

RELATION OF INSTRUCTION IN CLOTHING SELECTION AND  
CONSTRUCTION TO CURRENT PRACTICES

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By

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## INTRODUCTION

Clothing courses have heretofore been built around the necessity of making clothing for oneself. Tradition called for beginning to learn the technics of sewing on easy, nonfitted garments and progressing to the more difficult types of fitted dresses made of materials more difficult to handle. Pattern courses supplemented training in elementary sewing and textiles, and costume design courses rounded out the group of required courses. This plan was intended to enable a girl to buy materials wisely, choose and make designs becomingly, and to construct garments skillfully.

About the year 1830 people began to manufacture ready-to-wear garments. The first clothing made on a commercial scale, for resale on a ready-to-wear basis, was produced in New Bedford about 1830 for the sailors of the whaling ships that outfitted and started from that port. The next market to be developed for ready-to-wear clothing appears to have been in the South. Prior to the 40's, the slaves on the various plantations had made their own clothing, but the boom in cotton-growing throughout the South developed to the point where the negro laborers could be more profitably employed, particularly during the summer months, in cotton-growing and cultivating. For this reason, the simple

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<sup>1</sup> Journal of Home Economics, Rathbone, Rosalie V., Iowa St. College, Oct., '32.

clothing demands for these laborers came to be supplied on the ready-to-wear basis. Dealers' organizations sprang up in several cities to take care of this demand, notably in Baltimore, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Memphis, Charleston and New Orleans, as well as in New York and Philadelphia. The business of supplying rough working clothing for the slave laborers of the South grew to large production in the period from 1840 down to the opening of the Civil War<sup>2</sup> in 1861.

The rise of the manufacture of women's apparel followed that of men's apparel with an interval of but a few years. As early as the 40's, there began to be ready-made garments for women, such as cloaks and mantles, offered for sale in retail stores. Following the Civil War there was more of a demand for suits. In 1914, light coats for spring and fall came into use, which were for the most part unknown in earlier days. The production of other classes of women's apparel, including waists, dresses, muslin underwear, house dresses, and children's and infant's goods, received a very great impetus following the period of business depression<sup>3</sup> of 1893.

During the period of the World War, the manufacture of apparel both for men and women was greatly curtailed, and a large part of the capacity for manufacture of men's

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2, 3.

Nystrom, Economics of Fashion, The Ronald Press Co., New York. p. 408, 413.

apparel was turned into production of military clothing for the army. There was a heavy demand following the war. The men coming back from the army were keen to get back into civilian clothes, and people at home who had economized and refrained from buying now manifested an active desire for new apparel. Wages were high and spending continued freely throughout the year of 1919.

Due to the depression of 1920-1921 there was an over-production of wearing apparel manufactured. But by 1923 there had been quite general recovery from the depression of 1921, and consumer demand for clothing was again some  
4  
where near normal.

Under the present economic and social conditions almost any article of clothing in any style or make and in any material may be purchased ready-made, and a woman may assemble a finished and completed wardrobe in one shopping trip at a reasonable cost. Retail stores are showing such a range of values that the purchaser finds it difficult to pick out the ones best suited to her needs. Since there are so many manufactured garments on the market and so many women purchasing ready-made garments it is necessary that clothing selection be taught as well as clothing construction.

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4.

Nystrom, Economics of Fashion, The Ronald Press Co., New York. p. 414



## PROCEDURE

In undertaking a study of the relation of the teaching of clothing construction and clothing selection to current practices, it was felt that the results obtained would be of more value for curriculum work if the study were not confined to one state. Since an exhaustive study of the entire United States was impossible, four neighboring states were included with Oklahoma in this study, namely; Kansas, Texas, Missouri, and Arkansas. The distribution of Questionnaires Numbered I and II are shown<sup>1</sup> on the maps of each of the states.

A Questionnaire was sent to instructors of clothing in colleges, universities, and city and small community high schools in each of the five states to determine the time allotted to the teaching of clothing construction and clothing selection in each institution.<sup>2</sup>

A second Questionnaire was sent to two hundred college girls, two hundred high school girls, two hundred city women, and two hundred rural women in each state, for the purpose of determining the current practices in clothing construction and clothing selection.<sup>3</sup>

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- 1 Appendix - page i  
2 Appendix - page vi  
3 Appendix - page vii

## INTERPRETATION OF DATA

### Questionnaire No. 1.

In response to questions No. I, II, and III, of Questionnaire No. I, as to the time allotted to the teaching of clothing construction and clothing selection in each institution, thirty-four replies were received. The general trend seems to be, that instructors are teaching more clothing construction than selection; however they are teaching more selection than in previous years.

The results indicate that less construction and more selection is being taught in colleges than in high schools throughout the five states. The average percentage of time spent in all high schools studied is 56.4% in clothing construction and 24% in clothing; while the average is 51.5% in teaching clothing construction, and 29.1% in clothing selection in colleges. (Table I).

Table I.

Relative Time Spent in Teaching Clothing Construction and Clothing Selection.

High Schools	Average Clo. Construction	Average Clo. Selection
Texas	67%	20%
Oklahoma	58%	23%
Missouri	No Returns	No Returns
Arkansas	34.6%	10%
Kansas	66.6%	23%

Colleges	Average Clo. Construction	Average Clo. Selection
Texas	66.6%	33.3%
Oklahoma	54.6%	26.6%
Missouri	43.8%	24.3%
Arkansas	56.2%	26.6%
Kansas	36.3%	35%

More textile study is being taught in colleges than in high schools, according to returns received. It is apparent that Kansas places more emphasis on the study of textiles than any other state, in this study. (Table II).

Table II.

Percentage of Time Spent in Teaching Textiles.

State	Average High Schools	Average Colleges
Texas	9%	No returns
Oklahoma	22%	16.5%
Missouri	No Returns	25%
Arkansas	6.8%	22.1%
Kansas	10%	28%

There were so few returns received from question No. 1V of Questionnaire No. 1., "If there has been any change in the proportion of time devoted to construction, selection and textiles within the past five or six years will you indicate the time spent previously", that no definite comparisons can be made of the proportion of time spent previously in teaching clothing construction and selection with the time devoted to each phase of clothing work at present. Of the instructors, who replied, practically all stated that there had been an increase in the time devoted to the teaching of clothing selection and less time was given to teaching of clothing construction. "There is a trend toward greater emphasis on selection than has been given in the past, especially when the term selection is taken to mean a study of design principles that influence the choice of dress; a knowledge of textile fabrics, and a consideration of cost of clothing in relation to other family expenses."<sup>1</sup>

In the five states studied, there has been no research carried on pertaining to the proportion of time spent by homemakers in clothing selection and clothing construction.

In question No. VII of Questionnaire No. I., the instructor was asked to give her opinion concerning the percentage of women and girls buying their clothes ready-made and the percentage making their clothes or having them made. Twenty-two replies were received from college and high school instructors. The results of these replies have

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<sup>1</sup> Alpha Latzke, Head of Clothing and Textiles,  
Manhattan, Kansas.

been tabulated in table III.

**Table III.**

Percentage of Women and Girls Buying their Clothes Ready-made, and Percentage making their Clothes, or having them made.

State	Percentage Buying Their Clothes	Percentage Making or Having Made
Texas	75%	25%
Oklahoma	56%	44%
Missouri	65%	35%
Arkansas	65.5%	35.5%
Kansas	62.5%	37.5%

As a further check of current practices, an examination of the high school state courses of study and college catalogues, in the five states studied was made. It was found that emphasis was placed on the teaching of clothing selection. In high school clothing courses of study, the wise selection of materials as well as the construction of the garments, is included. Usually the time allotted is divided into units with a different phase of the clothing work emphasized in each unit. Such titles as these are given to the units: "How and Where to Buy My Clothing", "Selecting and Constructing Garments", "Intelligent Buying", "Buying Only When Needed", and "Care, Selection and Construction of garments".

In practically all clothing courses in colleges, it was found that some time is spent in considering the problems of clothing selection. While in many colleges only a small amount of time was spent in this phase of work, in others over 50% of the time was devoted to selection. Separate courses in clothing selection, clothing construction, and textile buying were also offered in certain institutions.

## Questionnaire No. II.

Today, the work of textile and clothing departments in schools and colleges is being challenged by the change<sup>1</sup> in the buying habits of the modern consumer. A survey was made to determine the practices of families in clothing construction and selection over five states: Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Missouri. Of the two thousand five hundred questionnaires sent out, one thousand four hundred sixty five returns were received. The returns included replies from rural and city housewives, and high school and college girls.

## Articles of Clothing made in the Home.

Of the replies received, pertaining to the articles of clothing made by some member of the family, it is evident that less clothing is being constructed in the homes of Texas than in any other state studied. The greatest percentage of clothing constructed in the home is found in Arkansas. Detail results are shown in Tables IV, V, VI, VII, and VIII.

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1. Eddy and Wiley, Pattern and Dress Design - Houghton Mifflin Co., New York - Page vii

Table IV.  
Articles of Clothing Made at Home.  
(Texas)

<u>Women and Children's Garments</u>	<u>All %</u>	<u>Some %</u>	<u>None %</u>
House dresses .....	9.1	31.9	43.1
Wash school dresses.....	9.4	35.4	58.1
Wool school dresses.....	4.5	32.4	57.3
Dress-up dresses for mother	2.4	35.1	58.6
Dress-up dresses for daughter of high school or college age.....	3.2	42.1	48.6
Aprons or smocks.....	17.0	37.8	34.8
Petticoats and slips.....	4.0	38.9	53.2
Brassiers.....		9.7	76.0
Shorts or step-ins.....	1.0	6.4	82.9
Pajamas .....	4.3	41.6	45.4
Dress-up dresses for little girls.....	11.8	30.9	32.8
Coats for children.....	10.8	19.5	43.2
Infant's clothes.....	10.1	20.0	48.0
<u>Men and Boy's Garments</u>			
Men's shirts.....		1.8	80.0
Men's underwear.....		3.2	88.0
Boy's wash suits.....		4.3	67.0
Boy's wool suits.....		1.0	78.0
Boy's overalls.....			81.3
Boy's underwear.....		7.0	80.5
<u>Household Linens</u>			
Pillow cases.....	9.2	27.5	51.3
Sheets.....	4.3	23.7	48.1
Towels.....	1.0	24.0	65.4



Table V.

## Articles of Clothing Made at Home.

(Missouri)

<u>Women and Children's Garments</u>	<u>All %</u>	<u>Some %</u>	<u>None %</u>
House dresses.....	11.6	30.8	40.4
Wash school dresses.....	12.4	30.2	47.2
Wool school dresses.....	14.8	31.2	25.4
Dress-up dresses for mother..	11.6	30.8	45.2
Dress-up dresses for daughter of high school or college age.....	15.2	36.0	22.6
Aprons or smocks.....	18.8	35.6	24.8
Petticoats and slips.....	8.4	35.6	47.2
Brassiers.....	2.4	11.6	61.2
Shorts or step-ins.....	2.4	16.8	52.0
Pajamas.....	10.0	41.6	27.6
Dress-up dresses for little girls.....	17.2	29.6	25.6
Coats for children.....	18.0	21.2	42.8
Infant's clothes.....	12.4	22.4	28.8
<u>Men and Boy's Garments</u>			
Men's shirts.....		4.8	64.4
Men's underwear.....		8.8	64.4
Boy's wash suits.....		10.0	55.6
Boy's wool suits.....		3.6	61.6
Boy's overalls.....			66.6
Boy's underwear.....		11.6	56.0
<u>Household Linens</u>			
Pillow cases.....	18.8	31.2	38.0
Sheets.....	12.8	27.6	54.4
Towels.....	10.4	32.4	48.8

Table VI.

## Articles of Clothing Made at Home.

(Oklahoma)

<u>Women and Children's Garments</u>	<u>All %</u>	<u>Some %</u>	<u>None %</u>
House dresses.....	15.1	30.0	40.7
Wash school dresses.....	18.5	34.0	41.9
Wool school dresses.....	19.3	27.2	40.3
Dress-up dresses for mother...	17.8	31.8	39.3
Dress-up dresses for daughter of high school or college age.	19.0	40.8	43.3
Aprons or smocks.....	23.6	38.4	21.0
Petticoats and slips.....	9.0	40.7	44.8
Brassiers.....	1.8	8.4	85.7
Shorts or step-ins.....	2.1	18.4	73.6
Pajamas.....	20.0	39.0	35.1
Dress-up dresses for little girls.....	19.3	33.6	38.4
Coats for children.....	7.5	38.5	40.5
Infant's clothes.....	15.1	25.4	39.3
<u>Men and Boy's Garments</u>			
Men's shirts.....		2.0	85.7
Men's underwear.....	1.2	9.6	75.7
Boy's wash suits.....		15.0	66.3
Boy's wool suite.....		9.0	80.6
Boy's overalls.....		6.0	75.1
Boy's underwear.....	4.8	13.3	68.7
<u>Household Linens</u>			
Pillow cases.....	18.2	40.3	36.7
Sheets.....	16.5	32.0	46.2
Towels.....	12.7	30.0	47.7

Table VII.

## Articles of Clothing Made at Home.

(Kansas)

<u>Women and Children's Garments</u>	<u>All %</u>	<u>Some %</u>	<u>None %</u>
House dresses.....	20.0	61.4	16.5
Wash school dresses.....	20.2	59.2	16.5
Wool school dresses.....	13.4	56.0	25.7
Dress-up dresses for mother.	7.4	42.1	40.5
Dress-up dresses for daughter of high school or college age	17.1	55.1	26.5
Aprons or smocks.....	40.1	41.1	18.8
Petticoats and slips.....	4.5	42.8	46.0
Brassiers.....	1.7	20.5	74.0
Shorts or step-ins.....	1.1	16.0	76.0
Pajamas.....	20.0	43.7	34.5
Dress-up dresses for little girls.....	22.2	32.8	29.7
Coats for children.....	10.8	36.0	32.5
Infant's clothes.....	24.8	25.4	28.0
<u>Men and Boy's Garments</u>			
Men's shirts.....		2.8	75.1
Men's underwear.....		8.8	80.5
Boy's wash suits.....		10.8	66.5
Boy's wool suits.....		5.7	72.2
Boy's overalls.....			77.1
Boy's underwear.....		14.4	59.4
<u>Household Linens</u>			
Pillow Cases.....	20.5	36.0	26.8
Sheets.....	16.0	38.5	40.0
Towels.....	14.5	38.5	37.7

Table VIII.

## Articles of Clothing Made at Home.

(Arkansas)

<u>Women and Children's Garments</u>	<u>All %</u>	<u>Some %</u>	<u>None %</u>
House dresses.....	38.2	50.5	13.1
Wash school dresses.....	35.4	43.1	13.4
Wool school dresses.....	29.7	40.0	22.2
Dress-up dresses for mother..	23.1	44.0	23.1
Dress-up dresses for daughter of high school or college age	26.2	37.4	17.4
Aprons or smocks.....	45.4	46.5	6.1
Petticoats and slips.....	12.2	44.5	31.1
Brassiers.....	4.5	20.5	69.5
Shorts or step-ins.....	4.0	26.0	67.4
Pajamas.....	24.5	37.4	26.0
Dress-up dresses for little girls.....	32.5	40.0	19.1
Coats for children.....	28.2	45.4	18.2
Infant's clothes.....	39.2	30.2	13.1
<u>Men and Boy's Garments</u>			
Men's shirts.....	1.7	8.0	76.1
Men's underwear.....	1.4	12.2	72.8
Boy's wash suits.....	1.7	10.8	72.0
Boy's wool suits.....	1.1	5.1	72.5
Boy's overalls.....	1.1	3.4	74.0
Boy's underwear.....	1.4	16.8	69.2
<u>Household Linens</u>			
Pillow cases.....	19.7	44.2	29.6
Sheets.....	18.2	36.8	39.7
Towels.....	21.4	43.4	28.5

A comparison of the amount of clothing construction done in the home, in the various states is shown in Table IX. The results show that the families in Texas made fewer garments than in any other state. In Missouri 11.92% of the families made all their women and children's clothing, 28.7% of the families made some, while 37.75% of the families did no sewing. In Oklahoma 14.46% of the families made all their women and children's clothing, 31.23% of the families made some, while 44.91% of the families did no sewing for the women folk. Fifteen and seventy one hundredths per cent of the families in Kansas made all the clothing for women and children, while 40.92% of the families made some of their clothing, and no sewing was done for the women folk by 35.78% of the families. In Arkansas, only 26.13% of the families did no sewing for the women and children, while 26.39% of the families made all their clothing, and 38.12% of the families did some sewing for the women members of the family.

Men and boys' garments were made less frequently in all the states (Table IX, B), while in every state in the study, some household linens were constructed (Table IX, C).

Table IX.

Comparison of Clothing Made in The Home of The  
Various States Studied.

A. Women and Children's Clothing:

	All %	Some %	None %
Texas	6.73	27.05	52.46
Missouri	11.92	28.70	37.75
Oklahoma	14.46	31.23	44.91
Kansas	15.71	40.92	35.78
Arkansas	26.39	38.12	26.13

B. Men and Boy's Clothing:

	All %	Some %	None %
Texas		2.88	79.13
Missouri		6.47	61.43
Kansas		7.08	71.08
Oklahoma	1.00	9.15	75.35
Arkansas	1.40	9.38	72.76

C. Household Linens

	All %	Some %	None %
Texas	4.83	25.06	54.93
Missouri	14.00	30.40	40.73
Oklahoma	15.60	34.10	43.53
Kansas	17.00	37.66	34.83
Arkansas	19.43	41.46	32.60

A summary of the articles of clothing made in the homes is found in Table X. Dresses are made most frequently by members of the family, while men's and boy's clothes are seldom made. Underwear and infant and children's clothing are made less frequently than dresses. Low frequencies for children's clothing is probably due to the fact that many homes have no small children.

In 7.2% of the homes, the entire supply of pillow cases were made, while 36.4% of the homes purchased all of their pillow cases ready-made. Similar results were noted in the cases of sheets, where 13.5% made all their sheets and 45.6% used ready-made sheets. Some pillow cases and some sheets were made by 35.8%, and 35.7% respectively. Of the towels used in the households only 12% made all their own towels. One-third reported making part of their own towels while 45.6% did not make any.

Table X

Summary of Articles of Clothing Made in the  
Homes of the Southwest Section.

Women and Children's Garments:

	<u>All %</u>	<u>Some %</u>	<u>None %</u>
House dresses .....	17.6	35.2	32.5
Wash school dresses.....	19.1	40.5	37.4
Wool school dresses.....	16.3	37.3	38.2
Dress-up dresses for mother.....	12.4	36.7	41.3
Dress-up dresses for daughter.....	16.1	42.5	31.7
of high school or college age			
Aprons or smocks.....	28.9	39.8	21.7
Petticoats and slips.....	7.6	40.5	24.4
Brassiers.....	2.1	14.1	75.3
Shorts or step-ins.....	15.7	40.6	70.3
Pajamas.....	15.7	40.6	33.9
Dress-up dresses for little girls.	16.1	28.4	21.5
Coats for children.....	15.1	32.1	35.4
Infant's clothes.....	20.3	24.7	27.8

Men and Boy's Garments:

Men's shirts.....	.2	8.8	76.9
Men's underwear.....	.5	8.5	76.2
Boy's wash suits.....	.2	12.3	65.8
Boy's wool suits.....	.2	4.8	75.2
Boy's overalls.....	.2	1.9	74.4
Boy's underwear.....	1.2	12.5	68.7

Household Linens:

Pillow cases.....	17.2	35.8	36.4
Sheets.....	13.5	35.7	45.6
Towels.....	12.0	33.6	45.6



### Reasons For Not Sewing In The Home.

A survey was made to determine why sewing was not done in the home. Lack of time was given as the most common reason for not sewing in each of the five states. Five hundred twenty indicated this as their greatest difficulty. Two hundred forty-one stated that ready-made articles cost little if any more than home-made articles. The fact that sewing was hard on the eyes was given as a reason for not sewing by 218 people. One hundred fifty-eight people reported lack of skill in sewing as a reason. Reports show 78 stating that ready-made clothes have better style, while 20 indicated that ready-made garments last longer. In 59 homes the dislike for sewing is present. Sewing was given as being hard on general health in 60 replies.

### Difficulties In Construction.

It was found that fitting was indicated by 629 people to be the greatest difficulty in clothing construction, in the five states included in the study. Similar results were found by Miss Grace Fernandes in a survey made to determine the relation between the economic status of the Oklahoma farm family and the farm women's standards of management with respect to clothing. Fitting headed the list as the greatest difficulty recognized by 39% of the 437 women reporting.<sup>2</sup>

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2. Fernandes, Grace; Experiment Station, Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Experiment Station Bulletin No. 197.

Finishing, that which so outstandingly brands a garment as a poor or attractive article, was listed next by 351 persons. This also ranked second in Miss Grace Fernandes study.<sup>3</sup> Planning work and cutting were also problems for many people. (Table XI). Similar results were found in Miss Maud Hopkins survey.<sup>4</sup> Of the instructions needed by home sewers, cutting ranked second from the lowest.

Table XI.

## Difficulties in Construction

## Number Indicating Difficulties:

	:Kan.	: Okla.	: Ark.	: Mo.	: Texas	: Total
Fitting	: 175	: 142	: 115	: 105	: 92	: 629
Finishing	: 99	: 73	: 55	: 49	: 75	: 351
Planning Work	: 94	: 70	: 78	: 44	: 35	: 321
Cutting	: 25	: 30	: 65	: 10	: 11	: 141
Total.....	413	315	313	208	213	1362

## Mending Done In The Home

It was found that more women's clothing is mended at home than men and boy's clothing, however some clothing is mended in the home for the men folk. (Table XII) All underwear was mended by 32.1% regularly, 36.6 per cent occasionally, and 7.6% never do any mending of their underwear.

3. Fernandes, Grace. Experiment Station, Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Experiment Station Bulletin No. 197

4. Hopkins, Maud. A study of Inexpensive Commercial Dress Patterns. Submitted to School of H. Ec. Okla. A. & M. College for Master of Science - 1934.

Hose were mended regularly by 44.5%, occasionally by 28.2%, and never, by 7.6%. Dresses were mended regularly by 31.1%, occasionally by 37.8%, and never, by 10.2%, while men and boy's clothing was mended regularly by 24.5%, occasionally, by 30.7%, and never by 23.2%. (Table XII).

Table XII.  
Comparison of Percentage of  
Mending Done in The Home:

Garment	: Regularly %	: Occasionally %	: Never %
Underwear	: 32.1	: 36.6	: 7.6
Hose	: 44.5	: 28.2	: 7.6
Dresses	: 31.1	: 37.8	: 10.2
Men's and boy's clothing	: 24.5	: 30.7	: 23.2

#### Remodeling Done In The Home.

More garments are remodeled for the little girl than any other member of the family. (Table XIII). In 14.4% of the homes, all the dresses were remodeled for mother, and 23.4% for daughter, while some were remodeled by 40.1%, and 40.5%, respectively.

The fewest number of remodeled garments were found in the coats and suits for boys. This may have been due to the fact that these garments call for certain tailoring technique.

TABLE XIII.

Comparison of Percentage of  
Remodeling Done in The Home.

Garment	All %	Some %	None %
Dresses for Mother	14.4	40.1	29.2
Dresses for daughter of high school or college age	23.2	40.5	23.3
Dresses for little girls	27.3	37.7	17.8
Coats	9.9	33.6	28.4
Suits for boys	2.0	22.8	49.9

**Study of The Proportion of Ready-Made  
Clothing, Home-Made Clothing, and That  
Made by the Dressmaker.**

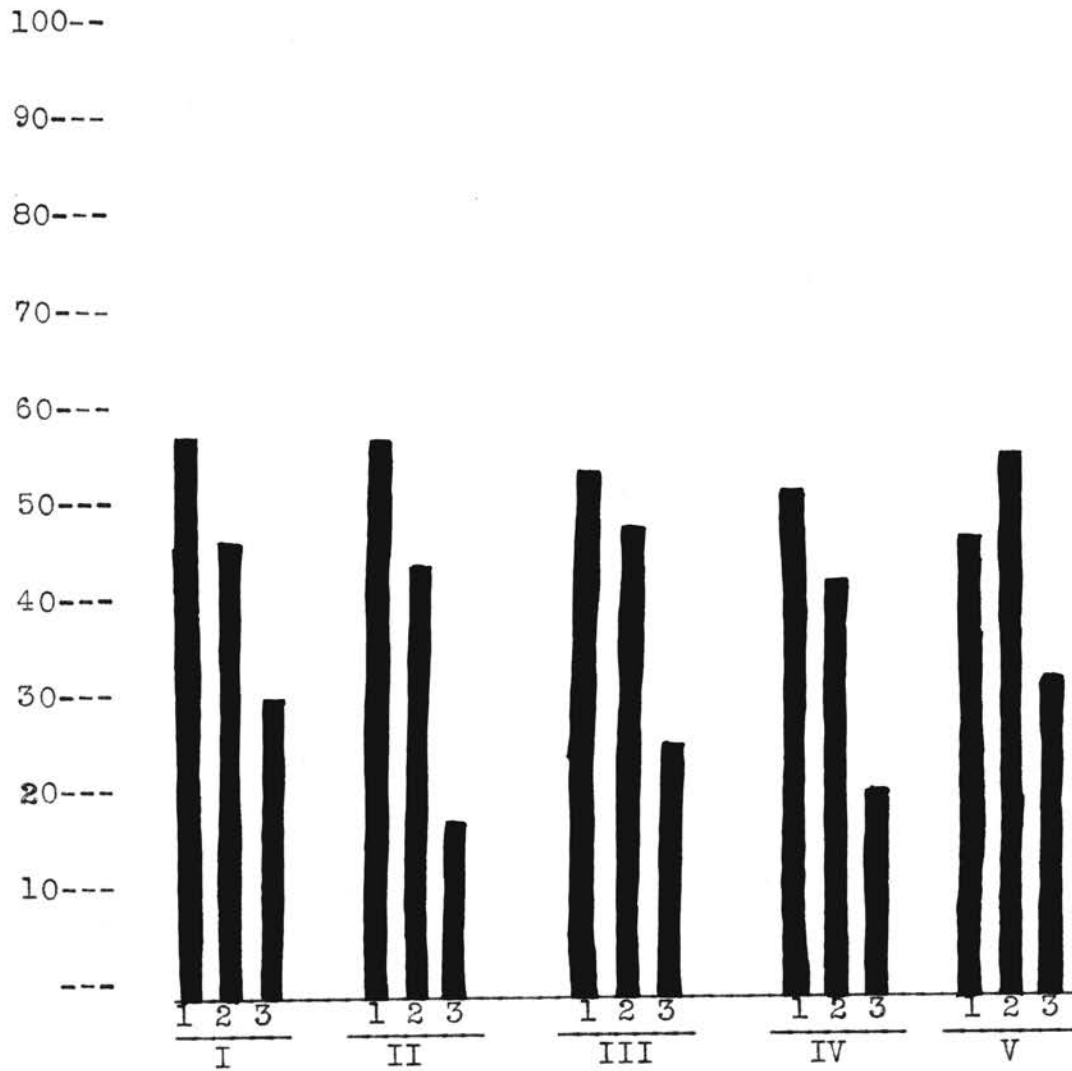
A study of the clothing construction and selection practices was made to determine what percentage of the clothing for the family was ready-made, or dressmaker made. Replies were received from rural and city housewives, and college, and high school girls. (Fig. I). In the states studied, 53.38% of the clothing worn, was ready-made, 46.71% was constructed at home, while 24.87% of the clothing worn was made by dressmakers.

The results of the questionnaire show that the average percentage of clothing purchased ready-made, in Texas, is larger than that purchased in any other state included in the study. Of the five states, the highest percentage of clothing made, and also that made by dressmakers, was found in Arkansas. Ranking next in clothing made at home, is Oklahoma (47.1%), and although Texas has the highest percentage of ready-made garments, it ranks second highest in dressmaker made clothing. (Fig. I).

In order to determine whether it was an economic advantage to use ready-made or home-made clothing, the question was asked whether or not money was saved by making clothing. As a result of the questionnaire, 1,045 indicated that they saved some by making their own clothing, while 157 indicated

Figure I

Comparison of Percentage of Ready-made, Home-made  
and Dressmaker-made



- I. Texas
- II. Missouri
- III. Oklahoma
- IV. Kansas
- V. Arkansas

- 1. Ready-made
- 2. Home-made
- 3. Dressmaker-made

that nothing was saved by doing their own sewing.

In planning the family's clothing, results show that the mother plans all the clothing for the family in 296 cases; in 797 cases she makes plans for only a part, and in only 211 cases none of the wearing apparel was planned by the mother. Similar results were found in the case of selection, where all the clothing worn by members of the family was selected by 264 mothers; 787 replies indicated that a part of the clothing was selected by the mother, while the mother selected none of the clothing for the family in 272 cases.

#### Factors Influencing the Choice of Certain Garments.

In selecting shoes 1,210 people consider size as the most important factor. The next important factor in selection of shoes was that of cost, according to 1,062 people. Quality was likewise considered an important factor by 1,003 of those replying. Type, color, comfort, suitability, style, need, durability, occasion, whether or not they are practical, and the height of heel were other points considered in the order given.

One thousand people consider the quality and size of hose as the most important factors in buying. In 982 cases the color was the most important. The thread count, cost, comfort, fit, weight, type, need, suitability, and brand were mentioned as other important factors.

Approximately equal importance was placed on the cost, quality, and suitability as factors influencing the choice of gloves. Additional emphasis was placed on size, cut, brand, material, and fashion.

In 1,005 cases the type of hat was given more consideration by women than any other factor in selecting a hat. However the cost and color are considered important by many. The following items were stated as additional factors; size, fit, becomingness, trimming, occasion, quality, suitability, and style.

In selecting a dress or suit, 1,068 people consider color as the most important factor and 1,035 people consider cost as a determining factor in purchasing. One thousand consider material when selecting a dress or suit. Additional factors considered important are suitability, fit, style, type, construction, size, durability, and fashion.

To most people, cooperating in the study, the cost of a coat was of major importance. One thousand and sixty-eight gave cost as the most important factor in selecting a coat, while others consider material and suitability. Additional factors are size, versatility, type, and style.

Approximately nine hundred people gave quality, durability, and cost equal consideration when selecting underwear. Additional emphasis was placed on size, ease of laundering, fit, comfort, color, brand, cut, and material.



Nine hundred seventy-seven people stated that suitability was the most important factor in selecting a scarf. Other important factors in the selection of a scarf were cost, size, quality of material, color, and ease of laundering.

#### Consideration in Selecting Ready-made Garments.

In selecting ready-made garments, the fit of the garment is considered by the majority of the people to be of the greatest importance, with cost, becomingness, current fashion and comfort ranking next in order named. (Table XIV). Very little importance was given to the possibility of making over the garment at the time of its selection. The matter of selecting clothes which matched or blended with other articles in the wardrobe, likewise seemed to receive little attention, although the ensemble has been stressed very decidedly in the past few years.

Table XIV.

Considerations in Selecting a Ready-made  
Garment.

	Number indicating considerations.					
	Ark.	Okla.	Mo.	Tex.	Kan.	Total
Cost	265	257	175	140	321	1,158
Color	227	232	165	144	254	1,022
Durability	224	258	125	99	257	963
Cost of cleaning	225	233	151	128	249	986
Becomingness	266	261	187	120	299	1,133
Fit	259	281	149	164	311	1,164
Suitability to environment	203	229	123	120	267	942
Suitability to person	195	248	114	132	231	920
Suitability to occasion	185	252	162	122	255	976
Quality of material	233	252	156	125	288	1,054
Ease of soiling	217	218	157	103	250	945
Quality of workmanship	218	249	161	104	246	978
Matching with other garments	199	210	124	94	225	852
Possibility of making over	201	181	106	68	255	811
Current fashion	228	340	155	111	260	1,094
Comfort	250	232	192	124	281	1,079

**Consideration of Place Where  
Clothing Is Bought.**

More clothing is bought in local stores although some is purchased from mail order houses and in other cities. All of the clothing was purchased in local stores in 19.9% of the homes, 50% of the families purchased some, while 13.2% did no shopping in the local stores. While 31.1% of the families purchased in their city only, 8.7% purchased all their clothing in other cities. In only 1.2% of the homes was all the clothing purchased from mail order houses, while 32.9% of the families purchased some articles through mail order houses. Forty-eight and nine tenths per cent of the families did not patronize the mail order houses for any of their shopping. (Table XV)

Table XV.

Comparison of Places Where Clothing is Bought			
	All %	Some %	None %
Clothing Purchased in Local Stores	19.9	50.0	13.2
Clothing Purchased in Another City	8.7	46.1	31.1
Clothing Purchased from Mail Order Houses	1.2	32.9	48.9

As a further check on purchasing habits, a survey was

made to determine the number asking for certain commercial brands when buying. It was found that 298 persons called for commercial brands regularly, 724 persons called for commercial brands occasionally, and 338 persons never referred to commercial brands when shopping.

## CONCLUSION

In comparing the relation of teaching clothing construction and clothing selection to current practices, the following facts were found:

1. More clothing construction is being taught than clothing selection.
2. More textile study is taught in colleges than in high schools.
3. According to the opinion of instructors throughout the five states studied, more people are purchasing their clothing ready-made, than in previous years.
4. In every state, women and children's clothing were the most common articles of clothing made in home. Few men and boy's clothing was constructed in the home, although in some cases a small proportion of their clothing was made. In every state some household linens were made.
5. Of the five states included in the study, the families of Arkansas did more sewing in the home than in any other state.
6. Lack of time was the most common reason for not sewing in the home, while the main difficulty in sewing was fitting.
7. In general, more women's clothing was mended in the home than men and boy's clothing, however some mend-

ing was done for the men folk.

8. More clothing was remodeled for the small girl than any other member of the family, although some remodeling is done for other members.
9. The average percentage of clothing purchased ready-made was higher in Texas than any other state, while the highest percentage of clothing made in the home, and that made by the dressmaker was found in Arkansas.
10. In the states studied the highest percentage of clothing worn was ready-made, although many consider it an economic advantage to make their own clothing.
11. In selecting ready-made clothing, the majority of the people consider fit of the garment as the greatest factor of importance, with cost, becomingness, current fashion, and comfort ranking next in order named.
12. Very little attention was given to the possibility of making over the garment and whether or not it matched with other articles in the wardrobe, when selecting ready-made clothing.
13. More clothing is purchased in local stores, although some clothing was purchased in other cities and through mail order houses.
14. There are many people disregarding commercial brands, when shopping, yet there are some who call occasionally for a certain brand. There was only a small

percentage of women using commercial brands as a guide in buying.

Since it has been a custom to teach clothing construction with little emphasis placed on selection, it has continued through the years. Greater emphasis should be placed on clothing selection in schools over this section in order that the consumers may receive "the best article available for the purpose with a minimum expenditure of time, energy and money."<sup>1</sup>

Probably the lack of training keeps many women from sewing although lack of time was given as the most outstanding reason. Short cuts in sewing should be emphasized in clothing courses to reduce the time element. This perhaps would encourage more home sewing. The reason for more women's than men's clothing being made in the home is probably due to the fact that tailoring is more difficult and few have training along that line. To many, mending and remodeling are jobs to be shunned and dreaded. The possibilities of remodeling should be stressed as well as the advantages of mending.

Good shopping centers encourages more buying of ready-made garments. Some states have more large cities and better highways on which to travel than others. One reason, perhaps, why the people of Texas purchase more ready-made garments than those in other states, is due to the fact that there are a

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1. Kyrk, Hazel. Economic Problems of the Family.  
Harper and Brothers. Page 435

number of large cities located within the state. After a consideration of the road maps of the five states studied, it was found all states have fairly good highways although Arkansas is handicapped in some sections.

Since so many articles are purchased ready-made, good quality should be stressed. People should be taught to analyze their needs and determine what qualities are desirable in every article that is to be purchased. A knowledge of textiles and clothing construction is desirable when selecting ready-made garments, in order to determine quality of material and workmanship.

The wise selection of clothing requires a high degree of skill in the application of hygienic, economic, and aesthetic principles and should receive its share of emphasis in the teaching of clothing and textiles.



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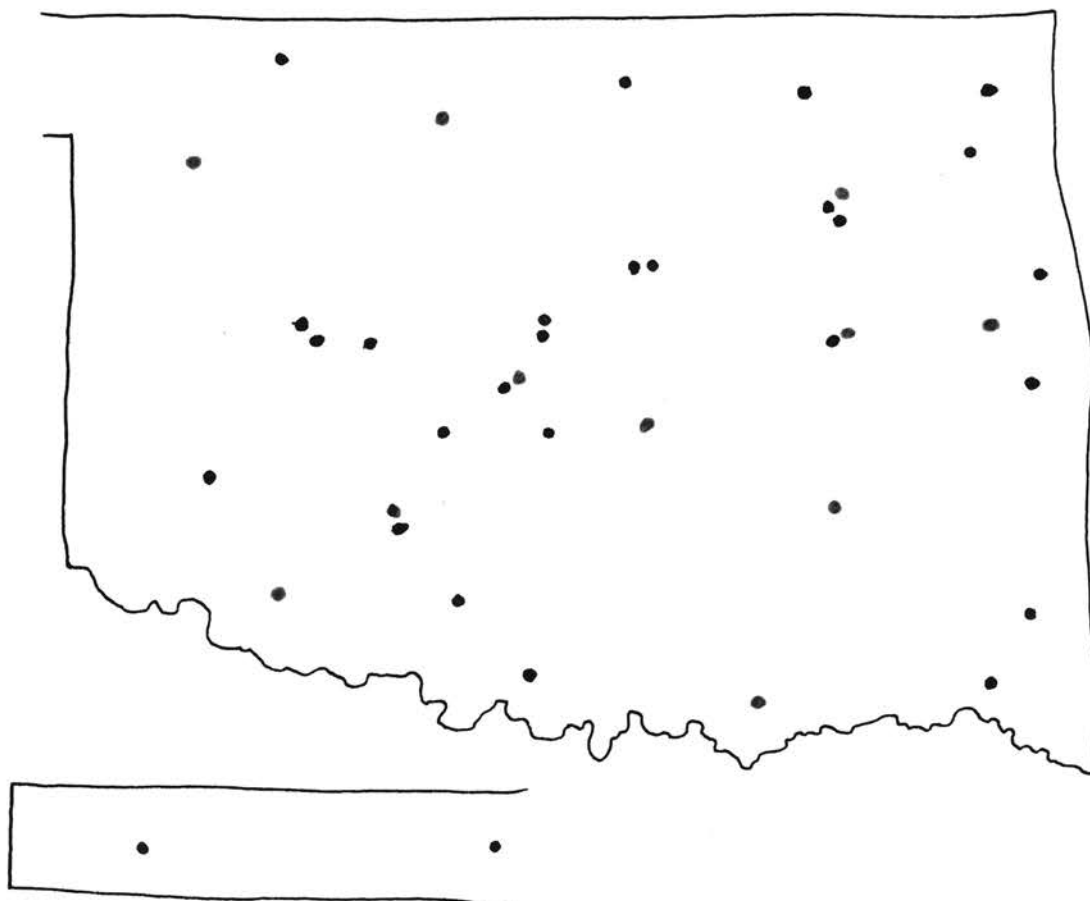
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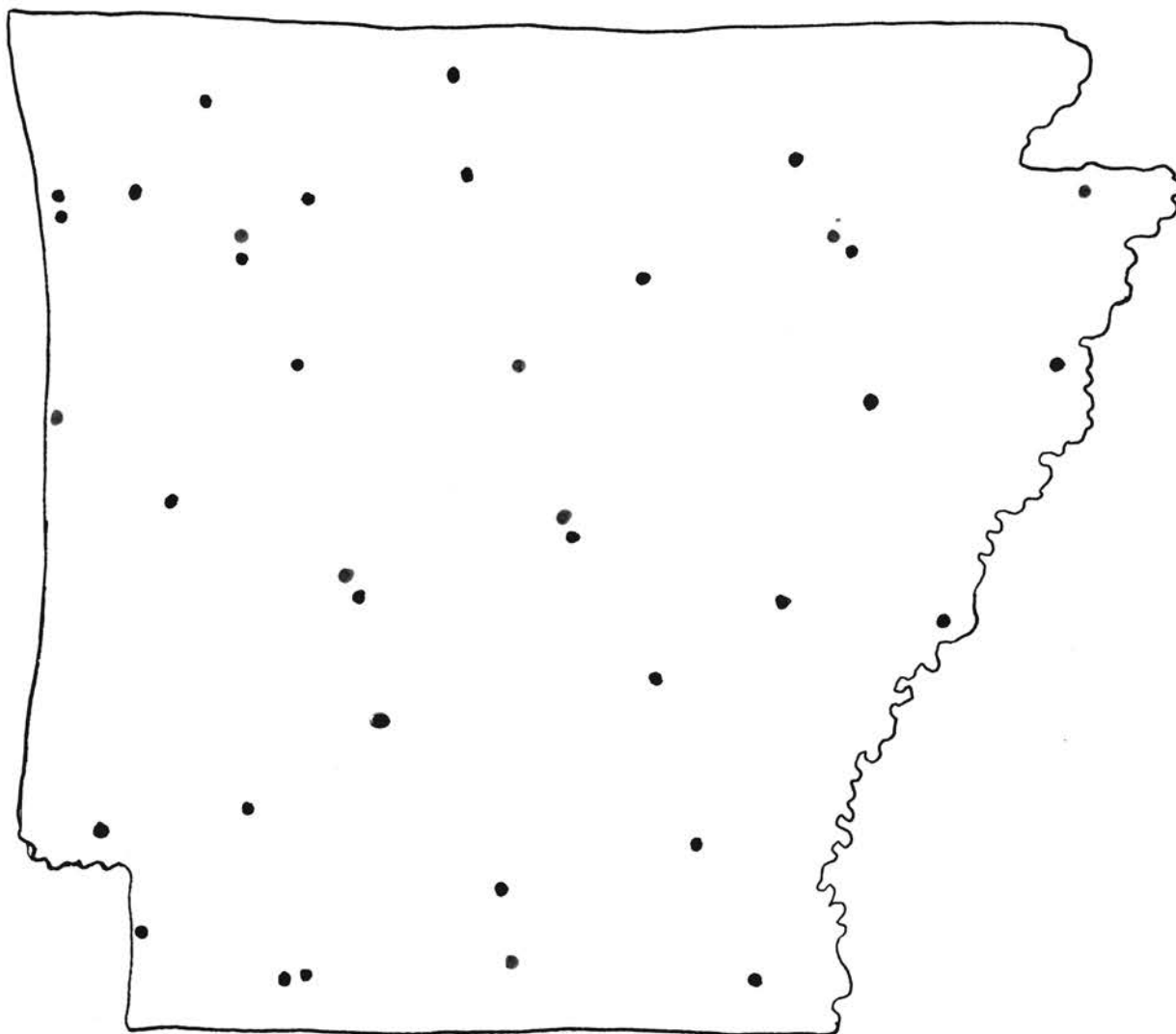
## OKLAHOMA



Distribution of Questionnaires No. I and II.

- - - - Questionnaire sent to Instructors in Colleges and High Schools.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to City Women.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to Rural Women.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to High School Girls.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to College Girls.

## ARKANSAS



Distribution of Questionnaires No. I and II.

- - - - Questionnaire sent to Instructors in Colleges and High Schools.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to City Women.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to Rural Women.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to High School Girls.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to College Girls.

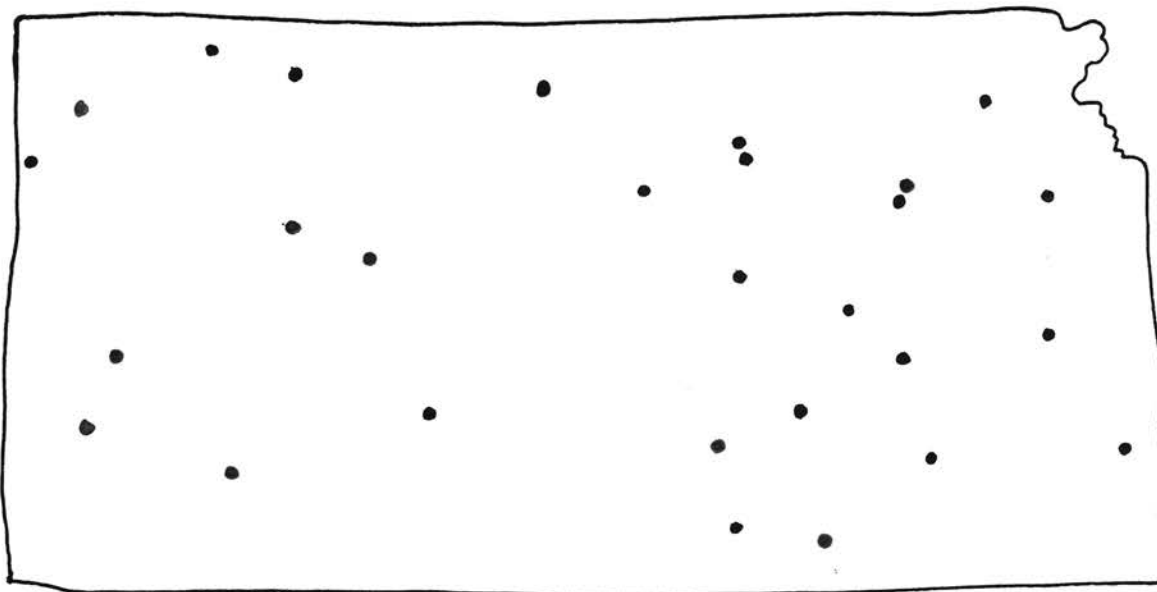
## MISSOURI



Distribution of Questionnaires No. I and II.

- - - - Questionnaire sent to Instructors in Colleges and High Schools.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to City Women.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to Rural Women.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to High School Girls.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to College Girls.

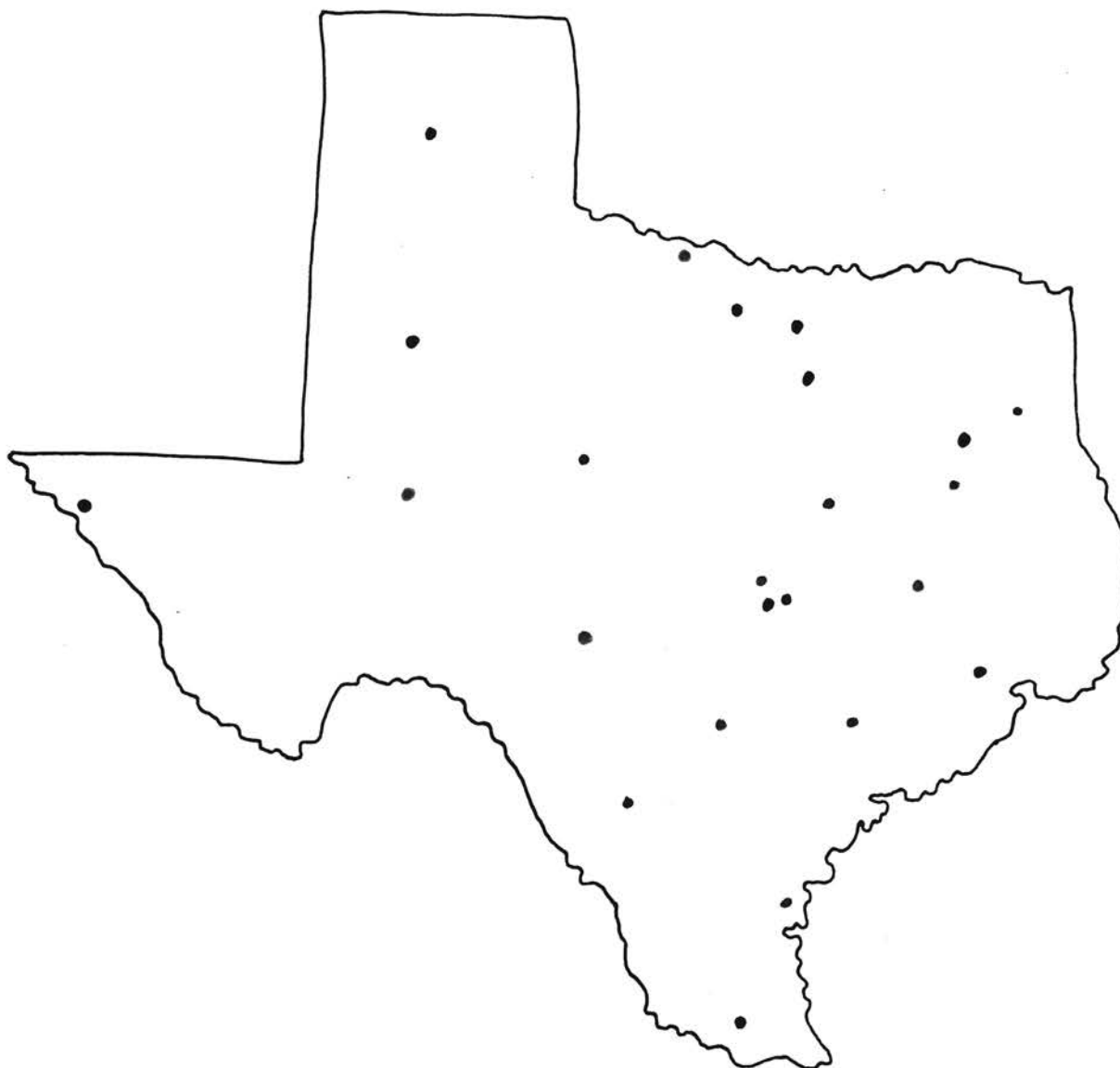
## KANSAS



Distribution of Questionnaires No. I and II.

- - - - Questionnaire sent to Instructors in Colleges and High Schools.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to City Women.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to Rural Women.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to High School Girls.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to College Girls.

## TEXAS



Distribution of Questionnaires No. I and II.

- - - - Questionnaire sent to Instructors in Colleges and High Schools.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to City Women.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to Rural Women.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to High School Girls.
- - - - Questionnaire sent to College Girls.



## Questionnaire No. I.

1. What percentage of the instructional time is spent in teaching clothing selection to your classes or groups? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What percentage of the instructional time is spent in teaching clothing construction to your classes or groups? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What percentage of the instructional time is spent in teaching textiles to your classes or groups? \_\_\_\_\_
4. If there has been any change in the proportion of time devoted to construction, selection and textiles within the past five or six year will you indicate the time spent previously. Clothing construction, \_\_\_\_\_ Clothing selection, \_\_\_\_\_ Textiles, \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Has there been any research carried out by your institution or state to indicate the proportion of time spent by home-makers in clothing selection, yes\_\_\_\_, no\_\_\_\_; clothing construction, yes\_\_\_\_, no\_\_\_\_?
6. If published will you indicate where published; if not, will you give a brief summary?
7. If no scientific study has been made will you give your opinion concerning the following facts in your community?
  - a. Percentage of women and girls buying their clothes ready made \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Percentage of women and girls making their clothes or having them made \_\_\_\_\_

## QUESTIONNAIRE NO. II.

Your cooperation would be appreciated in checking the following practices of you and your family in clothing construction and selection. Place a check mark (x) after the item which most nearly conforms to your practice.

## I. Clothing Construction.

## 1. Articles of clothing made by some member of the family:

House dresses

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Wash school dresses

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Wool school dresses

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Dress-up dresses for mother

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Dress-up dresses for daughter  
of high school or college age

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Aprons or smocks

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Petticoats and slips

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Brassiers

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Shorts or step-ins

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Pajamas

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Dress-up dresses for little girls

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Coats for children

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Infant clothes

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Men's shirts

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Men's underwear

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Boy's wash suits

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Boy's wool suits

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Boy's overalls

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Boy's underwear

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Pillow cases

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Sheets

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

Towels

all \_\_\_\_\_

some \_\_\_\_\_

none \_\_\_\_\_

2. If sewing is not done by members of family it is because  
 Of lack of time \_\_\_\_\_  
 Of lack of skill \_\_\_\_\_  
 Of dislike for sewing \_\_\_\_\_  
 It is hard on general health \_\_\_\_\_  
 It is hard on eyes \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ready-made has better style \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ready-made lasts longer \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ready-made costs little if any more than home-made \_\_\_\_\_  
 Have no sewing machine \_\_\_\_\_  
 Others \_\_\_\_\_

3. The main difficulties in construction of garments are  
 Planning work \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cutting \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fitting \_\_\_\_\_  
 Finishing \_\_\_\_\_

4. The following garments are mended at home  
 Underwear:  
 Regularly \_\_\_\_\_  
 Occasionally \_\_\_\_\_  
 Never \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hose:  
 Regularly \_\_\_\_\_  
 Occasionally \_\_\_\_\_  
 Never \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dresses:  
 Regularly \_\_\_\_\_  
 Occasionally \_\_\_\_\_  
 Never \_\_\_\_\_  
 Men's and boys garments:  
 Regularly \_\_\_\_\_  
 Occasionally \_\_\_\_\_  
 Never \_\_\_\_\_

5. The following are remodeled at home  
 Dresses for mother:  
 All \_\_\_\_\_  
 Some \_\_\_\_\_  
 None \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dresses for daughter of high school or college age:  
 All \_\_\_\_\_  
 Some \_\_\_\_\_  
 None \_\_\_\_\_

# Dresses for little girls:

All \_\_\_\_\_  
 Some \_\_\_\_\_  
 None \_\_\_\_\_

## Coats:

All \_\_\_\_\_  
 Some \_\_\_\_\_  
 None \_\_\_\_\_

## Suits for boys:

All \_\_\_\_\_  
 Some \_\_\_\_\_  
 None \_\_\_\_\_

6. What percentage of your clothing is Ready-made \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home-made \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dressmaker made \_\_\_\_\_

7. Amount saved by making own clothing  
 Some \_\_\_\_\_  
 None \_\_\_\_\_

## II. Selection

1. Planning and selection  
 Amount of family's clothing planned for by mother of the family

All \_\_\_\_\_  
 Some \_\_\_\_\_  
 None \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of family's clothing selected by the mother

All \_\_\_\_\_  
 Some \_\_\_\_\_  
 None \_\_\_\_\_

2. Check the items you consider important when selecting the following articles (x) important (xx) very important

## Shoes

Size \_\_\_\_\_  
 Quality \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cost \_\_\_\_\_  
 Color \_\_\_\_\_  
 Type \_\_\_\_\_  
 Others \_\_\_\_\_

Hose  
 Size \_\_\_\_\_  
 Color \_\_\_\_\_  
 Quality \_\_\_\_\_  
 Others \_\_\_\_\_

Gloves  
 Cost \_\_\_\_\_  
 Quality \_\_\_\_\_  
 Suitability \_\_\_\_\_  
 Others \_\_\_\_\_

Dress or suit  
 Cost \_\_\_\_\_  
 Material \_\_\_\_\_  
 Color \_\_\_\_\_  
 Suitability \_\_\_\_\_  
 Others \_\_\_\_\_

Hat  
 Color \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cost \_\_\_\_\_  
 Type \_\_\_\_\_  
 Others \_\_\_\_\_

Coat  
 Cost \_\_\_\_\_  
 Quality \_\_\_\_\_  
 Material \_\_\_\_\_  
 Suitability \_\_\_\_\_  
 Others \_\_\_\_\_

Underwear  
 Cost \_\_\_\_\_  
 Quality \_\_\_\_\_  
 Durability \_\_\_\_\_  
 Others \_\_\_\_\_

Scarf  
 Color \_\_\_\_\_  
 Quality \_\_\_\_\_  
 Suitability \_\_\_\_\_  
 Others \_\_\_\_\_

3. Check the following considerations in selecting a ready-made garment.

(x) important  
 (xx) very important

Cost \_\_\_\_\_  
 Color \_\_\_\_\_  
 Durability \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cost of cleaning \_\_\_\_\_  
 Becomingness \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fit \_\_\_\_\_  
 Suitability to environment \_\_\_\_\_  
 Suitability to person \_\_\_\_\_  
 Suitability to occasion \_\_\_\_\_  
 Quality of material \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ease of soiling \_\_\_\_\_  
 Quality of workmanship \_\_\_\_\_  
 Matching with other garments \_\_\_\_\_  
 Possibility of making over \_\_\_\_\_  
 Current fashion \_\_\_\_\_  
 Comfort \_\_\_\_\_  
 Others \_\_\_\_\_

4. Amount of your clothing bought at local stores

All \_\_\_\_\_  
 Some \_\_\_\_\_  
 None \_\_\_\_\_

5. Amount of your clothing bought in another city

All \_\_\_\_\_  
 Some \_\_\_\_\_  
 None \_\_\_\_\_

6. Amount of your clothing bought from mail order houses

All \_\_\_\_\_  
 Some \_\_\_\_\_  
 None \_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you ask for certain commercial brands when buying?

Regularly \_\_\_\_\_  
 Occasionally \_\_\_\_\_  
 Never \_\_\_\_\_

Copy of the Letter Sent to  
Home Demonstration Agents  
to Contact Rural Women.

610 W. 3rd. Ave.,  
Stillwater, Oklahoma,  
(date)

\_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Dear Madam:

As part of my graduate work in Household Arts at Oklahoma A. and M. College, I am carrying out a piece of research work pertaining to the teaching of clothing in public schools, colleges, and in the extension field.

I would like to get two hundred questionnaires filled out by rural women and returned to me. For this study, I am collecting information from Missouri, Arkansas, Kansas, Texas, and Oklahoma. Throughout each of the five states, I am sending two hundred questionnaires. Would you be responsible for having as many as fifty filled out and returned to me?

I would appreciate your cooperation in getting these questionnaires filled out and returned to me. Enclosed you will find a stamped addressed envelope for your reply.

Very truly yours,

Virginia Blanche Reynolds

VBR

Inc.

Copy of the Letter Sent to  
City Women.

610 W. 3rd. Ave.,  
Stillwater, Oklahoma,  
(date)

\_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Dear Madam:

As part of my graduate work in Household Arts at Oklahoma A. and M. College, I am carrying out a piece of research work pertaining to the teaching of clothing in public schools, colleges, and in the extension field.

For the study I am collecting information from Arkansas, Kansas, Texas, Missouri, and Oklahoma. I would like to get two hundred consumer questionnaires filled out and returned to me. We would appreciate your suggesting women, in your state, that would assist in getting these questionnaires filled out and returned, or would you distribute them from your office. It is desirous that we get these questionnaires filled out by women in four or more towns over your state. There are to be two hundred sent to each of the above mentioned states.

I would appreciate your immediate answer.

Thanking you, I am.

Virginia Blanche Reynolds

VBR

Inc.

Copy of the Letter Sent to  
Instructors of College Girls.

610 W. 3rd. Ave.,  
Stillwater, Oklahoma,  
(date)

\_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Dear Madam:-

As a part of my graduate work in Household Arts at Oklahoma A. and M. College, I am carrying out a piece of research work pertaining to the teaching of clothing in public schools, colleges, and in the extension field.

For the study I am collecting information from Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas, Texas, and Oklahoma. Two hundred questionnaires are being sent to college girls of each state for their replies. In order to do this I am sending the blanks to the instructor and asking their cooperation.

I would appreciate your cooperation in getting these questionnaires filled out and returned to me. I would like to have one hundred blanks filled out by college girls. These girls need not be enrolled in clothing classes, as the questionnaire relates to the current practices in selection and construction of clothing.

Let me know if you are willing to assist me.

Yours very truly,

Virginia Blanche Reynolds

VBR

Copy of the Letter Sent to  
Instructors of Home Economics  
in High Schools.

610 W. 3rd. Ave.,  
Stillwater, Oklahoma,  
(date)

\_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Dear Madam:

As part of my graduate work in Household Arts at Oklahoma A. and M. College, I am carrying out a piece of research work pertaining to the teaching of clothing in public schools, colleges, and in the extension field.

For the study I am collecting information from Kansas, Texas, Missouri, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. Two hundred questionnaires are being sent to high school girls of each state for their replies. In order to get a fair picture of current practices I am hoping they may be distributed to various sections of the state in groups of twenty-five.

I would appreciate your cooperation in getting these questionnaires filled out and returned to me. I would like to have twenty-five filled out by girls in your high school, and returned to me.

Very truly yours,

Virginia Blanche Reynolds

VBR

Inc.



**Typist:**

A. L. Wright  
515 Hester Street  
Stillwater, Oklahoma.