed concerning respondents who are products of homes broken by divorce and the marriage role expectations which they hold.

The conceptions which girls from homes broken by divorce have about marriage roles is particularly needed. A determination of differences could then be made between the views of these respondents and the views held by girls who are products of unbroken, two-parent homes.

It will be the purpose of this study to examine the marriage role expectations of girls from homes broken by divorce and to compare them

to the same role expectations of girls who have come from unbroken, two-parent homes. The reasons for selecting this problem can be found in the following three statements. First, areas of concern relating to special problems of marriage role expectations could be clarified. Second, guidance relating to these unique problems of girls could be more adequately given by teachers who would be working with the girls. Finally, a more positive feeling of competence would be realized by teachers in an area where instruction is important.

Questions To Be Asked

The questions this study will attempt to answer are the following.

1. Do the conceptions of marriage role expectations differ for the respondents from homes broken by divorce as compared to those who are from unbroken, two-parent homes?
2. Do the respondents from homes broken by divorce have an equalitarian or traditional attitude toward marriage role expectations?
3. Do differences between the groups suggest implications for inclusion in a family living curricula?

Procedure To Be Used

The instrument to be used is the "Marriage Role Expectation Inventory" developed by Dr. Marie S. Dunn. The Inventory was the result of a study undertaken by Dr. Dunn in which she attempted to develop an instrument which would yield data concerning the nature of marriage role expectations of adolescents. She also was interested in determining the extent to which adolescent expectations reflected companionship-equalitarian or traditional-patriarchal conceptions of

marriage roles. Finally, her study sought to determine if a relationship existed between role expectations of adolescents and socioeconomic status, place of residence, marital status, and sex.

Sample To Be Used

A group of high school girls from a suburban community will be used for testing. The reasons for the selection of the community are the size of the school represented and the availability of the number and type of needed respondents.

The group will have the Inventory administered by the homemaking teachers of the high school which they represent. The teachers will be provided with written instructions prepared by the researcher. The group will be individually analyzed through the use of a numbered Face Sheet (Appendix A) to determine if the home represented is one broken by divorce or is one in which divorce has not occurred. The analysis will be done in confidence by the researcher to avoid the respondent feeling singled out due to the marital status of her parents. All marking of the Inventories and data analysis will be done by the researcher.

Limitations of the Study

It should be recognized that limitations existed for this study. The size of the groups being tested was small, involving a total of 108 respondents in testing. The respondents were representative of a single community and school. All persons used in the testing were enrolled in a homemaking class in high school. A limited amount of personal data was obtained from each respondent. The age range of the

respondents fell within a three-year span of time.

Definitions of Terms

Below are given the definitions of terms which appear several times in the text of this study. The definitions selected for use are those which seemed to best describe the meaning intended by the author.

Marriage role expectation = the anticipation of patterns of behavior which are appropriate to the status of being married.

Patriarchal-traditional marriage relationship = one in which the husband is dominant in most areas; the wife's authority in areas of child-rearing and caring for the home is delegated to her by him. The pattern of the marriage relationship is based on a sharp distinction between the sexes and places a premium on masculinity and femininity. These derive their meaning and significant differences by contrast to each other (1).

Equalitarian-companionship marriage relationship = a new form of relationship in the modern urban family which has emerged as a result of the impact of social changes in the family. The unity of the new marriage and family relationships are determined by "such interpersonal relations as the mutual affection, the sympathetic understanding, and the comradeship of its members" (1). The suggestion arises from the concept of the companionship family that the husband and wife always make decisions as a democratic pair with the result that the individual marriage roles of each are often essentially the same (1).

Institutionalized = the authority of specific roles of a husband and wife in marriage clearly rests with one of the two partners.

It has been the purpose of Chapter I to present the problem for study, the specific questions that are to be considered, to outline the procedure to be used, to provide a description of the sample to be tested, and finally to present definitions of terms which will be used in the discussion.

In Chapter II a review of literature will be given. Included as topics in this review will be: 1) the process of divorce; 2) existing opinions regarding role assumptions by various family members; and 3) a consideration of family living courses in the Home Economics curricula. This review will serve to establish a framework for Chapter III in which a presentation and analysis of the data will be made. Chapter IV will provide a discussion of the implications of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It will be the purpose of Chapter II to provide a review of literature that will assist in establishing a framework for this study. Since the study relates to a comparison of the marriage role expectations of girls who are from homes broken by divorce and those who are from unbroken, two-parent homes, the author includes information regarding the divorce process, as well as some of its causative factors and some of its effects on children, with the thought that such information will clarify the reason for this comparison of the two groups being studied. Second, existing opinions regarding the roles of men, women, and adolescents and the relation of the assumption of these to their marriage role expectation will be explored. Finally, since possible implications for curricula in family living courses may be present in the findings of this study, a consideration of the inclusion of such courses in the Home Economics curricula will be made.

In Fulcomer's (10) article describing today's families four statements are made which will be included for consideration in this study.

He states:

1. The family is a deeply rooted institution in the United States.
2. Youth, couples, and families are all in the quest for meaning in this turbulent and dangerous world.
3. Families today are different--very different.
4. There are issues in the American family today that are

important.

He then lists ten characteristics and trends in the American family. Since one of these characteristics is thought by the author to be particularly applicable to the following presentation relating to divorce, it will be stated here as evidence that a recognition of it exists. Fulcomer (10) says, "that many persons today are living in incomplete families." (He does not specifically identify the factor making the family incomplete; however, it can be thought that he means that one or both of the parents in the family is absent. The absence may have occurred through death, separation, desertion, or the process of divorce.) Consideration of the divorce process will follow to provide a framework of reference for the study. Divorce will be interpreted; some of the causative factors given; as well as a consideration of the effects on children.

Interpretation of Divorce

Divorce has been defined as a mechanism for dealing with the pressures and problems inevitably caused by marriage (6). In another way divorce is a symbol of family disruption and disorganization, and finds a high degree of disapproval in the American society (30). The norms of family stability and happiness in the American culture seem to be under attack with the existence of the divorce mechanism. Landis (17) says that the societal norms of individual happiness and security cause strain on the marital relationship--sometimes to the point of breaking. It is this contradiction between these norms of stability and happiness and the existence of divorce which oftentimes results in condemnation by various groups. Goode states that "members of a

society cannot be morally required to be happy or unhappy."(6) Divorce serves as a convenient symbol of accumulated discontent, but the causes of family disruption have to be found elsewhere. In examining the attitude of society toward divorce more closely, William Goode (12) has stated "that a different divorce pattern exists in our time." Considerable evidences exist that divorce has gradually been substituted as a solution for conflicts that a couple of generations ago would have ended in only desertion or separation. (12).

Bergler and Bernard do not feel that divorce necessarily means disillusionment with marriage in general, but rather only with a particular person within a particular marriage. Statistics reveal a high rate of remarriage among the divorced, although many might consider these remarriages as "risky." Bernard (2) states that a "divorce proneness" is present with each remarriage of a divorced person.

Causative Factors of Divorce

When examining the causes of a divorce, nine broad factors present themselves as being influential in a person's or couple's decision to divorce. These nine factors are given here with a brief discussion for each one.

The factor of the duration of marriage can be viewed by considering a finding of Jacobsen. He found that the frequency to divorce was highest in the earliest period of married life, from 0-5 years duration (25). Such a finding might give rise to a suggestion that marriage had been used experimentally.

Second, the age at marriage and the differences between these ages are given some indication, by Locke; who states that among the

divorced, the age differential between a husband and wife is greater than it is among happily married couples (25). This statement gives rise to an indication that marital adjustment may be better when a wife is not too much younger than her husband at the time of their marriage. In Goode's study of 425 women in Detroit, it was found that the average age of divorce had been 19.5 years. A conclusion from these above considerations might be that couples of the same, or near the same age, at the first marriage, and who are at least twenty years old, appear to have a greater chance of not being divorced.

A third factor, that of premarital conditions, is documented by Locke's study. He found that an unhappy childhood, extreme conflict with parents, parental restraint, unhappy parental marriage, parental disapproval of the couple's marriage, and living with in-laws all being conditions which were conducive to a divorce (25).

The fourth factor, that of the presence or absence of children, was found by Jacobsen not to be crucial in determining a decision to divorce. He found that other variables were more influential than the mere absence or presence of children (25). Goode comments that the meaning of children is an important consideration in the divorce analysis.

The decision to have children is for many a decision that the marriage is going well enough to continue it, and if the marriage is not going well, there should not be any children just yet (25).

The size of a family is the fifth factor found to be an element in a consideration to divorce. It appears that generally the more children present in a single family the less likelihood of a divorce occurring. This might be partially ascribed to a reluctance by certain religious groups to approve family planning measures.

Another suggestion might be the compensations a large family provides to the husband and wife which remove many of the conditions which might lead to divorce.

William Ogburn clarifies the sixth factor--namely that of educational level. He states that the educational level and its association with a higher income level may assist in marriage solidarity (25). The removal of chronic problems of finances, employment, societal acceptance into the job market might provide the buffer against threats to a marital relationship that did not suffer the crises of daily provision of necessities.

Closely related to the factor of the educational level is one of economic status and social class and its relation to divorce. Locke found that a lower economic level and security was related to a higher incidence of divorce (25). Weeks, Goode, and Kephart concur in this conclusion as similar relationships have been reported by each of them (25).

The eighth factor--namely the type of environment present, whether a rural or urban one, and its relation to divorce is presented. Divorce has been called an urban phenomena with city living being thought to be more conducive to divorce than is rural life. Four suggestions for this phenomena have been made. They are: 1) the tensions of a city set in motion anxieties and compulsions that a more leisurely pace of life permits to remain dormant; 2) a "normalized manic (exaggerated) behavior" has been described as typical of a modern city; 3) the urban environment creates opportunities for irritations with a spouse and broad opportunities for infidelity; and 4) the urban atmosphere leads people to hold for themselves

expectations which are beyond the capacity of fulfillment (25).

Finally, the ninth factor is that of religious affiliation. It was shown in three studies involving a total of nearly 25,000 families, that consistently marriage between individuals of the same faith showed the smallest percent of divorce and separations (25). A conclusion that might be made from the above consideration is that marriages which occur between persons of any of the three major faiths (Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant) might be said to experience more problems than marriages which occur within any one of the three faiths.

As a concluding statement concerning the causative factors of divorce, an additional thought is provided from Talcott Parsons. He says that since the family is no longer the central agency in society and with marriage seemingly becoming a more affectional relationship, a rise in the divorce rate may be one of the penalties of the democratization of the family (25).

Some of the Effects of Divorce on Children

Although extensive and definitive research is lacking in the area of the specific effects of divorce on children, some broad findings are available. Whether an emphatic yes or no can be ascertained concerning whether divorce is, or is not, a traumatic experience for children is highly problematical. It would seem that a potentially traumatic experience for a child could occur in an atmosphere in which the child had been led to think his home was a happy one, only to find this not to be the case. The effects of divorce in such a case could be expected to make a child feel less secure and happy than before a divorce (18).

Frequently divorce may represent a tremendous relief for a child (25). The hostile, emotionally draining tensions which may have been present in the unhappy, but not divorced, home situation may have left irreparable emotional scars on the child. In these cases it was not the divorce itself which created the trauma for the child, but rather the experiences prior to its occurrence.

It might seem that in determining the effect of trauma on a child involved in a divorce situation that the more emotionally stable a child's personality is when the divorce occurs, the more capable the child may be of coping with the emotional consequences of it. Significant variables which may determine to what degree a divorce is traumatic for a child are: 1) the child's age and 2) the presence of sufficiently older siblings who might serve as surrogates (26).

A brief examination of some of the effects of divorce on the relationships of specific parents with their children will be presented. It is a well established fact that at every developmental phase in his maturity a child needs a father. Statistics reveal that in a majority of divorce settlements the woman is assigned custody of the children. This means for a high percentage of these children, they are reared in a home headed by a woman. When an absence of a parent occurs, as in the result of a divorce, the psychodynamic structure is complicated by hostilities, feelings of abandonment, and guilt arising from divided loyalties (12).

For the children of divorce a necessity for a redefinition of feelings and attitudes toward one or both parents arises (18). In addition, the emotional distance between a parent and child may be affected. As Landis (19) noted, the following effects were evident.

First, girls and boys, and especially girls, from divorced homes tended to feel more distant from their fathers than children from unhappy, nondivorced homes. Second, girls from divorced marriages tended to feel closer to their mothers than did girls in unhappy, nondivorced marriages.

Although broad generalizations are impossible to cite, nevertheless, one concluding statement regarding the relationship of divorced parents and their relationship to their children would be helpful. The best guarantee of a satisfactory future for the marriage of these children of divorce is a satisfactory parental image. The safeguarding of this image, whether male or female, should be the main concern of the parent entrusted with the custody of the children (26).

Roles of Different Family Members

The discussion will now be directed to an examination of findings related to marriage role expectations. A description of men's and women's roles will also be included for additional clarification.

Role as it will be used in this discussion follows: "the part an individual plays in the life of a family as indicated by the prerogatives he exercises and obligations he assumes in carrying out this part."(28) It may be said that much difficulty arises as a result of attempts to define clearly the roles of men and women in today's society. For this reason the author has chosen to deal separately with these divisions, considering first the roles of men and then those of women.

Suggested reasons for difficulties in establishing norms in role definition, division, and role assumptions for men as husband and/or

father are as follows: 1) the form of families is changing, granting greater freedom for each family member; 2) the allocation of economic resources represents a further change; 3) the mobility of the American family creates alteration of family roles; 4) the socialization of men makes it difficult for a man to learn to love rather than to command or punish; and 5) families are interdependent units interacting with other units of society (27).

It would seem to be a tenable hypothesis that men suffer from a lack of a generally accepted, clearly defined pattern of behavior expected of them. Their individual interpretation of the masculine role varies according to individual personality needs and social situations (14).

Against a background of change it should be remembered that there is no such thing as a "typical American family," or even more specifically, no representative male in a group. In the final consideration of the roles men will assume the final judgment must lie with the individual and his own interpretation of his role. Differences exist which are related to class, communities, and regional sub-cultures which set limits to possible generalizations being made.

Roles of Women

Women's roles and status have changed. The present day responsibilities of homemakers have come about largely as a result of economic and political changes. The saying, "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world," is true currently as women increase their assumption of dual and multiple roles in life (3). Additionally, women and their roles have been affected by world affairs and politics.

The movement of women into the working world has made an enormous change in the position of women in the home as well as in society (3). Rostow states that little reliable documentation exists of the relation between the change in status of women and the change in attitudes toward the rightful roles of men and women (3).

Margaret Mead points out a conflict between fulfillment through marriage and motherhood on the one hand and self-realization in work on the other. She says that a girl learns to be successful but not too much so, that she can do a job adequately but still be willing to give up the job for marriage and parenthood. She continues that it is not surprising that marriage persists as a primary aim for young women, but this does not mean she must live traditionally. "The achievement of balance between marriage and gainful employment in life can make both experiences optimally rewarding."(3)

In Christensen's study on "Lifetime Family and Occupational Role Projections of High School Students" it was found that ten per cent of the girls in the sample planned to be homemakers during the first year after graduation; sixty-two per cent expected to experience either part-time or full-time employment; about one-half of the entire group planned for some formal education after high school; and most of the girls planned to be homemakers most of their lives. Recognizing that it is becoming increasingly possible for women to have both a marriage and gainful employment during the majority of their adult life, a need seems to exist for a continuous examination of the various aspects of the multiple roles assumed by both men and women today (3).

Historically, change and the ability to adjust to change have been instrumental in the roles that women have assumed. It cannot be said

with certainty what the women of the future will do or what responsibilities they will assume, however, it is reasonable to assume that high school girls today need to be in harmony with the present and in tune with the future (3). In a changing society many roles are becoming shared ones with other family members. The changes will call for additional accommodations, new insights, and increased understanding to obtain workable pleasant role-taking experiences by all family members.

In an attempt to more fully understand the factors involved in the formulation of role expectations of youth today, Dunn undertook a study in which she outlined three purposes: 1) to develop an instrument which would yield data concerning the nature of marriage role expectations of adolescents; 2) to determine by analysis of responses to the instrument the extent to which adolescent expectations reflect companionship-equalitarian or traditional conceptions of marriage roles; and 3) to determine if a relationship existed between the role expectations of adolescents and socio-economic status, and sex. Her study involved the use of 436 white, high school seniors enrolled in urban and rural public high schools in seven parishes of northern Louisiana. The findings revealed that the role expectations of this group of adolescents was a trend toward a companionship-equalitarian type of American family in the future. The greatest progress toward equalitarian expectations was evident in the areas of child care, social participation, and personal characteristics. The least progress toward equalitarian expectations was noted in the two role areas most clearly sex-ascribed in the traditional-patriarchal family. These areas were: 1) that of a wife as a homemaker and 2) that of a husband as breadwinner. Findings of Dunn's (9) study substantiate those of

investigators who have found that for both single and married subjects, more women than men tend to hold traditional conceptions with reference to homemaking responsibilities. However, the findings also suggest that the concept of "equality" in family member roles is not unidimensional (having only one dimension), but was found to vary considerably from one area of family interaction to another. The situation in which the role was expressed in each statement in the instrument was found to be influential in demonstrating the degree to which role expectations reflected equalitarianism.

Additional uses of the Inventory developed by Dunn have been made to explore role conceptions and to examine the relationship between marriage role expectations and further studies involving such variables as sex, social class, education, and selected personality traits have been done (5, 13). No evidence could be found by the author of use being made of the Inventory to explore possible differences in marriage role expectations of girls who are reared in homes which have been broken by divorce and girls who are reared in unbroken, two-parent homes.

The "Marriage Role Expectation Inventory" developed in Dunn's study was chosen to be used as the testing device for this study due to its relative ease of administration and scoring, its appeal to high school students, as was demonstrated in its previous use, and its broad coverage of areas of family interaction. The reader will find further reference to the Inventory in Chapter III.

Discussion of Curricula Offerings

Because of the relation of this study to possible implications for

family living courses in the Home Economics curricula offerings, the author wishes now to provide a framework of understanding regarding the organization of these learning experiences, the criteria to be used for their provision, and specifically, the inclusion of the conceptual approach for organization which has been adopted for Home Economics curricula offerings.

Organization of Learning Experiences

In order for educational experiences to produce a cumulative effect, they must be organized to reinforce each other. Organization is thus seen as an important problem in curriculum development because it greatly influences the efficiency of instruction and the degree to which major educational changes are brought about in the learners (29).

Criteria for Provision of Learning Experiences

There are three major criteria suggested by Tyler (29) to be met in building an effectively organized group of learning experiences. These are: continuity, sequence, and integration. These three criteria are basic to the building of an effective scheme or organization of learning experiences (29).

In working out a plan of organization for a curriculum, it is necessary to identify the elements of the curriculum which serve as the organizing threads (29). The "Conceptual Framework and Generalizations in Home Economics" is a good example of work done to identify the major concepts and generalizations that serve as organizing elements for the curriculum in Home Economics (8).

Conceptual Approach to Learning Experiences

Changes in ways of thinking, in fundamental habits, in major operating concepts, in attitudes, in abiding interests and the like, develop slowly (29). Concept formation is the process whereby an individual interprets his environment (15). Since these relatively systematic ways of viewing the environment are referred to as concepts, an individual becomes able to react with some degree of assuredness and consistency (15). Concept learning has been found to involve the development of the ability to make discriminations by which one concept can be distinguished from another, and to identify and relate experiences of a concept. All these processes require a knowledge of important facts about the concept which is equal to the intellectual ability of the learner and his maturity (15). It, then, becomes one of the teacher's responsibilities to determine the kinds of experiences that are most appropriate for the development of a particular concept (15).

Although it has been found that the various aspects of personal, family, and community living are generally similar for all adolescents in our culture, nevertheless, the concepts each one holds varies (15). Since no two situations are identical, the associations, meanings, and feelings each individual connects with a particular concept will be widely different. Hatcher and Andrews (15) say that since early concepts usually represent casual learning, erroneous interpretations may also be involved.

The development of generalizations involves the recognition of factual information that can be broadly applied and thus be related to many situations (15). Students should be helped to realize that

generalizations are valuable to the extent that they can be used in everyday living (15).

Insight into how students see various aspects of everyday living makes it possible for the teacher to try to direct their new knowledge toward expanding, revising, and clarifying their concepts and generalizations and even developing new ones (15)

Examination of high school curricula offerings in Home Economics reveal the provision of study in family life education to be organized under broad concepts. Generalizations are also listed for each given concept. As an example of a unit plan which exemplifies this, one from the Ohio Home Economics Curriculum Guide serves the purpose. Four weeks are suggested as the time length to examine the unit "Recognizing and Understanding the Responsibilities of Marriage and Parenthood." In this unit the following concepts are suggested to be studied:

1) preparation for marriage; 2) readiness for marriage; 3) marriage laws and customs; 4) successful marriage; and 5) successful parenthood (24). Other curriculum guides (New York, Alabama, Illinois) likewise provide similar organizations in their curricula offerings in Home Economics.

In Chapter III a thorough examination of the data for this study will be made. In addition, an analysis of the data will be given. The Inventory which was used as the testing instrument will be more fully explained.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION OF DATA

Introduction

The central purpose of Chapter III is to present the findings and an analysis of this study. The major findings will be organized around two of the three original questions which formed the basis of inquiry for this study. Briefly stated, these questions are as follows:

- 1) do differences in marriage role expectations occur between respondents from homes broken by divorce and those from unbroken, two-parent homes?; and
- 2) do respondents from homes broken by divorce have an equalitarian or a traditional attitude toward marriage role expectations?

Explanation of Instrument

The "Marriage Role Expectation Inventory" does not determine one's readiness for marriage, nor does it attempt to be a device to predict marital success. It should be understood that it is an exploratory pencil and paper test to assist persons in their preparation for marriage and family living by recording, evaluating, and comparing what is expected of one's self and of a marriage partner in seven areas of behavior. These areas are as follows: Authority, Homemaking, Care of Children, Personal Characteristics, Social Participation, Education, and Employment and Support. The Inventory consists of 71 items. For 34 of these items the respondent answers in terms of agreement,

uncertainty, or disagreement to statements that describe marital behaviors and attitudes which indicate an equalitarian-companionship relationship to a marriage partner. To the remainder of the items, (37), response is made also in terms of agreement, uncertainty, or disagreements to statements which indicate a traditional-patriarchal marriage relationship.

Five responses to each statement on the Inventory are possible. These are listed as follows: SA-strongly agree; A-agree; U-undecided; D-disagree; and SD-strongly disagree. The instrument was designed to yield two types of total scores. One score is referred to as the equalitarian score. The responses on the Inventory which are identified as SA-strongly agree and A-agree are the responses, which when totaled, reveal the degree of equalitarian response made. A second score is referred to as the traditional score. The responses which are identified in the Inventory as SD-strongly disagree and D-disagree are the responses, which when totaled, reveal the degree of traditional response made. The interpretation of scores can be made by using the following general classification given below in Table I.

TABLE I
CLASSIFICATION OF MARRIAGE ROLE EXPECTATIONS
ACCORDING TO NUMERICAL SCORE

Numerical Score	Classification
0 - 18	Traditional
19 - 35	Moderately Traditional
36 - 53	Moderately Equalitarian
54 - 71	Equalitarian

It can be seen that the higher the numerical score the nearer the respondent comes to being classified as equalitarian in his beliefs. Conversely, the lower numerical score classifies the respondent as being more traditional.

By using the item counting method suggested by the Dunn instrument, and subsequently the classification table referred to in Table I, an individual's responses to marriage role expectations can be determined. Once determined, the responses can then be compared either individually or within a group to clarify points of likenesses or differences. Further, it can be determined whether a respondent holds an equalitarian or traditional attitude in his marriage role expectations.

The validity of the Dunn instrument is recognized in the following way. Four steps were carried out to establish the validity: 1) the unstructured responses from adolescents concerning marriage role expectations furnished the original items; 2) conceptual definitions of traditional and equalitarian roles were developed; 3) criteria used in formulating and editing statements were used; and 4) a consensus of judges, who were known to be familiar with the concepts, served as controls to limit and define the nature of the statements written. The final items for each category were selected in terms of the degree to which they differentiated between the extreme groups on the various measures. No statement was used in the final form that failed to discriminate at the 5% or higher level of confidence.

The reliability of the Dunn instrument was proved in the following way. A split-half correlation coefficient computed on scores of 50 respondents on the odd-numbered and on the even-numbered statements

demonstrates the reliability of the 71 item Inventory. The coefficient of .95, corrected by the Spearman-Brown formula to .975, compared favorably with those reported in the literature for attitude scales developed by the method of summated ratings (9).

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Explanation of Pilot Study

Before the major testing for this study was done, a pilot study was conducted using 20 high school girls from a city other than the one employed in the major study. The girls were all students enrolled in a homemaking class and all were juniors and seniors in high school. The major purposes of the pilot study were: 1) to see if difficulties existed in the administration of the test instructions; and 2) to see if the printed Face Sheet used in connection with the Inventory to obtain personal data, was able to be completed by each respondent without confusion.

It was found that no difficulties existed in the administration of the test instructions since no questions were asked which might have indicated a lack of clarity in the test directions. Likewise, the Face Sheet which requested a limited amount of personal data, was answered without confusion.

Description of Group

The group of high school students from a suburban community used in this study consisted of a total of 108. Of this total 27 of the group came from homes broken by divorce, while the remaining 81 were from unbroken, two-parent homes. All the respondents represented a

single community and school. All were students enrolled in homemaking classes in the high school. The age range for the group was within a three year time span.

Explanation of Testing Procedure

The Inventory described previously was administered by the homemaking teachers in the high school represented by the respondents. Printed directions (Appendix B) which were sent by the author to the teachers were followed in the testing procedure.

The Inventories which had been previously numbered were administered to the group. Completion of these, as well as the printed Face Sheets (Appendix A), was carried out during a single class period. The respondents were not required to sign their names to the Inventories. Before the Inventories were marked, instructions which were printed on the test instrument were read aloud to the respondents. Time was given to ask questions should the directions need further clarity. The respondents were then allowed as much time as was needed by each person to complete the Inventory. An average time of thirty minutes was required by the majority of the group to mark the instrument. A few respondents took longer than this, while a few required less time.

After each of the respondents had completed the Inventory, they were handed to the teacher in charge. They were then asked to complete the printed Face Sheet which asked for a limited amount of personal data from them. The Face Sheets had also been numbered and were later matched to the numbered Inventories. It was the intention of the researcher to insure each respondent's feeling of confidence in replying to the two sheets. It was the opinion of those administering

them that this feeling of confidence had been safeguarded, as no verbal comments were made that might have indicated that an invasion of privacy had taken place.

Likewise, it was the opinion of those proctoring the testing that no difficulties were presented in the administration of the Inventory. The directions that had been given previous to their actual marking seemed sufficient in their clarity. Neither did the completion of the printed Face Sheet seem to prompt questions which might have indicated confusion by the respondent in completing it. The Face Sheets were answered without difficulty.

The first original question of the study was to determine if differences in marriage role expectations occurred between girls from homes broken by divorce and those from unbroken, two-parent homes. Below is a table which shows precisely how each respondent was classified according to the total score marked on the Inventory.

TABLE II
NUMBER OF ADOLESCENTS FOR EACH CLASSIFICATION
OF MARRIAGE ROLE EXPECTATIONS

Classification of Marriage Role Expectations	Group I (Students with divorced parents)	Group II (Students with nondivorced parents)
Equalitarian	6	20
Moderately Equalitarian	21	59
Moderately Traditional	0	2
Traditional	0	0
Totals	27	81

For the purpose of analysis the two respondents who fell in the category of Moderately Traditional will be combined with the Moderately Equalitarian group. The variation in scores between the Moderately Equalitarian and Moderately Traditional was so slight that this procedure would seem to be acceptable. Likewise, the category, Traditional, will be omitted since none of the respondents fell within this classification. Thus the data that follow will treat the respondents as being either Equalitarian or Moderately Equalitarian in their marriage role expectations.

From this point the data analysis will refer to Group I (students with divorced parents) and Group II (students with nondivorced parents) which will be handled as two divisions--A and B. The A division will refer to those respondents giving an Equalitarian score. The B division refers to responses of the Moderately Equalitarian classification. Table III shows the distribution of the two groupings, thus answering the second original question of the study--what attitude is held by the respondents from homes broken by divorce and respondents from homes not broken by divorce toward marriage role expectations?

By applying a Test of Significance to the totals given in Table III it can be seen that a 1 to 3 ratio occurs between Groups I and II in both divisions of A (Equalitarian) and B (Moderately Equalitarian). It may be concluded from this Test of Significance for the two groups being studied, and having used this particular instrument as a measurement of equalitarian-traditional attitudes concerning marriage role expectations, that no differences in responses can be found between Groups I and II. However, these responses were total scores of the respondents. The data was further studied to see if differences

occurred for the sub-scales.

TABLE III
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS HAVING EQUALITARIAN
AND MODERATELY EQUALITARIAN RESPONSES

Groups	Divisions		Total
	A (Equalitarian)	B (Moderately- Equalitarian)	
I (students with divorced parents)	6	21	27
II (students with nondivorced parents)	20	61	81
			108

Equalitarian Responses to Sub-Scales

The seven sub-scales included in the "Marriage Role Expectation Inventory" are dealt with in Tables IV and V which follow. There were two ways of responding to each sub-scale, equalitarian or traditional, by both Group I (students with divorced parents) and Group II (students with nondivorced parents). The total number of responses possible for either an equalitarian or traditional role expectation is given numerically in parentheses following each of the sub-scales. Median scores for Groups I and II have been compiled.

It can be seen that a one point difference exists between Group I and II on the sub-scale of authority. Since the median score is higher in the direction of Group I, the following comments might be made about the respondents. The respondents viewed the questions on the authority sub-scale that were in regard to money matters; family financial status

status and husband's business affairs, ~~was to be~~ seen as joint efforts between husband and wife. Likewise joint decision-making in regard to children ~~was~~ seen as shared husband and wife activities. Thus Group I (students with divorced parents) tended slightly to be more equalitarian on this particular sub-scale than did Group II (students with nondivorced parents).

TABLE IV
MEDIAN SCORES OF RESPONDENTS TO EQUALITARIAN
STATEMENTS IN EACH SUB-SCALE

Sub-Scales	Median Scores	
	Group I (Students with divorced parents)	Group II (Students with nondivorced parents)
<u>A</u> uthority (11)	8	7
<u>H</u> omemaking (11)	5	5
<u>C</u> are of children (12)	10	10
<u>P</u> ersonal characteristics (8)	6	7
<u>S</u> ocial participation (11)	7	8
<u>E</u> ducation (11)	10	9
<u>E</u> mployment and <u>S</u> upport (7)	6	5

For the sub-scale of education a similar one point difference is present for Group I and II and again favors Group I (students with divorced parents). On this sub-scale statements were included in the Inventory dealing with the question of combining marriage and a college education for either the husband or the wife, and the limits of education desirable for both.

Again, daughters of divorced parents seemed to regard education for both husband and wife as slightly more important than did daughters of nondivorced parents.

Third, the employment and support sub-scale revealed a one point difference between the two groups and is in the direction of Group I (students with divorced parents). By reacting on the equalitarian side to such topics as outside employment for women being a joint decision; combining motherhood and a career, if desired; choosing a career in preference to motherhood; and respecting and loving one's husband regardless of the kind of work he does, the respondents might be said to view employment and support of a family as a joint partnership or in a more equalitarian way than does Group II (students with nondivorced parents).

On the other hand, for the sub-scales of personal characteristics and social participation Group II (students with nondivorced parents) had a one point increase over Group I (students with divorced parents). The sub-scale dealt with personal characteristics such as: 1) the importance of a wife being an interesting companion in preference to being a good cook and housekeeper; 2) the wife's family background seen as less important than her having a compatible personality; 3) the job of setting a good example for the children and going to church as a woman's job more than a man's; and 4) the importance of a husband being able to get along with people rather than being ambitious and hard-working. Group II (students with nondivorced parents) seemed to favor all of these topics as being activities that a husband and wife would share, thus not defining a line according to "women's" work and "men's" work.

The social participation sub-scale reveals topics of participation in community affairs which Group II (students with nondivorced parents) viewed likewise as being more equalitarian in their beliefs than did Group I (students with divorced parents).

The two sub-scales, care of children and homemaking, reveal no differences in the median scores between the two groups. However, noting that 12 was the possible score on the sub-scale, care of children, and seeing the agreement of 10 for the median scores between the two groups as true, reveals a high response of equalitarian attitude to such questions regarding the rearing, care, and disciplining of children. It might be noticed, too, that a median score agreement of 5 out of 11 possible responses between the two groups for the sub-scale of homemaking could be interpreted to mean less of a "sharing" attitude between a husband and wife concerning such topics as housework. In other words, some jobs are seen clearly as women's work and likewise some as men's.

Traditional Responses to Sub-Scales

Table V provides the median scores for the traditional responses of the sub-scales by Group I (students with divorced parents) and Group II (students with nondivorced parents). Again, the sub-scales are listed and the total number of possible responses for each sub-scale is given in parentheses after each sub-scale.

Table V reveals no differences between the two groups for the sub-scales of authority, care of children, education, and employment and support. The reactions to these sub-scales might be interpreted to mean that for the specific statements regarding each one, the two groups replied in a more traditional way. Such topics as the following

are examples: the husband having the final voice in a decision of where to live; certain aspects of child-care seen clearly as women's and men's work; lack of need for woman to have as much education as her husband; and the breadwinner role seen more definitely as a man's job.

TABLE V
MEDIAN SCORES OF RESPONDENTS TO TRADITIONAL
STATEMENTS IN EACH SUB-SCALE

Sub-Scales	Median Scores	
	Group I (Students with divorced parents)	Group II (Students with nondivorced parents)
<u>A</u> uthority (11)	4	4
<u>H</u> omemaking (11)	6	5
<u>C</u> are of children (12)	2	2
<u>P</u> ersonal characteristics (8)	3	1
<u>S</u> ocial participation (11)	4	3
<u>E</u> ducation (11)	2	2
<u>E</u> mployment and <u>S</u> upport (7)	2	2

Numerical differences do occur, however, for the sub-scales of homemaking, personal characteristics, and social participation. More reactions of jobs seen clearly as men's or women's work were present in the answers to these statements. In all instances where differences are present Group I (students with divorced parents) tended to be slightly more traditional than Group II (students with nondivorced parents).

Undecided Responses

Since one of the methods possible for response to individual statements on the Inventory was that of undecided (u), median scores of the undecided responses were compiled for the two groups to see what, if any, degree of differences existed.

TABLE VI
MEDIAN SCORES FOR UNDECIDED
RESPONSES TO INVENTORY

Groups	Number of (u) Responses
I (students with divorced parents)	2+
II (students with nondivorced parents)	2+

After examining Table VI it can be seen that no differences existed for Groups I (students with divorced parents) and II (students with nondivorced parents) in the number of undecided responses made by either group. It might be said that one group was found to be no more undecided in their responses than was another.

The data presented indicate that differences in marriage role expectations of adolescent girls from unbroken homes compared to those from homes broken by divorce was not evidenced in the results of the Dunn instrument. Only slight differences were noted in the sub-scales of the Inventory.

The girls tested evidenced companionship-equalitarian expectations for marriage role attitudes rather than traditional attitudes. In fact, not one of the 108 respondents reacted in a strictly traditional manner to the Inventory.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to compare the marriage role expectations of adolescent girls from homes which had been broken by divorce and girls from unbroken homes. The instrument used for the work was the "Marriage Role Expectation Inventory" developed by Dunn.

An attempt was made to gather data that would help answer three questions.

1. Do the conceptions of marriage role expectations differ for the respondents from homes broken by divorce as compared to those who are from unbroken, two-parent homes?
2. Do the respondents from homes broken by divorce have an equalitarian or traditional attitude toward marriage role expectations?
3. Do differences between the groups suggest implications for inclusion in a family living curricula?

The first question was answered when the marriage role expectations of the respondents from the two unlike home situations were found to be no different from each other. For the conclusion to this question, however, it should be remembered that the group tested was representative of only a single community. Neither did it consist of a matched sample. Therefore, perhaps the use of a larger, more representative group might show differences between girls who live in unlike home situations concerning their marriage role expectations.

Also, perhaps having the same number of persons in each of the two groups (students with divorced parents and students with nondivorced parents) might allow a matching of the groups. Because the groups used for the study did not consist of the same number in each group, such matching was not possible to be done.

The second question was answered when the responses to the instrument used in the study indicated that for both groups (students with divorced parents and those with nondivorced parents) a desire for an equalitarian-companionship marriage role expectation was present. Both groups tended to reject, rather definitely, a desire for a strictly traditional-patriarchal kind of marriage role expectation.

In relation to the seven sub-scales in the "Marriage Role Expectation Inventory" some slight differences in responses were evident for the two groups in all of the sub-scales except for one--care of children. Slightly more equalitarian-companionship attitudes were voiced by the girls from homes broken by divorce for the following sub-scales: authority, education, and employment and support. However, for the girls from homes not broken by divorce slightly more equalitarian-companionship attitudes were evident for the sub-scales designated as: personal characteristics, and social participation. The girls from homes broken by divorce showed more of a tendency toward a traditional-patriarchal attitude about homemaking, personal characteristics, and social participation. In viewing all of the responses to the seven sub-scales, two conclusions might be drawn. First, the girls from homes broken by divorce viewed more of the sub-scales in an equalitarian-companionship manner than did the girls from unbroken homes, four out of a total seven. Second, as would be expected, the

opposite was true for the girls from unbroken homes. In other words, they regarded homemaking, personal characteristics, and social participation in a more equalitarian-companionship view, but responded to the sub-scales of authority, education, and employment and support in a more traditional-patriarchal manner.

The third question of concern in this study regarding the implications for the family living curriculum will be treated in the following section.

Implications for Family Living Curriculum

The results of the study indicated several implications for inclusion in a family living curriculum.

1. The study revealed a strong trend for companionship-equalitarian marriage role expectation. Not a single girl of the total tested indicated a desire for a traditional-patriarchal marriage role expectation. Therefore, it would seem important that students in family living classes be helped to understand fully what obligations and freedom an equalitarian-companionship marriage relationship involves.
2. It is presently thought that role expectations are largely conditioned by early childhood experiences, environment, and education. The degree to which a child's role expectations are influenced by such an experience as a divorce in his home situation might prove to be helpful in understanding more fully how his marriage role expectations are formed. Awareness of the teacher for the need of such students to explore more fully role expectations through class discussions, films, and role-playing might prove beneficial to the final formation of his marriage role expectation.
3. Even though a strong trend in the direction of equalitarian-companionship marriage role expectation was shown by the total group of girls tested, nevertheless, some responses to individual sub-scales (homemaking, social participation, and personal characteristics) revealed traditional-patriarchal viewpoints. Because of this apparent contradiction in attitude by students, help might be given by the teacher to understand more fully what is meant by

equalitarian-companionship marriage relationship or a traditional-patriarchal one, thus reducing the degree of confusion in their own attitude.

Additional Implications

It is the opinion of the author that additional implications exist for this study. First, the study might be carried out using adolescents from homes broken by divorce and those from unbroken ones, but using a larger, more representative sample consisting of equal numbers in the two groups. It would then be possible to match the respondents on predetermined points. Statistical analysis could also provide definite indications regarding the views toward marriage role expectations held by girls from unbroken and broken homes.

Second, improvement in the collection of personal data about adolescents used in such a study as this is needed. More personal data than was obtained in this study would prove to be an advantage in the analysis of responses.

Third, a study that would involve a cross-sectional sample of adolescents might reveal interesting contrasts. This study used respondents who were presently enrolled in a homemaking class. No definite statement could be made to say that this was a major difference in the way the Inventory was answered, nevertheless, it should be remembered as a possibility. A final conclusion could only come by comparing this variable of enrollment versus non-enrollment in homemaking.

Fourth, the age at which the respondents were tested might have been an influential element. Because it is difficult to say definitely how and when role conceptions are formed by an individual, it would not

be unusual, perhaps, to find the respondents reacting to the same instrument in a different way after a lapse of time, say one, two, or three years hence. The respondents would then be nearing the age for marriage. A follow-up study might prove to be an interesting check for this factor.

Fifth, since the study involved a comparison of girls from unlike home situations, additional information provided with the "Marriage Role Expectation Inventory" might show greater differences among the respondents checking the Inventory. Also, it is possible that the author was desiring to study differences that could not be measured by using a single pencil and paper device. It would seem that until more research is completed in the area of role formation, and especially marriage role formation of adolescents, it cannot be said definitely that such formation is completely measurable by such a device.

Sixth, it would seem that an awareness exists for any measuring device of marriage role expectations to be subject to constant revision. Societal changes make this imperative if such a measurement would have validity.

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APPENDIX A

FACE SHEET

NAME _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____
 mon. day year

SEX: BOY _____ GIRL _____ GRADE _____ SCHOOL _____ ENROLLED IN HOME MAKING?

_____ Yes

_____ No

ADDRESS _____
 street city

1. Check the relationships and give the number of persons living in your home. (DO NOT include those who are NOT living at home.)

father _____

mother _____

sisters _____ number _____ ages _____

brothers _____ number _____ ages _____

others _____ number _____ relation _____

2. A. Is either of your parents not living?

a) father _____ yes _____ no

b) mother _____ yes _____ no

B. Are your parents divorced? _____ yes
 _____ no

C. Are your parents separated? _____ yes
 _____ no

- D. If your answer to any of the above is YES, how old were YOU when this occurred?

_____ age

APPENDIX B

Instruction Sheet

1. Please give ALL tests on the same day.
2. DO NOT have students write on test form anything but their answers. (DISREGARD the information requested on the front of the test form.)
3. They may use either pen or pencil.
4. Give the Inventory to student FIRST, after ALL have completed the questions, take them up and give them an Information Sheet. BE SURE the number on the Inventory and Information Sheet is the SAME. This is VERY IMPORTANT.
5. After handing out the Inventory, go over the directions for marking it. These appear on the front of the sheet.

EMPHASIZE: Test Directions.

- a. There are no Right or Wrong answers.
- b. Their answers should be what SHE expects of HER own marriage, not what someone else expects.
- c. DO NOT discuss the Inventory with others. Ask questions only of the teacher in charge.
- d. They are to answer EACH question, with only one answer.
- e. Try to answer as few Undecided (U) as possible, and leave none blank, if possible.

EMPHASIZE: Information Sheet Directions.

- a. BE SURE the number on the sheet is the same as for the Inventory. (DO NOT make this evident to the students, however.)
- b. Have them answer all blanks.
- c. Go over directions for marking Question #1, especially note the directions in parenthesis.
- d. Question #2 -- Part A.
A YES answer means one or the other IS NOT living, so if they ARE living their answer should be checked NO.
- e. Please double check the papers as they are handed in to see if every blank has been completed.

THANK THE GIRLS FOR THEIR COOPERATION.

VITA

Dora Sue Moorer Miskel

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: MARRIAGE ROLE EXPECTATIONS OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS FROM HOMES
BROKEN BY DIVORCE AND UNBROKEN HOMES

Major Field: Home Economics Education

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