

OPINIONS OF EDUCATIONAL SUPERINTENDENTS AND PRINCIPALS
CONCERNING A FAMILY LIFE COURSE IN CERTAIN CHURCH-RELATED
ACADEMIES

by

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INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Many administrators are evaluating the high school curriculums in the light of present day needs of youth. One of the exigencies that is becoming apparent is the need for family living courses. As the functions of the home become limited, it seems vital that the school must broaden its scope of services to cooperate with the home in preparing youth for present and future family living.

The Joint Committee on Curriculum Aspects of Education for Home and Family Living (1941, p.140) concluded:

Probably on no school level are there greater opportunities for an educational program that will significantly influence family living than in the secondary school. Here are represented the families of the mass of the population.

The Problem

The investigator believed that a functional type of family life education is needed in certain church-related academies as much as in the high schools. This conviction has been generated by a long acquaintance with the philosophy and programs of academies of one denomination in which she has served as a faculty member.

At the present time only one of 67 senior academies of the church-related group is offering a course called Marriage and Family Living. The remaining 66 depend upon the few opportunities that the general curriculum offers in helping and counseling young people in preparation for marriage.

Further interest in this study has been stimulated by the apparent need for research concerning the acceptance and evaluation of marriage preparation courses on the secondary level. Although

little research has been done, family life educators have been concerned with the problem and have given certain information and suggestions that are worth considering. A review of their ideas follows.

Current Misunderstandings

Progress is impeded that could be made in placing courses in marriage and family living in the curriculum of high schools and colleges because the objectives and aims of family life education are not always understood by the general public or by some administrators and teachers.

Force (1950) pointed out that in spite of a great deal of verbal and written progress in the last ten years, there is still an admitted lack of successful programs and courses in secondary schools related to preparation for marriage and family living.

Often family life education becomes a touchy subject associated with taboos because of some people's narrow concepts. Certainly a knowledge of the facts of life and love is an important part of such education but should not be the central theme. York (1949) stated that too many communities think of family life education as sex education. Family life educators should make known to the public the proper place in a marriage course of materials concerning sex.

The American Association of School Administrators (1941, p. 162) recommended through their committee on education for family life the following:

Instruction for family life should be both woven into the general content of the curriculum and recognized in

specific courses especially in junior high school, senior high school, and college. The content of such instruction should be adapted to the interests of the child at the period, but also should be forward-looking so that it may influence later activities and attitudes.

In specific instruction in family relationships, preparation for marriage should be increasingly emphasized as the age level advances. Instead of 'sex education' there should be a program related to marriage and family life, and family values should be used to motivate sex conduct, especially during adolescence.

Cosgrove (1952) stated that the objectives of family life education were to help the student gain an understanding of himself and his problems and to prepare him for marriage and parenthood.

Drummond (1953, p.202) said:

Family life education deals primarily with interpersonal relations and is concerned with emotional maturity as well as physical well-being, with personality development, with the forming and changing of attitudes and with ways of living together within the family and in family-community life.

One of the common errors made by the public is to believe that family life education and home economics are synonymous terms. Even though many courses offered in home economics contribute to better family living, a general attitude sometimes exists that these courses are designed for girls, therefore only a few boys avail themselves of them. In 1940 the United States Office of Education found that 65 per cent of all girls graduating from senior high school had taken some work in homemaking, whereas only two per cent of the boys had enrolled (Drummond, 1953).

The Journal of Social Hygiene (1936) summarized reports from a Conference on Education for Marriage and Family Social Relations that expressed the need for every young person to be educated for marriage. The need has arisen because greater freedom in social contacts along with inborn basic needs make successful mate selection

dependent upon the ability of young people to make intelligent choices affecting family life.

Saur (1949) emphasized the fact that since many homes are being threatened by disorganization, preparation for marriage is as important as preparation for a vocation.

Where Responsibility Lies

Who should assume responsibility for preparing young people for family life? Kirkendall (1949) stated that adequate preparation for marriage is an obligation that society should meet through the schools, churches, homes, youth serving agencies and recreational facilities.

Groves (1934) believed that until the school recognizes the changing role of the home in relation to marriage education, a neglect for training for family experiences will result. A new type of instruction must be provided in the schools.

Hicks (1949) expressed an opposite view. Even though the school must widen its services in offering education for family life, he stated that it should not take over the function of the home, for which there is no substitute. The church and the school must work in cooperation with the home.

Schools and colleges have been slow to assume responsibility for marriage education. As reported by Putnam (1955) the Metropolitan School Study Council of New York City called family life education a pioneer field in the school program. In a study of 5,000 educational workers in sixty school districts, fewer examples of good school practices leading to the improvement of family living

were found than in any other of the 12 areas of school learnings.

The first course in family life for credit was offered at Boston University by Dr. Ernest Groves in 1924. By 1949 over 500 colleges in the United States were offering similar courses (Stone, 1949).

A growing tendency to include such course offerings in the high school curriculum is apparent. Many high schools are re-evaluating their curriculum in the light of student needs. Douglass (1951, p.43) stated:

There has been in the last 10 or 12 years, an acceleration of the pace toward the adaptation of education to the needs of life in the United States and in the world today. This adaptation is pointed toward areas of life for which adjustment must be made. Material acceleration in the practice of revamping the entire high school curriculum in order to meet the needs of young people of modern life is more evident.

Today there is underway in almost every state in the United States a movement which is rapidly becoming definitely a grassroots movement for the improvement of education for life adjustment. This new movement aided now by the National Commission on Education and more than 20 state commissions is ushering in a period of accelerated change in practice, the charter of which was set forth more than 30 years ago.

Problems in Executing Responsibility

Perhaps the reluctance to accept family life education on the secondary level is based on the problems and objections that may come as a result of including such a class in the curriculum.

Some administrators assume that parents would object to a marriage preparation class. Henning (1951) believed the public would not criticize such courses if the objectives of family life education were made known. "Parents need and want the schools' cooperation in helping young people develop an acceptable code,"

Eckert (1951) pointed out.

Kirkendall (1951) found that two-thirds of the fifty-nine teachers who said they experienced some resistance to the family life education program, said the opposition was from the administration and some fellow teachers. The data were collected from teachers attending the 1947-48 Training Center in Family Life, Health and Social Relations.

Lorenz (1949) believed the best investment a school administrator could make would be to provide his faculty with preparation emphasizing the importance of family life education.

Sometimes problems of curriculum revision arise as a result of adding new courses. Howland (1952) stated that overcoming the difficulty of incorporating additional classes into an overcrowded curriculum would seem to be a matter of evaluating present courses to eliminate content material that is not meeting the educational needs of present-day youth.

Locating qualified teachers is another problem in introducing marriage courses in secondary schools. Timmons (1952) indicated the following to be important personal characteristics in selecting teachers; to be interested in people, to have growth potential, to be well adjusted to life and to have a healthy attitude toward marriage.

Universities should provide satisfactory training for teachers (Rockwood, 1935) but if trained teachers cannot be found, Timmons (1952) said summer school courses, extension courses, workshops, institutes and conferences on family life could be utilized to supplement the teachers' knowledge.

Content of Family Life Courses

As secondary schools begin to include family living courses, the teachers' responsibility is to organize materials to meet the present day needs of the students. Family life educators, describing the scope of possible subject matter that could be included in a class in family life education made the following suggestions.

Bonar (1960, p.418) said that marriage education should train young women how to manage a home while pursuing a profession or occupation. For girls who plan only to marry he stated:

There is the need to recognize the necessity of a program of education that must much more positively prepare for the number one task in America--preservation of the family unit and strengthening it to become the main bulwark against social disintegration, juvenile delinquency and ultimate decline and fall of our nation.

Burchinal (1960) emphasized the challenge that present concern over early marriages has brought to family life education. A marriage course on the high school level should not only make young people aware of the hazards of young marriages but aid those who are already married to have a more stable marriage.

To be of practical help to young people, family life education should be concentrated on the high school level. High school graduation represents terminal education for many. Landis (1948) emphasized that since many high school students do not enroll in college, they should receive courtship and marriage guidance before they graduate from the secondary school level. Groves (1944), Morgan (1949) and Hicks (1951) supported this viewpoint.

Administrators of secondary schools would do well to include in their present curriculum a course in marriage and family life education.

Bonar (1960, p.418) stated

What we need is a new, bold approach by educators and the public to so remake our school curriculums that preventive education may hopefully prepare future generations of boys and girls to undertake marriage and the very difficult role of parenthood with sound knowledge and understanding.

While a search of the literature has revealed no specific investigation of family life education for the secondary school in denominational institutions, one study was made of family life education for secondary schools in Iowa and reported by Kenkel (1957). Of the 280 who returned the questionnaire, 11 per cent offered a unit course in family living. The majority of the courses were elective, for one semester, and limited to juniors and seniors.

All courses offered included the following topics: personality formation, dating and mate selection, adjustment to marriage partners, marriage problems, and budgeting. Physiology of reproduction, divorce, adjustment to relatives, and marriage laws were less frequently included.

No school reported unfavorable community reaction to courses taught. The reason given for not offering such a course by high schools was the lack of trained and interested instructors.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are the following: (1) to determine the opinions of certain church-related superintendents of education and senior academy principals toward content material for a course in family life education and toward inclusion of such a course in the academy curriculum; (2) to find relationships between subjects responses concerning inclusion of a course in marriage and the

family in the secondary curriculum and the factors of age, years of marriage, years of service and degrees held.

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

Educational administrators of a church-related group, both superintendents of education and principals of senior academies were chosen as subjects for this investigation. This group of men was more closely connected with curriculum planning of the academies and the conduct of instruction than any other group within the denomination.

A check-list (Appendix, pp.36-41) sent to subjects was designed to obtain such information as (1) subjects' attitude toward content material for a course in "Christian Home Living" and (2) subjects' evaluation of need for such a course in the curriculum.

The first part of the check-list was prepared using topics commonly treated in courses on marriage and the family based on four widely used textbooks for high school level (Landis, Judson, 1960), (Landis, Paul, 1954), (Moore, 1953), (Duvall, 1954). Forty-four topics were listed. Subjects were directed to indicate by a check mark the degree of emphasis they believed should be placed on each topic under the following categories: (1) strongly agree that it should be included, (2) tend to agree that it should be included, (3) tend to disagree that it should be included, (4) strongly disagree that it should be included.

The second and third parts of the check-list enumerated various areas of responsibilities to determine whether such responsibilities were or were not being discharged, and if not, whether a

course in "Christian Home Living" would meet the need and be acceptable.

When the schedule had been completed, it was submitted for criticism to four members of the Kansas State University faculty. The check-list was subsequently revised in the light of the criticisms offered and a pre-test was given to two educational superintendents and one academy principal of denominational employment to test for clarity. This group was also invited to give criticism.

The schedule, a covering letter (Appendix) from the investigator and a letter from the Education Department of the General Conference of the church-related group, supporting the study and requesting cooperation (Appendix) were sent to every educational superintendent and principal of the senior academies together with a stamped, self-addressed envelope for return.

Subjects of the study included 61 educational superintendents and 67 academy principals. Eighty-five subjects responded to the first request and 25 to a follow-up letter making a total of 54 responses from superintendents of education and 56 from principals of senior academies; 110 in all.

Eleven subjects sent letters stating why they did not return the schedule. The most common reasons were: "lack of time," "no academy in this area," "do not wish to participate." Three of the respondents who did not return the check-list wrote a letter stating their personal viewpoints. Seven subjects did not respond.

Of the 110 check-lists that were returned, 108, or 84.3 per cent of the 128 sent, were used in the investigation. Two were incomplete and could not be used.

The data were then analyzed according to total group responses. Percentages of agreement with each of the 67 items in the check-list were calculated. The chi-square test was used on the three items that dealt directly with responses of the subjects concerning inclusion of a class in family life education in the curriculum to determine associations between attitude and the factors of age, years of service, years of marriage and degrees held.

DATA AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of the Group

Tabulation of the responses of the 108 senior academy principals and superintendents of education in this study shows the following characteristics.

Approximately half of the subjects were between 36 and 45 years old (Table 1).

Table 1. Age of subjects.

Age in Years	:	Number	:	Per cent
25 or below		1		.9
26 - 35		19		17.6
36 - 45		50		46.3
46 - 55		28		25.9
56 - 65		10		9.3
66 - 70		0		0

Almost half of the group had been married from 16 to 30 years (Table 2).

Table 2. Number of years respondents had been married.

Years Married	Number	Per cent
1 - 15	38	35.2
16 - 30	46	43.5
31 - 45	15	23.1
Widowed	3	2.84
No answer	6	5.5

The mean number of children per subject was 2.7.

Table 3. Number of children.

Number of children	Number of subjects
0	2
1	24
2	47
3	24
4	6
5	2
No answer	3

The education of the subjects is shown in Table 4. Of the forty-five subjects who had completed their bachelor of arts or science degree, twenty-five had taken advanced education. Eighteen of the 43 subjects who had their master of arts or science degree had pursued further education. Over half of the group had their master of arts or science degree.

The average length of time that the respondents had been connected with denominational educational work ranged from 2 to thirty-nine years, although a relatively small per cent was in either extreme. The mean length of total time connected with the church related group was 13.6 years.

Table 4. Degrees received by subjects.

Degree	:	Number	:	Per cent
BA or BS		45		41.6
MA or MS		61		56.5
Ph. D.		2		1.9
No answer		0		0

The length of time that the respondents were in their present position ranged from six months to 16 years with a mean of 4.7 years.

Because of the frequent transfers by the denomination, which are often from one area of the country to another, the education of the respondents was not centered in any particular section of the United States.

Analysis of Data

A part of the schedule was related to content of a course in "Christian Home Living" for the senior high school level, designed to determine what material would be acceptable or unacceptable. Since the ranks of the continuum were designed to determine agreement or disagreement with the statement made, rank one and two, strongly agree and tend to agree, were combined in the following tables as were ranks three and four, strongly disagree and tend to disagree. Any of the subjects who strongly agreed or tended to agree would probably not object to any of the statements being included in the content material.

Tables 5 to 13 show the number and per cent of subjects in agreement and disagreement as to whether each statement should be

included in a family life course.

The following discussion of Tables 5 to 13 is speculative. Statements made concerning the percentages of agreement in each table are based on the author's frame of reference and on her experience in the denomination involved. These interpretations are somewhat descriptive of this frame of reference and are included in order to describe that viewpoint. They are not intended as conclusions.

The items under personal development were general statements that are commonly accepted. Any disagreement was probably due to the subjects' belief that the topic was irrelevant in a course in family living.

Table 5. Respondents' agreement with items on personal development.

Statement	: Agree :		: Disagree :		: No response :	
	: Number:	%	: Number:	%	: Number:	%
To solve problems in mature way	108	100.0	0		0	
Principles of human relationship	107	99.1	0		1	.9
Contributing citizen of community	103	95.4	4	3.70	1	.9

Because of the dating conduct expected of the students in the denominational academies the subjects may have placed greater emphasis on dating behavior and chaperonage than other areas of teenage dating (Table 6).

Table 6. Respondents' agreement with items relative to teenage dating.

Statement	: Agree		: Disagree		: No response	
	: Number:	%	: Number:	%	: Number:	%
Dating behavior	106	98.1	1	.92	1	.9
Chaperonage	105	97.2	1	.92	2	1.9
Pros and cons of steady dating	103	95.4	4	3.70	1	.9
Understanding among family members	101	93.5	6	5.6	1	.9
Becoming a datable person	98	90.7	9	8.33	1	.9

One half of the topics under items concerning mate selection received agreement ratings of 95 per cent and over (Table 7).

Table 7. Respondents' agreement with items concerning mate selection.

Statement	: Agree		: Disagree		: No response	
	: Number:	%	: Number:	%	: Number:	%
Love vs. infatuation	105	97.2	2	1.9	1	.9
Common interests	104	96.2	2	1.9	2	1.9
Interdenominational religious differences	103	95.3	5	4.6		
Suitable age for marriage	103	95.3	4	3.7	1	.9
Parental approval of marriage partner	100	92.6	7	6.5	1	.9
Family background	97	89.8	9	8.3	2	1.9
Racial differences	95	88.0	13	12.0		

Greater stress was placed on length of courtship prior to engagement than any other item in Table 8. Burgess (1939) found that the period of friendship before marriage was related to marital adjustment; those whose friendships were of five years or more duration before marriage had a higher adjustment rating than those whose period of acquaintance was under six months.

Of all the 44 topics, premarital sexual relationships was

considered the least acceptable for inclusion in a course in marriage and the family. It is possible that some of the subjects thought that discussing such a topic would bring criticism, since sex education is sometimes thought of as the parents' responsibility. The subjects' apparent belief that premarital sexual codes need not be discussed as much as other topics may have been related to the fact that the academies, through instructions and by regulations, place emphasis on behavior during dating.

Table 8. Respondents' agreement with certain items relating to marital happiness.

Statement	: Agree		: Disagree		: No response	
	: Number:	%	: Number:	%	: Number:	%
Length of courtship prior to engagement	100	92.4	6	5.6	2	1.9
Length of friendship prior to courtship	97	89.8	9	8.3	2	1.9
Important problem areas discussed before marriage	92	85.2	9	8.3	7	6.5
Broken engagements	90	83.3	9	8.3	9	8.3
Pre-marital sex relations	81	75.0	25	23.1	2	1.9

"Modern philosophy of family life as related to Christian principles" received the highest per cent of agreement in Table 9.

Table 9. Respondents' agreement with items on information needed before marriage.

Statement	: Agree		: Disagree		: No response	
	: Number:	%	: Number:	%	: Number:	%
Modern philosophies compared with Christian principles	102	94.4	3	2.8	3	2.8
Making wedding ceremony symbolic	94	87.0	11	10.1	3	2.8
Marriage laws	89	82.4	17	15.7	2	1.9
Traditional marriage customs reviewed	86	79.6	17	15.7	5	4.6
Suggestions for honeymoon	84	77.8	22	20.4	2	1.9

The subjects considered "philosophy and attitude toward spending the family income" an important topic to include in a marriage course (Table 10). The rating of this item may have been influenced by the fact that salary rates are considerably lower for the denominational group than comparable positions elsewhere, thus making the need for careful money management imperative.

Also in Table 10 a low rating was given to the topic "achieving sexual harmony." The subjects apparently believed as Behlmer (1959) who stated that an explanation of the sex act itself or of contraception is not considered appropriate subject matter in a family life education program for the high school curriculum.

Table 10. Respondents' agreement with items on various areas in marriage adjustments.

Statement	: Agree		: Disagree		:No response	
	:Number:	%	:Number:	%	:Number:	%
Philosophy of spending family income	107	99.1			1	.9
Solving differences	104	96.3	3	2.8	1	.9
Consumer economics	104	96.3	2	1.9	2	1.9
Personality interaction	98	90.7	5	4.6	5	4.6
Factors applying to in-laws	96	88.9	8	7.4	4	3.7
Religious differences within denomination	95	88.0	10	9.2	3	2.8
Achieving sexual harmony	62	57.4	44	40.7	2	1.9

Ninety-eight per cent of the subjects believed that the matter of divorce should be included in a family life course (Table 11). Perhaps this item would seem important because of the increase in problems to be solved as the result of divorces.

Table 11. Respondents' agreement with items of divorce and its effects.

Statement	: Agree		: Disagree		:No response	
	:Number:	%	:Number:	%	:Number:	%
Church attitude toward divorce	106	98.1	1	.9	1	.9
Effect of divorce	106	98.1	1	.9	1	.9

In Table 12, the lowest percentages of agreement were given to the topics dealing with a knowledge of facts of pregnancy, childbirth and planned parenthood. A possible reason for this may have been the subjects' hesitation to include such topics on this age level for fear of criticism from those who believed this was the responsibility of the home only.

Table 12. Respondents' agreement with items on preparation for parenthood.

Statement	: Agree		: Disagree		:No response	
	:Number:	%	:Number:	%	:Number:	%
Christian standards in managing children	105	97.2	3	2.8	0	
Modern goals in childrearing	103	95.4	4	3.7	1	.9
Adoption of children	93	86.1	15	13.9	0	
Planned parenthood	87	80.6	21	19.4	0	
Knowledge of facts of childbirth	85	78.7	23	21.3	0	

Table 13 indicates that the subjects placed slightly greater stress on parent-child relationships and husband-wife relationships than on sibling or grandparent interrelationships.

Table 13. Respondents' agreement with items on family interactions.

Statement	: Agree		: Disagree		: No response	
	: Number:	%	: Number:	%	: Number:	%
Parent-child relationships	101	93.5	4	3.7	3	2.8
Husband-wife relationships during child-development years	100	92.6	6	5.5	2	1.9
Living as family in community	100	92.6	4	3.7	4	3.7
Sibling relationships	97	89.8	9	8.3	2	1.9
Interrelation of grand-parents and family	88	81.5	16	14.8	4	3.7

Tables 14 and 15 summarize (1) items which 75 per cent or over of the subjects strongly agreed should be included and (2) items which five per cent or over of the group strongly disagreed should be included.

Table 14. Statements that received strong agreement (75% and over) as to inclusion in course.

	%
1. To meet and solve problems in a mature way	92.6
2. Love is important	86.1
3. Learning basic principles of human relationships	85.2
4. The effects of divorce on family members and on society	84.3
5. Interdenominational religious differences	82.4
6. Christian standards in managing children	80.6
7. Christian attitude toward divorce	79.6
8. Acceptable dating behavior	79.6
9. Philosophy related to Christian principles	75.0
10. Philosophy and attitude toward spending money	75.0

It is interesting to note that nearly every statement based on a religious concept received "strong agreement" rating. The fact that the subjects of the study were members of an affiliated denomination would influence their responses in favor of the items having a religious connotation.

Table 15. Statements that received strong disagreement (5% or over) as to inclusion in course.

	<u>%</u>
1. Achieving sexual harmony	14.8
2. Pre-marital relationships	7.4
3. Knowledge of the facts of pregnancy	7.4

The topics dealing with sex education received the strongest objections. The inclusion of sex education in the curriculum for secondary schools has been a topic of study for some time. Most family life educators believe that sex education should be included in marriage courses. Burchinal (1960, p.18) said, "Sex education is not preparation for marriage by itself; it is just one aspect of total preparation for marriage."

Some of the respondents suggested additional subjects for inclusion in a family life course: "proper recreation," "relationship of good health to a happy marriage," "how to manage money," "doing things together as a family," "living safely to avoid accident," "proper marriage counseling," "how to prepare for retirement," and "family worship."

Table 16 indicates of what value the subjects believed a course in marriage education would be to the young people. Most of the group believed that such a class would be of some help, particularly in realizing the hazards of interfaith marriages.

Table 16. Responses of subjects to value of course.

Value of course	: Agree		: Disagree		: No response	
	: Number:	%	: Number:	%	: Number:	%
Realize hazards of inter-faith marriages	98	90.7	5	4.6	5	4.6
Maintain higher standard of conduct	97	89.8	5	4.6	6	5.5
Reduce number of hasty marriages	88	81.5	14	13.0	6	5.5
Reduce number of teenage marriages	76	70.3	23	21.3	9	8.3

Some of the subjects mentioned the following as other benefits which might be derived from a course in family life education:

(1) such a course would make young people more alert to early symptoms of pitfalls within the home, (2) it would strengthen an appreciation of sympathy for others, (3) it would develop mature thinking.

Duvall (1960, p.77), quoting from a paper delivered at an annual conference of the National Council on Family Relations said,

There is evidence from a number of sources that those students who take such courses as Preparation for Marriage, Foundations of Marriage, and Family Living: (1) are more willing to face their problems of sex, courtship and marriage; (2) more often postpone or break off going steady; (3) are more apt to terminate unpromising engagements; (4) attempt to appraise their love feelings in terms of adequacy for marriage; and (5) postpone marriage until they are prepared to assume the roles and responsibilities that make successful marriages.

Force (1953, p.106) stated:

There is no question in my mind that a program such as we have in Toms River pays rich dividends.... Many parents comment to us on the positive changes that have come over their youngsters after taking the course. The youngsters themselves are the first to admit that they are able to think straight about their problems.

A survey made of our married couples a few years ago indicates pretty clearly that the divorce rate for graduates of our course is only a fraction of the high national divorce rate.

Eighty-four of the subjects stated they had no such course in their curriculum, fourteen did not respond to the question asking about their present program and ten said they had a course in family life education. However, seven of the ten were educational-superintendents. In checking the academies in their territory no such course was found.

One of the principals mentioned a course in home economics, another suggested a course called "Problems of Democracy" and the third said "Youth Guidance." These courses would not seemingly fit the description of a marriage education course. Apparently none of the 108 subjects responding to the check-list have at present a course in marriage and family living.

To ascertain the attitude of the group toward sources of help available to the young people, the check-list included the statement: Do you feel that as a denomination we are meeting the needs of our young people in teaching them the basic principles of a happy home? Following the question were statements naming the possible sources of help with provision made for subjects to indicate whether or not they believed these sources were fulfilling the need.

As seen in Table 17, 89.8 per cent and 87.1 per cent respectively disagreed that the home and church were giving enough instruction. Responses of the group indicated that the subjects believed the school should assume part of the responsibility for educating young people for family living.

Table 17. Responses of subjects toward possible sources of information.

Statement (Source of information)	: Agree		: Disagree		: No response	
	: Number:	%	: Number:	%	: Number:	%
Part of school's responsibility	103	95.4	5	4.6	0	
School should do more	94	87.0	12	11.2	2	1
Curriculum is sufficient	18	16.7	89	82.4	1	9
Church instruction adequate	14	12.9	94	87.1	0	
Home instruction adequate	11	10.2	97	89.8	0	

It will be noted that 16.7 per cent of the subjects indicated that the present curriculum was adequate. Sixteen out of the 18 who responded in this way mentioned specifically the class in "Youth Guidance" as giving adequate information. "Youth Guidance" is a required course taught in the religion department on the 4th year level in the senior academies of the church related group. Approximately two to three weeks are usually devoted to family life education. The majority of the subjects apparently believed this was not sufficient instruction.

Table 18 shows the subjects' response to the question of why a course in family living is not included in the curriculum at the present time. Placing an additional course in the curriculum and finding a qualified teacher are two of the greatest problems.

One subject emphasized the problem when he stated, "a top-notch teacher could discuss any of these subjects but an average or mediocre teacher would be better to leave the whole subject alone."

It is true that teachers trained in the field of family relations would be difficult to find because this area of instruction

is not emphasized in the colleges within the church-related group studied.

Table 18. Subjects' responses as to reason why class is not now offered.

Reasons why class is not now offered	:Number:	Per cent
We do not have room in the curriculum	46	42.5
No qualified teacher	29	26.9
Parents would object	7	6.5
I feel that it would encourage early marriage	5	4.0
The students would not accept it	1	.9
The community would object	1	.9
I feel it is contrary to church standards	1	.9

To determine whether there was any association between responses concerning inclusion of a family life course in the curriculum and the factors of age, years of marriage, number of years in denominational work and degree held, the chi-square test was used.

The following hypotheses were accepted: the responses are not associated with (1) years of marriage ($\chi^2 = 11.99$, 10 D/F, not significant at .05 level); (2) age ($\chi^2 = 5.77$, 6 D/F, not significant at .05 level); (3) number of years in denominational work ($\chi^2 = 5.68$, 6 D/F, not significant at .05 level); or (4) degree held ($\chi^2 = 5.67$, 4 D/F, not significant at .05 level).

The check-list gave opportunity for subjects to indicate how much time they would allow for a class in "Christian Home Living." Fifty per cent of the group stated that they would allow one semester. Two semesters would be allowed by 29.6 per cent of the subjects and 20.4 per cent of them did not indicate any specific time.

Twelve of the subjects or 11.0 per cent suggested that the course in Youth Guidance be reorganized to meet the need for a course in family life education.

This study indicates that the subjects would probably not object to a course in "Christian Home Living." Some of the group emphasized their attitude by writing such comments as "I feel there should be no reason for not teaching it," "sounds good." Two suggested that this instruction be given earlier than the senior year.

A few of the subjects believed there was no merit in a course in marriage on the academy level. "Count me out. I'm against the program in the academy," "I personally fear the results of such a course. The thoughts of so many youth are already too filled with such ideas" indicated their attitude.

The study is subject to the usual limitations of the questionnaire or check-list method.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

All of the 128 senior academy principals and educational superintendents of a church-related group were chosen for this study. A check-list sent to subjects was designed to determine the subjects' opinion toward content material for a course in family life education and the subjects' evaluation of need for such a course in the curriculum. Percentages of agreement with each of the 67 items in the check-list were calculated. The chi-square test was used on the three items that dealt directly with responses of the subjects concerning inclusion of a course in

family life education in the curriculum to determine any associations between responses and the factors of age, years of service, years of marriage, and degrees held.

Of the 110 check-lists that were returned, 108, or 84.3 per cent of the 128 sent, were used in the investigation. The data were analyzed according to total group responses.

From the findings the following conclusions were drawn for the subjects studied:

1. The content material relating to becoming a well-adjusted person, pros and cons applicable to mate selection, and certain factors in marriage adjustment and parenthood would be acceptable to two-thirds and over of the subjects. Content material related to premarital sexual relationships, honeymoon suggestions, achieving sexual harmony and knowledge of facts of pregnancy and childbirth would be somewhat objectionable.

2. Three-fourths of the group indicated that a course in family life would be of value to the young people but inclusion of such a course in the curriculum would pose two major problems, those of overcrowding the curriculum and of locating qualified teachers.

3. Present interest in family life education may be indicated by the number of responses that were received. Of 128 requests sent, 110 check-lists were returned and eleven letters received, making a total of 121 responses.

4. Almost nine-tenths of the subjects said they believed the home and church were not giving sufficient instruction in marriage education. Eighty-seven per cent of the subjects indicated that

the school should assume a greater responsibility in family life education.

5. No significant association was found between the opinions of subjects toward inclusion of a course in family life education and the factors of age, number of years married, number of years in denominational work and degree held. General factors were not related to the apparently individualistic opinions expressed.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

The following recommendations based on the results of this study, are suggested for further consideration:

1. That the academy curriculum be re-evaluated in the light of present day needs of young people and that study be given to methods of including family life education.

2. That a course be included in the curriculum in "Christian Home Living" of one or two semesters in length and required of every senior.

3. That the unit on the family in the "Youth Guidance" course be enlarged to cover the material on marriage more efficiently, if a course in "Christian Home Living" is not included.

4. That the colleges of the denomination review their curriculums for secondary teachers and consider requiring basic courses in marriage and family living in order that secondary teachers will be prepared to teach similar classes on the secondary level.

5. That since it may be necessary to employ instructors with little training in the field of family relationships to teach a

course in "Christian Home Living" that in-service training may be provided through Family Life Conferences either on the General Conference or Union Conference level.

6. That a detailed syllabus for a marriage and family living course, giving complete outlines of subject matter, references and activities be published by the General Conference Department of Education to be used by the academies.

7. That the principals educate their faculties as to the objectives and values of family life education.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to express her sincere appreciation to Mrs. Leone Kell, Professor, Department of Family and Child Development, Kansas State University, for her encouragement and guidance in the preparation of this thesis.

The assistance of Dr. Dale Womble, Professor, Department of Family and Child Development, and Dr. Ruth Hoeflin, Associate Dean of Home Economics, Kansas State University, is also greatly appreciated.

The cooperation of Dr. T. S. Geraty, Department of Education, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist and of the Senior Academy Principals and Educational Superintendents in completing the check-lists is gratefully acknowledged.

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APPENDIX

October 1, 1960

Union Educational Secretaries
Local Conference Educational Superintendents
Academy Principals

Dear Educators:

Enclosed is a check-list devised for the purpose of determining the need of and the acceptable content for a course in "Christian Home Living" for the senior year in our academies.

Your cooperation is requested in filling out and returning the enclosed schedule so that this project may prove to be of benefit to our denominational educational program. You may be assured that your response which is to be unsigned will be kept confidential.

I shall be more than happy to share the total results of my findings with you when the project is finished.

To be of help, it is necessary that this schedule be returned by November 1.

I thank you for your immediate attention to this request.

Sincerely yours,

Mary Lou Durning
Home Economics Department

GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

E. E. CORBENTINE, SECRETARY
 RICHARD HAMMILL, ASSOCIATE SECRETARY
 G. M. MATHEWS, ASSOCIATE SECRETARY
 T. S. GERATY, ASSOCIATE SECRETARY
 ARCHA O. DART, ASSISTANT SECRETARY
 RESEARCH DIVISION:
 FRANK L. MARSH, BIOLOGY, GEOLOGY
 P. EDGAR HARE, GEOCHEMISTRY, GEOLOGY



ADDRESS
 6640 EASTERN AVENUE, NW
 WASHINGTON 12, D. C.
 TELEPHONE
 RANDOLPH 3-0800

September 15, 1960

ACADEMY PRINCIPALS
 LOCAL CONFERENCE EDUCATIONAL SUPERINTENDENTS
 UNION CONFERENCE EDUCATIONAL SECRETARIES

Dear Colleagues:

As you are well aware, secondary education today is looking hard at its curriculum in terms of improvement. As Seventh-day Adventists we shall be re-evaluating our secondary curricula at the 1961 Principals' Council (June 28-July 2, 1961) in the light of individual and social needs of Seventh-day Adventist youth.

What more should we do to help prepare youth in the establishment and maintenance of Christian homes? In some of our secondary schools there are units on "The Christian Home" or "The Adventist Home" in correlated or separate course work.

The accompanying check list for a possible course in the senior year of Seventh-day Adventist secondary schools, entitled "Christian Home Living," has been prepared by Miss Mary L. Durning, Head of the Home Economics Department of Atlantic Union College, in her graduate program. We shall appreciate greatly your evaluation of such a possible course by duly filling out the check list and returning it to Miss Durning by November 1. We are interested in the tabulation of responses so as to know how to proceed.

Thank you for your cooperation in this study of curriculum improvement, and may God bless you each in the 1960-61 school year.

Cordially yours,

T. S. Geraty
 Associate Secretary

TSG/ebr

INFORMATION SHEET

1. Your College and University Education:

Name of School	Dates attended	degree	year rec'd	major field of study	hrs. of grad. wk.

2. In what area of education are you working? (Please check)

☐ a. Union Education Secretary☐ b. Local Conference Educational Superintendent☐ c. Academy Principal

3. Number of years in present position? _____

4. Number of years spent in denominational school work? _____

a. as school principal _____

b. as local Conference Educational Superintendent _____

c. as Union Conference Educational Secretary _____

5. Present Marital Status: Single _____

Married _____ Number of yrs. _____

Number of children _____ Other (specify) _____

6. Please check your age group:

25 or below _____, 26-35 _____, 36-45 _____, 46-55 _____,

56-65 _____, 66-70 _____

CHECK-LISTPART I

Circle the number as given in the following key that best describes your attitude toward specific content material for a class in "Christian Home Living". Please be sure to circle an answer for each statement.

1. Strongly agree that it should be included
2. Tend to agree that it should be included
3. Tend to disagree that it should be included
4. Strongly disagree that it should be included

A. BEING A WELL BALANCED PERSON

1. Attaining happiness before and after marriage by learning:

- 1 2 3 4 a. to meet and solve problems in a mature way
- 1 2 3 4 b. the basic principles of human relationships
- 1 2 3 4 c. to be a contributing citizen of the community

2. Some problems relative to teenage dating:

- 1 2 3 4 a. becoming a datable person
- 1 2 3 4 b. acceptable and unacceptable behavior during dating
- 1 2 3 4 c. chaperonage
- 1 2 3 4 d. pros and cons of steady dating
- 1 2 3 4 e. creating an understanding among family members during dating yrs.

B. GETTING READY FOR MARRIAGE

1. Pros and cons applicable to mate selection:

- 1 2 3 4 a. parental approval of a proposed marriage partner
- 1 2 3 4 b. family background, biological and eugenic, rituals, roles, authority patterns
- 1 2 3 4 c. interdenominational religious differences
- 1 2 3 4 d. racial, national and ethnic differences
- 1 2 3 4 e. common interests, values, standards, ideals and philosophies
- 1 2 3 4 f. genuine love versus infatuation
- 1 2 3 4 g. suitable chronological and emotional age for marriage

K E Y

1. Strongly agree that it should be included
2. Tend to agree that it should be included
3. Tend to disagree that it should be included
4. Strongly disagree that it should be included

2. Correlations between happiness in marriage and the following:

- 1 2 3 4 a. length of friendship prior to courtship
- 1 2 3 4 b. Length of courtship prior to engagement
- 1 2 3 4 c. pre-marital sexual relationships
- 1 2 3 4 d. extent to which important areas within marriage are discussed prior to marriage and degree of satisfaction with decisions made.
- 1 2 3 4 e. number of, reasons, and justification for broken engagements

C. WHEN YOU MARRY

1. Information to consider when you marry:

- 1 2 3 4 a. important state marriage laws
- 1 2 3 4 b. traditional marriage customs vs. those with genuine significance
- 1 2 3 4 c. making wedding ceremony symbolical of marriage objectives
- 1 2 3 4 d. guiding suggestions for a successful honeymoon
- 1 2 3 4 e. modern philosophy of family life as related to Christian principles.

2. Areas in marriage adjustment:

- 1 2 3 4 a. solving differences through developing constructive problem solving processes
- 1 2 3 4 b. philosophy and attitude toward spending the family income
- 1 2 3 4 c. consumer economics and family security
- 1 2 3 4 d. achieving sexual harmony
- 1 2 3 4 e. basic factors of human relationships as applied to in-laws
- 1 2 3 4 f. religious differences in intensity within ones own denomination
- 1 2 3 4 g. personality interaction in marriage

3. Divorce and its effects:

1 2 3 4 a. church attitude toward divorce

1 2 3 4 b. effects of divorce on family members and on society

D. PARENTHOOD

1. Physical and attitudinal preparation for parenthood

1 2 3 4 a. knowledge of facts of pregnancy and childbirth

1 2 3 4 b. planned parenthood: its implications

1 2 3 4 c. modern goals and methods in child-rearing

1 2 3 4 d. Christian standards in managing children

1 2 3 4 e. adoption of children

2. Family interactions

1 2 3 4 a. parent-child relationships

1 2 3 4 b. sibling relationships

1 2 3 4 c. interrelation of grandparents and family

1 2 3 4 d. retaining good husband-wife relationships during child-development years.

1 2 3 4 e. living together as a family in the community and in the culture

E. OTHER TOPICS YOU FEEL SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN A CLASS IN "CHRISTIAN HOME LIVING".

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

PART II

Circle the number as given in the following key that best describes your feelings toward the following statements and situations.

1. Strongly agree
2. Tend to agree
3. Tend to disagree
4. Strongly disagree

A. Do you feel that as a denomination we are meeting the needs of our young people in teaching them the basic principles of a happy home?

- 1 2 3 4 a. The home is meeting this responsibility.
- 1 2 3 4 b. The church is meeting this responsibility.
- 1 2 3 4 c. This is part of the responsibility of the school.
- 1 2 3 4 d. The school should do much more than it is to meet this need.
- 1 2 3 4 e. Our academy curriculum gives sufficient education along these lines.
- 1 2 3 4 f. Our academy counseling program is adequate
- g. Other (specify) 66
- B. Of what value do you feel a class in "Christian Home Living" would be to our young people?
- 1 2 3 4 a. It would help them to maintain a higher standard of conduct during present friendships.
- 1 2 3 4 b. It would reduce the number of teenage marriages.
- 1 2 3 4 c. It would reduce the number of hasty marriages.
- 1 2 3 4 d. It would help them to realize the hazards of inter-faith marriages.
- e. Other (specify) _____

PART III

Please check number or numbers that best describe your attitudes toward or situations for a class in "Christian Home Living".

1. Present status (Please check)

- a. We already have such a class in our curriculum other than the class in Youth Problems, Youth Guidance, or Philosophy of Life.

Please state name of class _____

- b. We do not have such a class in our curriculum.

2. If you do not have such a class, why not?

- a. No qualified teacher to teach it.
- b. We do not have room in our curriculum.
- c. The students would not accept it.

- ☐ d. The parents would object.
- ☐ e. The community would object.
- ☐ f. I feel that it is contrary to church standards.
- ☐ g. I feel that it would encourage early marriages.
- ☐ h. I feel that we should not place such a class in our curriculum.
- ☐ i. I am undecided about such a class in our curriculum.
- ☐ j. I feel strongly that we should have such a class.
- ☐ k. Other (specify) _____

3. How much time would you schedule for such a class?

- ☐ a. one semester
- ☐ b. two semesters
- ☐ c. other (specify) _____

Follow-up Letter

November 14, 1960

Dear Elder:

A month ago I sent to you a check-list to determine the content material and the need for a course in "Christian Home Living". In order for this project to be of benefit to our denomination it is necessary to obtain this information from our Academy Principals and Educational Superintendents.

If you have not already returned the check-list, I would ask your cooperation in filling it out and returning it at once to me in the stamped self-addressed envelope which was enclosed. If you do not care to take part in this project please return your check-list with such a statement.

I greatly appreciate your cooperation in this matter and trust that our mutual efforts may be of benefit to the denomination.

Very sincerely yours,

Mary Lou Durning
Home Economics Dept.

Table 19. Number of responses under 4 categories of Part I of the check-list.

Statement	Categories				no response
	No. 1:	No. 2:	No. 3:	No. 4:	Number
Attain happiness by learning:					
To solve problems in mature way	100	8	0	0	0
Principles of human relationship	92	15	0	0	1
Contributing citizen of community	58	45	3	1	1
Problems of teenage dating:					
Becoming a datable person	51	47	8	1	1
Dating behavior	86	20	0	1	1
Chaperonage	73	32	1	0	2
Pros and cons of steady dating	73	30	1	3	1
Understanding among family members	68	33	5	1	1
Mate selection:					
Parental approval of marriage partner	50	50	5	2	1
Family background	53	44	6	3	2
Interdenominational religious differences	89	14	4	1	0
Racial differences	65	30	10	3	0
Common interests	75	29	1	1	2
Love vs. infatuation	93	12	1	1	1
Suitable age for marriage	75	28	3	1	1
Marital happiness:					
Length of friendship prior to courtship	46	51	9	0	2
Length of courtship prior to engagement	43	57	6	0	2
Pre-marital sex relations	48	33	17	8	2
Important problem areas discussed before marriage	57	35	7	2	7
Broken engagements	48	42	8	1	9
Information needed before marriage:					
Marriage laws	36	53	15	2	2
Traditional marriage customs reviewed	38	48	14	3	5
Making wedding ceremony symbolic	53	41	9	2	3
Suggestions for honeymoon	37	47	15	7	2
Modern philosophies compared with Christian principles	81	21	3	0	3

Table 19 (concl.). Number of responses under 4 categories of Part I of the check-list.

Statement	Categories				No response
	No. 1:	No. 2:	No. 3:	No. 4:	Number
Areas in marriage adjustment:					
Solving differences	68	36	3	0	1
Philosophy of spending family income	81	26	0	0	1
Consumer economics	64	40	2	0	2
Achieving sexual harmony	37	25	28	16	2
Factors applying to in-laws	37	59	7	1	4
Religious differences within denomination	53	42	9	1	3
Personality interaction	49	49	5	0	5
Divorce and its effects:					
Church attitude toward divorce	86	20	1	0	1
Effect of divorce	91	15	1	0	1
Preparation for parenthood:					
Knowledge of facts of childbirth	52	33	15	8	0
Planned parenthood	49	38	14	7	0
Modern goals in child-rearing	62	41	2	2	1
Christian standards in managing children	87	18	1	2	0
Adoption of children	42	51	12	3	0
Family interactions:					
Parent-child relationships	80	21	2	2	3
Sibling relationships	54	43	5	4	2
Interrelation of grand-parents and family	37	51	12	4	4
Husband-wife relationships during child-development years	78	22	4	2	2
Living as family in community	71	29	2	2	4

OPINIONS OF EDUCATIONAL SUPERINTENDENTS AND PRINCIPALS
CONCERNING A FAMILY LIFE COURSE IN CERTAIN CHURCH-RELATED
ACADEMIES

by

MARY LOUISE DURNING

B. A., Washington Missionary College, 1946
B. S., Atlantic Union College, 1958

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Family and Child Development

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
MANHATTAN, KANSAS

1962

Family life educators have believed for some time that a course in family life education would be of benefit in making the high school curriculum better meet the present needs of young people. A review of the literature indicated a definite need for pertinent research concerning the acceptance and evaluation of marriage preparation courses on the secondary level.

The purpose of this study was to determine the opinions of certain church-related superintendents of education and senior academy principals concerning content material for a course in family life education and concerning inclusion of such a course in the academy curriculum.

A check-list designed to meet the objectives of the study was sent to all of the 128 superintendents of education and senior academy principals within the denomination in the United States. The first part of the check-list listed 44 topics that might be included in a marriage preparation course. The second and third parts enumerated various areas of responsibilities to determine whether such responsibilities were being discharged and, if not, whether a course in family life education would meet the need.

Of the 110 check-lists that were returned, 108, or 84.3 per cent of the 128 sent, were used in analysis of data.

Percentages of agreement with each of the 67 items in the check-list were calculated. The chi-square test was made on the three items that dealt directly with opinions of the subjects concerning inclusion of a class in family life education in the academy curriculum. The purpose was to determine associations

between opinions and the factors of age, years of service, years of marriage and degrees held.

The following conclusions were drawn from the findings of the data:

1. The content material relating to personal development, mate selection, certain factors in marriage adjustment and parenthood would be acceptable to two-thirds and over of the subjects. Content material relating to premarital sexual relationships, honeymoon suggestions, achieving sexual harmony and knowledge of facts of pregnancy and childbirth would be somewhat objectionable.

2. Three-fourths of the group indicated that a course in family life would be of value to the young people but inclusion of such a course in the curriculum would pose two major problems, those of overcrowding the curriculum and of locating qualified teachers.

3. Almost nine-tenths of the subjects said they believed the home and church were not giving sufficient instruction in marriage education. Eighty-seven per cent of the subjects indicated that the school should assume a greater responsibility in family life education.

4. No significant association was found between the opinions of subjects concerning the inclusion of a course in family life education and the factors of age, number of years married, number of years in denominational work and degrees held. These general factors were not related to the apparently individualistic opinions expressed.

Recommendations were made to the administrators concerned :

(1) to re-evaluate the present curriculum in the light of including a course in family life education for the senior year level or to enlarge the unit on the family in the course in "Youth Guidance" to cover material on marriage more efficiently, (2) to include basic courses on the family in the college curriculums for secondary teachers, (3) to give unprepared teachers in-service training through Family Life Conferences, and (4) to prepare a detailed syllabus for a marriage and family living course giving complete outlines of subject matter, references and activities.