

THE FURNISHINGS OF 290 RURAL KANSAS HOMES

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
REVIEW OF LITERATURE	4
METHOD OF PROCEDURE	8
FINDINGS	9
SUMMARY	70
RECOMMENDATIONS	76
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	79
LITERATURE CITED	80
APPENDIX	81

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INTRODUCTION

The most potent force in the progress of our civilization is the home. We look to the homes of today to make family companionship enjoyable and stimulating, to provide opportunity for social contacts, to encourage the pursuit of hobbies, to develop educational and social activities, and, in general, to provide a background of peace and security for living. To insure a continued growth for future generations, the home, by its very nature, should develop the children's judgment, taste, comradeship, and other qualities which contribute to mental, spiritual and social growth. One of the most encouraging factors contributing to this growth is that homemakers are recognizing the importance of planning for beautiful, comfortable, and satisfying home surroundings.

Information helpful to the homemaker in making the home attractive is far from adequate. Most books on the subject of home furnishings are written for high income levels. Much of the information made available is of the sales promotional type, and some of the best informed persons are not interested in making their information avail-

able to the homemaker. Many of the informational and illustrative articles in magazines need to be studied with a sound knowledge of basic principles of art and of economical consumer values.

The rural homemakers of Kansas are aware of their need for information which will guide them in planning livable homes. Even though the rural family has found it possible to spend only a very small sum for home improvements, it should be remembered that the satisfying home is not built solely on material possessions. Information should be presented which will help the homemaker to make the best of what she already has and which will stimulate her creative ability for improvements rather than cause dissatisfaction with the existing environment. A successful program in rural home improvement recognizes the different income levels and seeks to bring into all homes beauty, comfort, convenience, and utility of furnishings. Consumer education becomes a necessity in order that maximum values may be realized from the small sums of money available to the homemaker.

It is important that individuals responsible for a successful adult program become acquainted with activities and surroundings in the rural homes before organizing a

program of study intended to meet the needs, interests, and capacities of the homemakers. Too many of the farm homes in Kansas have just grown without respect to these needs. Although few families need and want the same things for satisfactory living, there is a common denominator that can be applied to basic features in planning the interiors of rural homes even at low cost levels.

One of the most extensive agencies now functioning in this phase of rural home improvement is the Cooperative Extension Service in Agriculture and Home Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture. For some time, it has been an important part of the Home Economics program in Kansas. This agency is in a position to make an important contribution to the rural homemakers in helping them to plan and develop livable homes.

This study was made to secure information on the furnishings of the rural home and to make suggestions which will aid in developing a vital program for use in extension teaching.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Interest in housing has been growing in recent years. Many studies of housing, both local and national, have been made, some of which have included phases of home furnishings. However, a review of the literature indicates that few studies of home furnishings have been reported.

President Herbert Hoover called a Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership (1) to make a study of Home-making, Home Furnishings, and Information Services. In the survey that followed, most of the urban and rural incomes were found to be \$1,500 or less and that many of the low income level families were in the rural groups. Eighty percent of the rural families owned their homes, while the average tenure of renters was 3.2 years. Dissatisfaction with the house arrangement was indicated by 60 percent of the rural women and 68 percent wanted better storage space especially for outdoor wraps, food, and cleaning equipment. Women complained of the lack of an adequate desk and equipment to manage family finance and farm business. One of every seven homemakers wanted her home redecorated because the house looked "run down", and

did not provide a cheerful atmosphere for the family life; also it was embarrassing for social activities and contacts. The major needs summarized were for "(1) sound, authentic information; (2) greater opportunity for authentic and unprejudiced advice regarding home interiors; (3) more merchandise that follows the best standards of design and craftsmanship."

The Farm-Housing Survey (5) showed that of the 17,929 Kansas homes included in the survey, 54 percent owned their homes, most of which were 25 to 49 years old and of frame construction. There were an average of 5.9 rooms per house occupied by 4.2 members. The house had an average of 2.9 bedrooms and 1.9 closets. The interior walls were rated "good" in 44 percent of the homes and 53 percent of the floors were in good condition. Although most homes needed improvement, 77 percent of the families were not interested in borrowing money to make these changes, even if the rate were satisfactory and payments distributed over a period of 10 years.

Wilson (6) found that the plan for a four room house favored by homemakers provided for a combined kitchen and dining room, a living room which can also be used as a bedroom, and two bedrooms. Some preferred a five room

house, providing a separate kitchen, a dining room, a living room, and two bedrooms. The demands of farm living generally require that the living room be warm all day during the part of the year when men do not have much outside work and warm in the afternoon and evening during spring and fall. The allowance for dining space should be liberal and the dining table large. Farm homemakers are decidedly in favor of a room set aside for the business activities of the farm. The living room is the center for leisure activities and its arrangement should take into consideration the entertaining of guests, and individual and family group activities.

Neal (3) interviewed 70 homemakers in two Kansas counties to determine their furnishings. Of these families 70 percent owned their homes; the median income was \$1,500. The median size family was four. Fifty-two percent of the homemakers planned to make changes in their homes. Most of the furniture was purchased when the homemaker was married and so Mission and Victorian were the styles most frequently found. All the homes had living rooms, but only 69.9 percent of them were used every day in the year. Lack of color was evident in all the rooms and furniture was not conveniently arranged for family use, as

a rule. Only 80 percent of the homes had separate dining rooms, the rest of them having the dining room-kitchen combination. These rooms were monotonous and showed little initiative or creative ability. The usual floor covering was linoleum. The windows were curtained with ruffle tie-backs. With the exception of the master bedroom, the sleeping rooms were occupied by one person. Metal beds were most frequent and the rest of the furniture followed the same pattern of dresser or dressing table or chest of drawers, and a chair. Only 21.4 percent of the homes had fully equipped bathrooms. Storage facilities were generally quite inadequate. It was evident that more information was needed by homemakers on quality and construction and style of house furnishings for which the estimated amount spent annually each year ranged from \$10 to \$100.

The Kansas Home Account Summary (2) showed that \$77 was the average amount spent for furniture and equipment by the 127 families reporting, an amount which was 10 percent of the total cash expenditures. The greatest portion of this amount was spent for refrigerators, stoves, cabinets, and similar kitchen equipment. The average amount spent for furnishings in rooms other than the kitchen were: house linens and other textiles, \$7.21;

floor coverings, \$6.66; furniture, \$13.02; glass, china, silver, \$1.50.

According to the Rural Electrification Survey (4) on January 1, 1940, 13.2 percent of the occupied farms of Kansas were electrified. Of the 21,546 homes having electricity, 4,462 were supplied by the Rural Electrification Association, 14,668 by private utilities, and 2,416 by municipal utilities.

METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The data for this study were secured from rural homemakers by means of check lists. Cooperation for the distribution of the check lists was secured from the county agricultural agents and home demonstration agents before lists were sent. The counties to which the lists were sent were selected with the help of the extension agricultural economist to represent the typical farming areas of Kansas. As far as possible the lists were distributed in the following order: one-third to members of Farm Bureau, one-third to non-members of Farm Bureau, and one-third to Farm Security clients.

Two hundred and ninety lists were checked and returned from the following counties: Brown, Chase, Commanche, Dickinson, Douglas, Greeley, Greenwood, Harper, Haskell, Hodgeman, Johnson, Lincoln, Linn, Lyon, Neosho, Rawlins, Reno, Smith, and Stafford. These data, together with those from personal visits made to twenty-seven counties in Dickinson, Ellsworth, and McPherson counties in 1938, were tabulated, analyzed, and evaluated. Recommendations were made for an extension home furnishings program in Kansas.

FINDINGS

The Family and Its Activities

Of the 290 families responding to the check lists, 264, or 91.03 percent were farm families and 26 or 8.97 percent lived in small towns. Concerning Farm Bureau membership, 49 percent of the returned lists were from members of the Bureau, as is indicated in Table 1. The 45.52 percent indicating that they were non-members included clients of the Farm Security Administration. Five years was the median for membership in Farm Bureau.

Table 1. Membership in farm bureau.

	Number	: Percent
Yes	143	49.31
No	132	45.52
No reply	15	5.17
Median years membership	5	

Homes were owned by 78 percent of the families (Table 2). This percentage is higher than that found in the Farm-Housing Survey (5) which indicated that 54 percent owned their homes, most of which were from 25 to 49 years old and of frame construction. Whether a family owns or rents its home, that is whether it moves seldom or often, will influence suggestions given for such improvements as additional storage space, wall treatments, woodwork, floor finishes, and others that cannot be moved.

Table 2. Home ownership.

	Number	: Percent
Yes	226	77.93
No	58	20.00
No reply	6	2.07

The average size of the families was four, according to Table 3. This average corresponded closely to the median found by Neal (3) for 70 families. This number did not include outside members living in the home, such as grandparents, teachers, hired help, or boarders. Six of the homes had no husband and in most instances, a son would supervise the farm or be the wage earner. Although there were more boys than girls in the families reporting, the difference was not sufficient to influence the type of home furnishings program needed.

Table 3. Personnel of families.

	Number
Husbands	280
Wives	286
Boys	316
Girls	261
Others	59
Average size of families represented	4

The tendency for older boys and girls to become wage earners may be responsible for the low percent of adult children living in the home. According to Table 4, 61.28 or an average of 1.28 children per family were 15 years of age or less, and only about one-third as many were between the ages of 16 and 21. The ages of children are important in planning the home in that it will influence such problems as furniture heights, furniture arrangement, and storage space for toys, study and recreational equipment, and clothing and similar articles.

Table 4. Age of children.

	Number :	Percent	:Average per : :family :
0 - 15 years	372	61.28	1.28
16 - 21 years	168	27.68	0.58
21 years or older	67	11.04	0.23
Total			2.09

All but five of the homes had either a living room or combination living and dining room (Table 5). Seventy-four percent had a separate dining room; and a few more homes had the kitchen-dining room combination than had the din-

ing-living room combination. An average of 2.98 bedrooms were found in these homes which was the same as that found by the Farm-Housing Survey (5). Several lists indicated that some of their bedrooms were not in use. Each home had an average of 2.64 closets. Only about half of the homes had a hallway of any kind, 27 percent of the homes had modern bathrooms, and 22 percent had a wash room. Two of the homes were basement homes. According to the findings of the Farm-Housing Survey (5), the average size of a Kansas home was 5.9 rooms. In a few instances families were financially able to install modern plumbing in kitchen, bathrooms and washrooms so that information only is necessary to encourage them to make such improvement. Previous surveys cited found that homemakers were decidedly in favor of a room set aside for the business of the farm with sufficient equipment to keep farm and home accounts. Since many homes indicated that they had unused bedrooms, the possibility of converting these rooms into offices should be considered.

Table 5. Total rooms of the houses.

	Number	: Average per house
Hallway	164	0.57
Living room	271	0.93
Dining room	215	0.74
Living and dining room	14	0.04
Bedrooms	866	2.98
Kitchen	274	0.94
Kitchen and dining room	17	0.06
Breakfast nook	23	0.08
Closets of all kinds	766	2.64
Bathroom (modern)	77	0.27
Bathroom (not modern)	51	0.18
Washroom	65	0.22
Storeroom	136	0.47
Finished basement	104	0.36
Attic	98	0.34
Miscellaneous rooms	22	0.08

Silent reading was the form of family recreation in 85.86 percent of the homes, as indicated in Table 6. Newspapers and magazines were most popular. Radio programs rated second, followed in importance by handicraft, indoor games and cards. Indoor games for family entertainment included mostly checkers, Chinese checkers, dominos, anagrams, ping pong, and crossword puzzles. Outdoor games most frequently included croquet, horseshoes, ball, and ice skating. Handicrafts were similar in many homes in that embroidery, rug making, crocheting, and knitting were most common. The greatest variety was found in the hobbies pursued by family members; these included scrapbook making, stamp collecting, music, flowers, and collecting of various articles such as glassware, dishes, and art prints. A house must be more than a center for group living; it must furnish opportunity for each individual within the group to develop and express his own ideas. Therefore, any home furnishings program should include information on storage for books, magazines, and other reading material so that they are easily accessible. Also there should be suggestions for a work center and adequate storage space to encourage participation in hobbies and handicraft. Further, in order to encourage

family comradeship and recreation, the equipment for indoor and outdoor games should be easily accessible through convenient and systematic storage space provided for it.

Table 6. Family recreation.

	Number	: Percent
Reading silently	249	85.86
Radio programs	230	79.31
Handicraft	220	75.86
Indoor games	186	64.14
Cards	168	57.93
Reading aloud	107	36.90
Hobbies	101	34.83
Outdoor games	88	30.34
Family singing	79	27.24
None	1	0.34
Others	27	9.31

The most popular recreation provided for the guests as indicated in Table 7 was the serving of meals by 87.59 percent of the families. This was followed in importance by conversation, cards, radio, and indoor games. This

would indicate that arrangement should be made for facilitating the serving of meals in the kitchen, dining room, and living room. The furniture should be arranged conveniently for conversation. Again, the need for convenient storage of recreational equipment is evident.

Table 7. Recreation for guests.

	Number	: Percent
Serve meals	254	87.59
Conversation	248	85.52
Cards	176	60.69
Radio	164	56.55
Indoor games	132	45.52
Outdoor games	102	35.17
Dancing	23	7.93
Others	27	9.31

The dining table is the favored study center for the children (Table 8), this center being used in 42 percent of the homes. The library table and kitchen table were next in importance. Still less important was the use of the child's own desk or the family business desk. This indicates that many children are studying at tables which are

not of the correct height and therefore are conducive to poor posture. Plans are needed for inexpensive tables built especially for the child, adjustable to his changing height through the growing years. To encourage the habit of orderliness, storage space for school supplies should also be planned for.

Table 8. Study centers for children.

	Number	: Percent
Dining table	122	42.07
Library table	43	14.83
Kitchen table	41	14.14
Own desk	28	9.66
Family business desk	24	8.28
Other	25	8.62

The high percentage of families reporting that their furniture was arranged for family use (Table 9) indicated that this question was probably not clearly understood. When personal visits were made to 27 homes, it was found that every home needed rearrangement of furniture into groupings for family use. Neal (3) reported that one of

the important needs for improving the comfort of homes was the rearrangement of furniture. These figures together with the frequent requests for information on furniture arrangement (Table 39) indicated a misinterpretation of the question.

Table 9. Furniture arranged for family use.

	Number	: Percent
Yes	225	77.59
No	15	5.17
Not reported	50	17.24

Almost one-half or 49.31 percent of the families indicated that they used their dining room as a living room, meaning that the evenings and Sundays were spent in the dining room (Table 10). In most instances, this was due to the heating problem; in other cases the reasons given were that the children studied on the dining room table, that there were only enough lamps for one room, that the radio was located in the dining room, or that the dining room was more comfortably arranged. It was observed in the personal visits to the 27 homes that even when heating was

not a problem, the time was not spent in the living room because of inconvenient and unattractive arrangement of furniture. To improve this condition, there is a need for information on arrangement of furniture for family use. In instances where it is not economically possible to improve the heating facilities, emphasis should be placed on making arrangements in the dining room most suited to the needs and living habits of the family, thus resulting in suggestions for both summer and winter arrangements.

Table 10. Dining room used as living room.

	Number	: Percent
Yes	143	49.31
No	102	35.17
Not reporting	45	15.52

Most of the families used the living room every day in the year (Table 11) but the 19.65 percent who reported that they did not give as the principal reason that the living room was too difficult to heat. Other reasons given were that the room was too dark, that there was no outside door, or that the room was used part time for a bedroom or

children's recreation room. Neal (3) reported that 30 percent of the families she interviewed did not use their living room throughout the year. That the living room was used for rest during the day in 68.31 percent of the homes is also shown in Table 11. There is a need for information on the types of upholstery and slip cover materials most practical for lounging and the selection of pillows to be used in these rest centers which will be practical, comfortable, and attractive. In some instances, it may be desirable to add a rest center in the kitchen or den.

Table 11. Uses of the living room.

	Number	: Percent
Living room used throughout the year		
Yes	199	68.62
No	57	19.65
Not reporting	34	11.73
Living room used for rest during the day		
Yes	201	69.31
No	53	18.28
Not reporting	36	12.41

Buying Habits

The homemaker had only a very small amount of money to spend for furnishings; therefore, it would be extremely important to plan for these purchases so that the maximum values would be received. Yet only 8.62 percent of the families had set aside a definite amount of money each year for furniture purchases, while 80.34 percent made no plans whatever (Table 12). Of the seven families who reported a definite amount, the average was \$32. The reason most frequently given for not planning ahead was that incomes were too uncertain.

Table 12. Furniture expenditures budgeted ahead each year.

	Number	: Percent
Yes	25	8.62
No	233	80.34
Not reporting	32	11.04
Average amount budgeted* - \$32.14		
* reported by seven homemakers		

Plans for furniture expenditures were made for three years ahead by 28.97 percent of the families, according to Table 13. Although it is difficult to know what purchases can be made when income is inconsistent, intelligent planning is needed so that spasmodic and wasteful buying can be eliminated. A program encouraging homemakers to plan ahead should educate for quality in purchases to be made and thereby help to eliminate the waste of hasty purchases.

Table 13. Plans for purchases made for three years ahead.

	Number	:	Percent
Yes	84		28.97
No	170		58.62
Not reporting	36		12.41

The median spent for furniture was \$10.36 as recorded in Table 14. This amount was lower than that recorded in the Kansas Home Accounts (2) which was \$13; however, since the number recorded on the check lists was an estimate and that of the home accounts was accurate, the latter number is more reliable. This expenditure range should be considered in any program for home improvement so that recom-

mendations beyond the reach of these income levels may be avoided.

Table 14. Amount spent for furniture.

	Number	:	Percent
\$ 1 - \$ 5	30		10.34
6 - 10	36		12.41
11 - 15	12		4.14
16 - 20	11		3.79
21 - 25	17		5.86
26 - 50	15		5.17
51 - 100	9		3.10
Median - \$10.36			

Construction was the most important buying guide used by homemakers in the selection of furniture, as shown by Table 15. Cost was of second importance, while design and color ranked third and fourth. In spite of this, Neal (3) found that furniture which had been purchased recently was in poorer condition than the older pieces, and that quality needed to be stressed. Color and design need equal stressing so that the family will get satisfaction from a beauti-

ful piece during its entire life.

Table 15. Buying guides.

	First :	Second :	Third :	Checked but : not rated
Construction	32.76	27.24	7.24	13.45
Cost	25.51	24.83	13.45	14.85
Design	15.86	15.86	28.62	7.93
Color	2.09	6.89	20.34	7.59
Salesman says	0	0	0.69	0.69

Local stores were most frequently patronized by homemakers for the purchase of furniture as is indicated by Table 16. Sixty-three percent bought in their home towns while 37.24 percent bought in nearby cities. More than 19.65 percent of the purchases were made from mail order houses in towns which were scattered and small. Since most of the furniture is purchased locally, it is wise to investigate the type of furniture available in each community before teaching consumer buying courses in that locality. Cooperation with the merchant may encourage his stocking whatever the homemakers as consumers are demanding and thereby tend to raise the standard of design and quality.

Table 16. Furniture stores patronized.

	Number	:	Percent
Local stores	183		63.10
Nearby city	108		37.24
Mail order house	57		19.65

The frequency for new purchases in furnishings varied according to the use of the article, as is indicated by Table 17. The median for the purchase of sheets and pillow cases was two years; many homemakers followed the plan of purchasing sheets for one bed each year. Curtains were purchased every three years, and again several homemakers indicated that these purchases were rotated for the different rooms. The fact that the median years for purchase of blankets was every three years, for table linen every four years, and for mattresses every ten years indicates that information is needed concerning these articles especially, so that longer wear may be obtained. According to the Farm and Home Account summary (2), the amount spent annually for house linens and other textiles, including curtains was \$7.21, and for floor covering, \$6.66. There is a need for consumer education information

on articles most frequently purchased and additional information on the buying of the other commodities so that frequent replacement will not be necessary.

The frequency for refinishing the walls, woodwork and floors was spread over a great range of years (Table 18). The median years for the replacement of the wall finish was three years although many homes refinished every two years. Woodwork was refinished every three years and floors received a new finish every two years, although here again, a large percent refinished every year. The necessity for such frequent new finishes indicates that the families are not getting as many years of service from these finishes as they should. Therefore, a program including information on the most durable, beautiful, and economical finishes together with information on how to apply them and care for them would be helpful.

Table 18. Frequency of new finishes (in percent).

	Walls	:	Woodwork	:	Floor
1 year	5.52		5.17		16.20
2 years	20.34		12.06		10.34
3 years	15.52		9.31		6.20
4 years	8.62		5.52		5.52
5 years	12.06		2.41		5.86
6 years	2.09		3.10		1.03
7 years	0.34		0.69		0.69
8 years	2.09		0.34		0.34
9 years	0		0		0
10 years	2.09		3.79		1.72
more than 10 years	0.34		0.69		0.69
Total percent reporting	69.01		43.08		48.59
Median years for new finish:					
walls	3				
woodwork	3				
floor	2				

The median price spent for living and dining room paper as shown by Table 19 was 15 and 14 cents, respectively. Bedroom paper was less with a median price of 12 cents and the price paid for kitchen paper dropped to 10 cents. These prices are indicative of the quality of wall papers used and explains the necessity for frequent renewal. It would be beneficial to emphasize in an adult program the design and color principles as they apply to any price

level paper so that greater satisfaction and a restful background for the home may be derived from even the low priced papers. It would be helpful also to compare costs of various qualities of wall finishes when figured over a period of years.

Table 19. Amount spent per single roll of wallpaper (in percent).

	living room	dining room	bed- room	kitchen
1- 5 cents	0.69	0.34	1.38	2.41
6-10 cents	10.00	10.34	15.86	17.24
11-15 cents	17.93	16.20	16.55	11.03
16-20 cents	9.66	6.89	5.86	2.76
21-25 cents	6.20	5.52	4.83	2.76
26-30 cents	2.41	1.03	1.03	1.38
30-35 cents	5.17	3.45	2.76	1.03
36-40 cents	1.72	1.03	0	0
41-50 cents	1.38	1.03	0.69	0
Total percent reporting	55.16	45.83	48.96	38.61

Median amount spent for wallpaper
per single roll:

living room	15 cents
dining room	14 cents
bedroom	12 cents
kitchen	10 cents

Not much furniture could be nor was purchased with an annual average of \$13, as is shown by Table 20, listing

the purchases made within the last three years. When money will be released by more bountiful crops, there will probably be a decided increase in the amount spent for furniture as it will be necessary to replace worn-out pieces now serving as makeshifts. It will be the alert adult teachers who will educate for wise purchases at that time. In the meantime, the major emphasis of consumer education should be directed toward the essential purchases which are being made frequently, regardless of money available. Much of the furniture purchased was secondhand and case goods so that help in selecting pieces which are well constructed and of good design would be needed by many homemakers. Information on refinishing is needed in homes where secondhand purchases were made and where old furniture on hand is of good enough quality to warrant the time and effort required for refinishing.

Furnishings on Hand

In 1935, personal visits were made by the writer to 27 homes in Ellsworth, Dickinson, and Hatteras counties to analyze the changes most needed. To summarize briefly the conditions in these 27 living rooms: the floors in

Table 20. Furniture purchased in last three years.

	:Number of:		:Percent of :	
	:families :		:purchases :	
	:making	:Number of purchases:	:purchases :	
	:purchases:	new : secondhand	:per family :	
Radio	65	56	9	22
Small table	54	47	7	19
Bed	44	29	15	15
Davenport or studio couch	43	30	13	15
Dining chair	41	30	11	14
Rugs	33	33	0	11
Linoleum	25	24	1	09
Rocker	25	16	9	09
Living room set	25	21	3	08
Mattress	16	15	1	06
Dresser	16	11	5	06
Desk	15	11	4	05
Dining table	15	8	7	05
Piano	12	1	11	04
Overstuffed chair	11	8	3	04
Bedroom set	10	8	2	03
Chairs	21	17	4	07
Occasional chair	9	8	1	03
None	42			

Furnishings on Hand

In 1938, personal visits were made by the writer to 27 homes in Ellsworth, Dickinson, and McPherson counties to analyze the changes most needed. To summarize briefly the conditions in these 27 living rooms: the floors in

seven homes were in good condition, 20 floors needed to be improved, most of them by filling the cracks or by leveling. Many of the floors are either stained or painted in a gaudy orange color. The walls in eight homes were in good condition; 19 needed to be changed because the paper was cracked, water spotted, or dirty. Six homes had woodwork which was in good condition, but in the other 21 homes, it was either chipped or blistered or worn down; the coloring was frequently too yellow or the finish too shiny. Only two homes had curtains which were in good condition, in the other 25 homes they were torn, skimpy, or flimsy. Only five homes had inadequate furniture but all 27 homes needed to have the furniture rearranged.

The tables which follow give more recent findings which will aid in planning an effective adult program.

Wallpaper was the wall finish in 70 percent of the living rooms, in 57.93 percent of the dining rooms, in 72.07 percent of the bedrooms, and in 52.76 percent of the kitchens (Table 21). Paint was more important in the kitchen than any other room. Calcimine was used in only a very few homes and most often in the bedroom. One home reported its walls as unfinished. Since wallpaper was the finish most frequently used, the major emphasis is needed

on color, design, and textures in the selection of papers that will be durable and pleasing. Homemakers should know how to mix paints to obtain soft effects on the painted walls. In many instances where the income level is low or when homes are rented, calcimine is the most economical and satisfactory wall finish. For intelligence in selection, the comparative values of the various finishes and the cost over a period of years should be considered.

Table 21. Wall finishes in the home (in percent).

	living room	dining room	bed- room	kitchen
Wallpaper	70.00	57.93	72.07	52.76
Paint	16.20	16.55	17.59	33.10
Calcimine	2.09	2.09	4.14	3.10
Wall board	0.34	0.69	1.03	0.34
Unfinished	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34
Other	2.09	1.38	2.41	3.79
Total percent reporting	91.06	78.98	97.58	96.43

Both varnish and paint were important as woodwork finishes. According to Table 22, varnish finish was used

most often in the living room, dining room, and bedroom, while the paint finish was used only slightly less. Paint became more important in the kitchen since it was used in 65.17 percent of the homes and only 20.34 percent used varnish. Since so many of the painted woodwork finishes are too yellow or wrong in coloring, and since so many of the varnish finishes are left shiny, there is need for information concerning the mixing of paints to blend with the coloring in the room and concerning the correct finish for varnished surfaces.

Table 22. Woodwork finishes in the home (in percent).

	living room	dining room	bed- room	kitchen
Varnish	49.31	39.66	48.28	20.34
Paint	34.48	31.72	36.90	65.17
Shellac and varnish	5.86	4.83	4.83	4.83
Oil	1.03	0.69	1.03	0.34
Shellac	0.69	1.38	1.03	0.34
Wax only	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34
Other	0.69	0.34	0.34	0.34
Total percent reporting	92.40	78.96	92.75	91.70

Varnish was the most commonly used floor finish for the living room, dining room, and bedroom, with paint a close second, as is shown in Table 23. Other finishes in the order of importance were wax only, shellac and varnish, oil only, floor sealer, and shellac. Several homemakers indicated that they never refinished the floor. It is likely that the low percentage of floor finishes reported under kitchen was due to the fact that a majority of these floors were covered with linoleum. Information is needed on some of the most durable finishes for the floor, suitable colors, and qualities of floor paints, and finishes best suited to the various kinds of wear, together with the correct methods for applying them.

Total percent reporting	78.64	67.26	75.16	50.03
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The patterned rug was found in 47.53 percent of the living rooms and the patterned linoleum was second in importance, being used in 26.57 percent of the homes, as is indicated in Table 24. In the dining room, however, the order was reversed by having 48.22 percent patterned linoleum and 12.73 percent patterned rugs. Throw rugs were used in more than half of the bedrooms. Since rugs are

Table 23. Floor finishes in the home (in percent).

	living room	dining room	bed- room	kitchen
Varnish	36.55	28.28	30.69	8.97
Paint	18.62	15.17	20.69	12.76
Wax only	7.59	7.24	7.24	7.93
Shellac and varnish	4.83	4.48	4.48	1.72
Oil only	4.14	3.45	4.14	6.65
Floor sealer	2.09	2.41	1.38	1.03
Shellac	1.03	2.09	1.72	0.69
Unfinished	0.69	0.69	1.72	1.72
Other	3.10	3.45	3.10	8.62
Total percent reporting	78.64	67.26	75.16	50.09

The patterned rug was found in 47.59 percent of the living rooms and the patterned linoleum was second in importance, being used in 25.67 percent of the homes, as is indicated in Table 24. In the dining room, however, the order was reversed by having 48.28 percent patterned linoleums and 12.76 percent patterned rugs. Throw rugs were used in more than half of the bedrooms. Since rugs are

purchased only after long intervals, special emphasis should be placed on color and design as well as quality so that the rugs will contribute to a restful, pleasing background. Information on the buying of linoleums so that longer wear may be realized would be beneficial. Points to consider in selecting or making throw rugs for the bedrooms which will be safe and durable and fit into the plan of the room should also be emphasized.

Table 24. Floor coverings (in percent).

	living room	dining room	bed- room
Printed linoleum	25.17	48.28	20.69
Inlaid linoleum	1.03	3.10	0.69
Patterned rug	47.59	12.76	15.52
Plain rug	8.97	1.72	4.48
Throw rugs	8.28	5.86	52.76
Bare floors	2.09	6.20	17.59
Other	0.34	0.34	0

Most of the windows were curtained with glass curtains and cloth shades (Table 25). Fifty-nine percent of

the homemakers indicated that they had glass curtains alone, and a total of 29.66 percent had either glass curtains and draperies, draperies alone, or draw curtains. Marquisette, lace, and net were the fabrics most often used for glass curtains and most of these were panel curtains. Only three homemakers indicated that they used theatrical gauze, and one used unbleached muslin. Rayon damask was used for drapery material far more often than any other fabric. Cloth shades were used in 55.86 percent of the homes and 22.06 percent had paper shades, but none of the homes reporting had Venetian blinds. Information planned to improve window treatments should include a consideration of wearing quality of various fabrics, suitability to the furnishings of the room, and guidance in the wisest selections for various budget levels.

Table 25. Window curtaining of the living room.

	Number	: Percent
Glass curtains alone	172	59.31
Draperies and glass curtaining	62	21.38
Draperies alone	14	4.83
Draw curtains	10	3.45
Paper shades	64	22.06
Cloth shades	162	55.86
Venetian blinds	0	0

Not all of the 290 families reported, as requested for Table 26, the pieces of furniture in their living room. In those homes reporting, the living room set commonly was composed of two pieces. The most common pieces were the davenport, studio couch, or day bed, the rockers, the piano, the library table, the magazine rack and the radio. It is interesting to note that the rocker was still an important piece of furniture in the home. Small tables, and especially coffee tables, were lacking in many homes which indicates that not much emphasis has been placed on the grouping of furniture into units. Wilson (6) reports in the Housing Requirements that homemakers considered the davenport or couch the most important large piece of furniture and the writing desk and piano were considered as essentials. Arrangement of furniture should therefore center around these articles. Neal (3) reported that Victorian and Mission furnishings were the styles most frequently found. A few families had beautiful antiques, which could be used as the center of interest in the arrangements.

The low prices paid for furnishings are indicative of the quality and the years of use which can be expected. Davenports purchased for \$53.32 and upholstered chairs for \$17.49 are destined to have short lives. These low prices

may account for the comparatively new furnishings indicated by the median years, since cheap quality makes frequent replacements necessary. The oldest pieces were the piano, library table, and rockers. Other pieces had a median age of ten years or less. Neal (3) reported that furniture purchased in recent years tended to be in poorer condition than the old pieces. With the small amounts available for furniture, decisions will need to be made as to which pieces are essential to family living and how the best values may be selected on any given budget.

Most pieces of living room furniture were purchased new. The piano was the exception; 69 being purchased secondhand compared with 37 purchased new. Several pieces of furniture were handmade, the most frequent being the footstool, magazine racks, and bookcases.

Table 26. Living room furniture.

	: Number of : : families : : reporting :	: pieces per : : family :	Median		: Condition when received : : new :secondhand:handmade: : : number :		
			price	age			
Living room set	57	2	92.49	6	44	6	-
Davenport	128	1	53.32	10	60	29	1
Day bed or studio couch	63	1	12.85	6	29	18	1
Upholstered chair	105	1	17.49	9	40	25	-
Rocker	202	2	9.13	13	115	60	-
Straight chair	142	3	3.05	10	69	40	1
Footstool	94	1	1.62	6	45	9	17
Piano or organ	136	1	102.49	18	37	69	-
Library table	123	1	9.32	16	60	30	5
End table	99	1	3.96	5	71	6	2
Coffee table	11	1	4.99	2	8	1	-
Magazine rack	129	1	1.96	5	65	9	21
Desk	60	1	14.28	10	23	16	2
Bookcase	84	1	6.74	10	34	13	16
Radio	133	1	37.06	3	87	23	1
Other	75	1	11.87	12	20	13	3

More families had purchased tables and chairs separately than in sets, according to Table 27. Not all homemakers who checked tables gave any account to the chairs. Those who indicated the chairs had a median number of six in the dining room. The fact that so many easy chairs, rockers, and radios were found in the dining room indicates that much of the living is done in this room. Other pieces of furniture found in the dining room included flower stands, service wagons, sewing machines, magazine racks, and bookcases.

The prices paid for dining room furniture was low. The median price for a living room set was \$71.33; for the table, \$10.26; and for the buffet, \$14.90. The oldest pieces of furniture were the table, chairs, buffet, chest of drawers, china closet, and rockers. Furniture in the dining room was older than either living or bedroom furniture.

Only a few more pieces were purchased new than secondhand. Most dining room sets were purchased new, but more tables were purchased secondhand. Not many of the pieces of dining room furniture were handmade, the most frequent of these being the china closet and desk.

Table 27. Dining room furniture.

	:Number of:		Median		: Condition when received :		
	:families	:pieces per:	: price	: age	: new	:secondhand:	:handmade:
	:reporting:	:family			number		
Dining room set	77	-	71.33	10.0	56	11	-
Table	196	1	10.26	17.5	51	57	-
Chairs	169	6	2.08	13.5	60	38	-
Buffet	85	1	14.90	15.5	22	20	2
Chest of drawers	17	1	5.10	15.5	3	7	2
China closet	55	1	5.56	13.5	27	18	7
Day bed	46	1	8.40	10.0	24	10	-
Rocker	90	1	3.90	13.5	34	25	-
Easy chair	27	1	17.40	10.0	11	5	-
Radio	62	1	36.98	3.0	39	9	1
Desk	32	1	13.65	6.0	10	10	4
Other	80	1	43.65	10.0	30	21	6

Bedroom furniture purchased in sets usually consisted of three pieces, as shown by Table 28. Dressers were used more frequently than vanity dressers, and a chest of drawers was found in about one-third of the bedrooms. Less than half of the rooms had a straight chair. Only 30 bedside tables were reported for 278 beds. Other pieces of furniture found in the bedroom were the wash stand, sewing machine, baby bed, trunk, and stool.

Prices paid for bedroom furniture were higher comparatively than those paid for living room furniture. This may partially account for the higher median age for the bedroom pieces. The oldest articles reported were the bed, chest of drawers, dressers, chair, and cedar chest.

More of the furniture for the bedroom was purchased secondhand than for the living room; the dresser, chairs, and many of the chests of drawers and beds were purchased secondhand. The cedar chest was most often listed as handmade. With the limited budgets available for furnishings, the bedroom would be the logical room in which the use of handmade furniture could be encouraged. Therefore, designs for easily made beds, bedside tables, wardrobes, would release more money for better quality living and dining room furniture.

Table 28. Bedroom furniture.

	:Number of:		Median		Condition when received :		
	:families	:pieces per:			: new	:secondhand:	:handmade:
	:reporting:family		: price	: age	: number		
Bedroom set	63	3	78.80	8.5	53	5	-
Bed	215	1	21.13	13.5	99	54	-
Bedside table	30	1	2.30	7.0	5	6	4
Chest of drawers	91	1	12.30	19.5	22	20	3
Dresser	159	1	13.77	19.5	47	60	1
Vanity dresser	60	1	18.00	8.0	11	7	-
Chair	115	1	2.95	13.5	21	29	-
Cedar chest	74	1	17.07	13.5	37	11	7
Wardrobe	43	1	15.20	10.5	18	10	4
Desk	12	1	11.33	10.5	4	6	2
Other	26	1	6.00	11.5	7	6	5

Kerosene lamps were in the majority, according to the data recorded in Table 29, and power line electricity ranked second in importance. Natural gas was found in seven homes whereas only one home each had bottled gas or acetylene. "Other lamps" was interpreted to mean ceiling lights by some reporting and therefore the data in this column are inaccurate. Statistics as of January 1, 1940, found by the Rural Electrification Survey, indicated that 13.2 percent of the rural homes were electrified. With the steady increase in the number of homes having electricity, information is needed by the homemaker on the selection of lamps. For any type of light, information on the amount of light needed for health and economy is necessary.

Table 29. Lighting.

	Number of		
	table lamps:	floor lamps:	other lights:
Kerosene	254	25	59
Electricity (city)	129	84	85
Aladdin	73	20	18
Gasoline	71	10	14
Electricity (home plant)	60	51	159
Natural gas	7	4	40
Bottled gas	1	-	-
Acetylene	1	1	1
Other	4 Rayo	-	-

Calendars were used as pictures in the homes of 73 percent of the families reporting (Table 30). Approximately one-half of these were left unframed. Hand painted pictures were second in importance, usually made by relatives or children or as the hobby of the homemaker. The prints found in the homes included many of the common reproductions, such as, "The Lord's Supper", "The Good Shepherd", "Age of Innocence", and many scenery pictures. Photographs, mottos, and magazine pictures were next in importance. Other pictures found in the rooms included mirror silhouettes, wood pictures, diplomas, certificates, and embroideries. Pictures enrich the cultural atmosphere of the home and satisfy the aesthetic nature of the individuals in the home. Discussion on appreciation of art would provide a satisfaction more durable than that given by material possessions. Suggestion on inexpensive framing of good illustrations clipped from inexpensive sources will aid in satisfying the desire for beauty.

Table 30. Pictures in the home (in percent).

	Calendar:	Hand painted:	Prints:	Photographs:	Mottos:	Magazine:	Other :
One	20.69	21.38	9.31	11.03	15.86	5.17	5.86
Two	20.00	9.66	7.24	11.72	10.69	6.20	3.79
Three	14.14	6.65	7.93	9.66	2.09	2.41	3.45
Four	7.93	4.48	5.86	5.17	1.38	1.03	2.76
Five	3.45	0.69	3.79	1.03	0.69	0.34	1.38
Six	3.45	0.69	4.14	1.38	0.34	0.34	1.38
Seven to ten	-	2.76	6.65	1.38	-	0.69	1.72
Eleven or more	-	0.69	1.38	0.69	-	-	0.34
Checked but no number given	3.45	2.76	2.09	2.09	3.10	1.38	1.38
Total families reporting	73.11	49.76	48.39	44.15	34.15	17.56	22.06

Clocks were the most frequently used accessories in the home, having a percentage of 70.33 percent as shown by Table 31. These were of a variety of styles, such as alarm clocks, banjo, mantle, grandfather's, electric, and an assortment of wall clocks. Mirrors were second in importance, and included buffet, living room, full length, antique, and small mirrors placed over end tables. Sofa pillows were used in 63 percent of the homes, a number which corresponded closely to the 69 percent of families using the living room for rest during the day. Most of the scarves listed were of white and ecru linen, of crushed velvet, or embroidered designs. The wall hangings described were of tapestry, velvet, embroidered or crayon designs. Other articles listed included book ends, candlesticks, boxes, birds, fish, thermometers, and ships. Among the heirlooms were such objects as glassware, dishes, books, homespuns, and pieces of antique furniture. To solve some of the problems presented here, information is needed to emphasize making the most of the accessories on hand by placing them to an advantage; to provide storage and display space for books, plants, vases, sculpture, and similar articles; to guide in the making of some of these articles such as sofa pillows and wall hangings so that

they will have good art quality; to encourage the use of seldom used inexpensive accessories, such as screens and wall hangings; to find materials provided by nature as a substitute for crepe paper flowers.

Table 31. Accessories in the home (in percent).

	:Clocks:	:Sofa :Mirrors:	:pillows:	:Vases	:Potted: :plants:	:Books	:Scarves:	:Whatnot: :shelves:	:Family :heirlooms:	:Artificial: :flowers	:Wall :hangings:	:Flowers and: :grasses	:Sculpture:	:Screens:	:Others :
One	39.66	27.93	3.45	9.31	5.52	2.41	1.03	25.51	6.65	10.00	9.66	7.59	5.17	2.41	2.76
Two	16.89	13.10	8.62	14.14	7.59	1.72	5.17	8.97	5.52	2.41	1.72	1.38	2.41	-	3.79
Three	3.79	7.24	15.17	10.34	3.10	0.69	3.45	2.09	2.09	0.34	1.03	0.34	0.69	-	-
Four	0.34	3.45	9.31	5.17	3.79	1.03	1.72	1.38	0.69	-	-	1.03	0.34	-	0.34
Five	0.34	1.38	3.45	4.83	3.79	0.34	2.09	-	-	-	-	0.34	-	-	-
Six	0.69	1.38	6.65	3.79	4.14	0.34	5.86	-	-	-	0.34	-	0.69	-	0.69
Seven to ten	-	2.09	4.14	2.76	4.83	1.72	7.59	-	-	-	0.34	0.69	-	-	0.34
11 - 20	-	-	1.72	1.03	9.31	5.17	6.20	-	-	-	-	0.34	0.34	-	-
21 - 50	-	-	-	-	2.41	7.24	0.34	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
51 - 100	-	-	-	-	0.34	4.48	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
100 or more	-	-	-	-	-	4.14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Checked but no number given	8.62	6.89	10.34	8.62	14.83	28.28	15.17	4.48	7.93	4.48	2.76	2.41	1.03	-	1.38
Total percent of families reporting	70.33	63.46	62.85	59.99	59.65	57.56	48.62	42.43	22.88	17.23	15.85	14.12	10.67	2.41	9.30

The most unsatisfactory piece of furniture in the house was the davenport or couch (Table 32). It was frequently not used at all, often because the leather upholstery stuck to clothing during hot weather or it was cold during the winter. The day bed was uncomfortable and ugly. Tables were uncomfortable because they were too small or the legs were spaced inconveniently. Many beds were not used at all and most unsatisfactory chairs were either not durable or not suited to the rest of the furniture. Never using a piece of furniture was the most frequent cause for dissatisfaction, or the furniture was uncomfortable or not suited to the rest of the furniture. Several homemakers made the notation that since they could not afford any changes, they might as well be satisfied with the furnishings they had.

Table 32. Unsatisfactory furniture.

	:Never :use it:	:Too hard to: care for	:Uncom- :fortable:	:Not :durable:	:Not suited: :to rest of: furniture	:Ugly:	Total :
Couch or davenport	6	1	11	-	3	3	24
Upholstered chair	1	2	1	-	2	1	7
Living room set	-	2	1	1	1	-	5
Day bed	1	2	6	1	2	3	15
Table	3	2	4	-	3	2	14
Bed	6	-	1	3	2	1	13
Chair	1	1	2	3	4	2	13
Rocker	3	-	5	1	1	1	11
Library table	2	1	-	-	5	2	10
Desk	1	-	-	1	1	3	6
Buffet	-	-	-	-	2	2	4
Phonograph	2	-	-	-	1	1	4
Rug	-	1	-	1	1	-	3
Bookcase	-	1	-	-	-	1	2
China cabinet	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Magazine rack	1	-	-	1	-	-	2
Dining room set	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Radio	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total checks	41	15	31	13	31	24	

The effective use of color for creating interesting and stimulating homes was one of the greatest needs of the homemaker. The five most important colors (Table 33) are tan, cream, brown, green, and grey all of which form a very drab, monotonous atmosphere. Checking through the list in the columns, the indications are that the walls were ivory, the woodwork tan, the floor tan (oak), the rug may have been brown, grey or tan, the curtains were ivory, the davenport was brown, the chairs brown or tan, and the accessories a green or brown. Adults either seem to be afraid to use color or have never known anything but the use of neutrals. Color is the magic which saves the most inexpensive home from monotony. Because it is least understood, the adult program needs to give special emphasis to this subject.

Table 33. Colors predominating in the living room (in percent).

	: Wall	: Woodwork	: Floor	: Rug	: Curtains	: Davenport	: Chairs	: Accessories	: Number of times checked
Tan or oak	27.59	38.62	44.48	13.45	5.17	5.17	17.59	3.79	4.52
Cream or ivory	39.66	16.55	1.38	2.76	49.66	0.34	0.69	1.38	3.26
Brown	0.34	11.72	15.52	15.86	0.69	15.17	14.48	6.65	1.94
Green	3.10	0.34	-	4.48	-	6.20	7.59	6.65	0.90
Grey	2.41	2.41	1.03	13.10	-	6.65	4.83	0.69	0.90
Blue	3.10	0.34	1.03	6.89	2.41	4.14	5.17	7.59	0.89
Rust	0.69	-	-	3.79	2.41	6.65	6.89	2.76	0.67
White	2.41	6.65	-	-	3.10	-	-	1.38	0.49
Red or dubonnet	-	-	0.34	1.72	1.38	3.45	2.76	4.14	0.40
Rose	1.72	-	-	2.41	0.69	2.41	2.41	1.72	0.33
Violet	-	-	-	1.38	0.69	3.10	2.76	1.03	0.26
Yellow	1.38	0.34	-	0.34	1.72	-	-	3.79	0.22
Black	-	-	-	0.69	-	1.38	0.34	0.69	0.09
Orange	-	-	-	0.34	0.34	-	1.03	-	0.05

The colors in the bedroom changed only slightly from those found in the living room. According to Table 34, the most important bedroom colors were tan, white, ivory, pink, blue, and brown. Checking through the list of highest percentages, the bedrooms probably had a cream or ivory wall, tan woodwork, tan (oak) floors, tan or blue rug, white, ivory, or pink curtains, brown or oak furniture, white dresser scarf, and pink accessories. Much information is needed to get color combinations more unusual than pink and blue. Interest in the bedroom should be stressed through an attractive color combination which will include more vitality than white dresser scarves and pink rayon bedspreads.

Table 34. Colors predominating in the bedroom (in percent).

		:Wood-:			:Furni-:	:Dresser:		:Number of	:
	: Wall	:work	: Floor	: Rug	:Curtains:	:ture	:scarf	:Accessories:	:times checked:
Tan or oak	14.14	75.86	95.17	17.93	4.48	37.24	1.38	1.03	7.31
White	20.00	12.41	-	-	36.90	3.10	61.72	4.14	4.01
Ivory or cream	35.17	30.69	1.38	2.09	33.79	13.45	15.52	1.72	3.86
Pink	19.31	0.69	-	7.24	23.79	0.69	7.59	12.41	2.08
Blue	24.48	2.09	1.38	14.14	5.86	1.38	2.09	7.93	1.72
Brown	-	5.86	3.45	1.03	-	41.03	0.34	0.69	1.52
Green	8.97	2.09	-	5.86	4.14	3.79	3.10	6.89	1.01
Yellow	8.97	1.03	-	1.72	3.79	1.03	1.72	7.59	0.75
Violet	4.83	0.34	-	0.34	5.17	0.34	1.72	3.10	0.46
Grey	3.45	3.45	2.41	5.86	-	0.34	-	0.34	0.46
Peach	2.76	0.34	-	-	3.79	0.34	0.69	1.38	0.27
Red or dubonnet	2.76	2.76	-	2.09	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.26
Orange	1.72	-	0.34	0.34	-	-	-	0.34	0.08
Rust	-	-	-	1.03	0.34	-	-	0.34	0.05
Black	-	-	-	1.03	-	0.34	-	0.34	0.05

Home Furnishings Information

The homemakers' most important source for decorating ideas was from the Farm Bureau (Table 35), even though only about half of the families reporting were members. Magazines were second in importance. The importance of other sources dropped considerably in percentage rating, placing friends' homes, mail order catalogs, and local stores next in importance. Knowing sources of information used by homemakers give an opportunity to correlate any program as much as possible with the ideas made available by these various sources.



Table 35. Sources for decorating ideas (in percent).

	: First	: Second	: Third	: Fourth	:Checked but no : :rating given :
Farm Bureau	28.97	11.03	8.28	4.14	15.17
Magazines	23.45	22.06	10.34	4.83	16.55
Friends' homes	5.52	14.14	19.65	11.72	12.76
Mail order catalogs	2.76	5.17	9.31	10.00	5.17
Local stores	2.09	5.17	2.76	7.59	6.65
Newspapers	1.72	5.17	5.17	5.52	7.59
City stores	1.03	5.52	5.86	7.24	3.79
Others	1.38	0.34	-	0.34	3.79

Since magazines were an important source for decorating ideas, Table 36 was planned to show the magazines most frequently used. The five top ranking magazines were the Country Gentleman, Better Homes and Gardens, Good Housekeeping, Ladies' Home Journal, and McCall's. Magazines grouped under the heading of "others" included those checked less than 10 times, such as the Farm and Home, Farm Journal, and Country Home, and miscellaneous small magazines. By knowing the kind of reference material available in the homes, it is easier to know the type of ideas and suggestions the homemakers have already received and aids in suggesting illustrative material and references for an adult program.

Table 36. Magazines used for information.

	:Number of :times checked:	Percent	:
Country Gentleman	85	29.31	
Better Homes and Gardens	73	25.17	
Good Housekeeping	58	20.00	
Ladies' Home Journal	56	19.13	
McCall's	52	17.93	
Woman's Home Companion	49	16.89	
Farmer's Wife	48	16.55	
American Home	41	14.14	
Household	40	13.79	
Capper's Farmer	40	13.79	
Successful Farming	27	9.31	
Woman's World	10	3.45	
Others	57	19.65	

More than half of the families indicated that the greatest need for additional storage space was for the storage of bedding, according to the findings in Table 37. Storage for clothing was needed by 42.76 percent of the families and many indicated a need for a place to put their dishes and glassware, bed linens, toys and recreational equipment. In many homes, extra space can be added without adding more square feet of floor space; in other homes there will be a necessity for additional space. Since adequate storage space contributes to a restful home atmosphere and encourages habits of orderliness, this need should be met by any adult program. Suggestions for arrangements in the closet, for the building of additional space, and for movable storage facilities to be added by families who rent is needed for these rural homes.

Table 37. Storage space needed.

	Number	:	Percent
Bedding	162		55.86
Clothing	124		42.76
Dishes and glassware	90		31.03
Bed linens	81		27.93
Toys and recreational equipment	67		23.10
Table linens	52		17.93
Suitcases and luggage	42		14.48
Silverware	18		6.20
Miscellaneous	60		20.69

The pieces of new furniture most needed by the families were reported in Table 38. A linoleum or rug was the article most frequently checked. Chairs, studio couch or davenport, mattresses, and rocking chairs were the other pieces most frequently checked. It was interesting to note that the rocking chair was important in the list of furniture recently purchased and remains important in the list of furnishings most needed. Since it is logical that the first articles to be purchased by rural homemakers will be the pieces indicated, information which will be helpful in making wise purchases of these articles would be timely.

The fact that many homemakers still consider "sets" of furniture as the solution to all decorating problems gives opportunity to educate for more character in rooms by combining separate pieces correctly and at the same time distributing financial expense over a period of years.

Table 38. New furniture needed.

	Number of families	:	Percent
Linoleum or rug	49		16.89
Chair	34		11.72
Studio couch or divan	29		10.00
Mattress	28		9.66
Rocking chair	27		9.31
Bed	24		8.28
Living room set	23		7.93
Dresser	22		7.59
Chest of drawers	19		6.65
Bedroom set	17		5.86
Easy chair	17		5.86
Dining room set	15		5.17
Desk	13		4.48
Other pieces	47		16.20

Although the requests for information from homemakers are not always adequate for discovering the needs of a group, they furnish the best indication for the type of information desired. Color and Furniture Arrangement were the two subjects most often checked as ranking first in importance (Table 39). These requests seemed sufficiently justified when we referred to previous tables (33, 34) which showed the total lack of knowledge of how to use color, and which indicated that furniture arrangement was one of the least expensive yet most needed improvements. It is interesting to note that although the rug was the most needed piece of furnishings, not one considered information on this subject first in importance. Although textiles ranked last in importance, the reason may be that individuals do not ask for information on something they know nothing about. There are so many inexpensive changes which can be made with fabrics, that the teaching of the decorating possibilities provided by them would be fascinating to the homemakers.

Table 39. Further information desired (in percent).

606

	: First	: Second	: Third	: Fourth	: Fifth	:Checked but: :no rating	:Number of :times checked:
Color	18.28	8.28	7.59	5.52	3.10	13.79	1.64
Furniture arrangement	12.06	6.89	4.83	3.45	1.72	10.00	1.13
Design in furniture	5.17	8.62	6.20	2.76	2.76	9.31	1.01
Accessories	4.83	7.59	4.83	3.79	5.17	12.06	1.11
Wall finishes	4.83	6.65	4.83	1.03	1.38	9.66	0.82
Pictures	2.76	3.45	2.09	3.45	2.41	9.66	0.69
Upholstered furniture selection	2.09	1.38	5.52	3.45	2.09	6.65	0.61
Mattresses and springs	1.72	1.38	2.09	2.76	3.10	7.59	0.54
Case goods selection	1.72	0.69	1.72	3.45	4.14	6.89	0.54
Curtains	1.38	4.83	4.83	5.17	2.41	8.97	0.80
Flower arrangement	0.69	2.09	2.76	3.79	6.20	9.31	0.72
Blankets, sheets, & bedspreads	0.69	0.69	1.72	3.45	1.03	4.83	0.36
Textiles	0.34	3.10	1.38	4.83	3.45	8.97	0.64
Rugs	-	4.14	2.09	4.83	3.79	6.20	0.61

SUMMARY

This study of the furnishings in 290 rural homes was made in counties representing the various types of farming areas in Kansas. Ninety-one percent of this number lived on farms and 8.97 percent lived in small towns; 77.93 percent owned their homes. Forty-nine percent of the homemakers were members of Farm Bureau; the 45.52 percent who were not included some clients of the Farm Security Administration. The median for the average family was four members.

A living room or combination living and dining room was found in all but five houses. All homes had a dining area; 74 percent had a separate dining room, and the remaining homes had either a living-dining room or dining room-kitchen combination. There was an average of three bedrooms for each home. Two of the homes reported were basement homes.

The rural family lives much within itself and therefore finds many forms of recreation, the most common of which are reading, radio, handicraft, and indoor games. Social contacts are satisfied by serving meals, conversation, indoor games, and radio. More adequate consideration

needs to be given to these activities in planning a convenient and livable home.

The dining room is used as a living room by 49.31 percent of the families. Improper heating and insufficient light were the reasons given by most homemakers for this practice. These were also the reasons why 68.62 percent of the families did not use their living room every day in the year. Sixty-nine percent of the families used their living rooms for rest during the day.

The money available for furniture purchases is limited to necessities. Eighty percent of the homemakers make no attempt to budget money for purchases, and 59 percent make no plans for purchases which will be needed within three years. Construction was the most important buying guide for furnishings, most of which was purchased from local stores. Medians for frequency of purchases indicate that better quality selections need to be made. Sheets are purchased every two years, curtains and blankets every three years, table linen every five years, and mattresses and rugs every ten years.

That low income levels limit expenditures for furnishings was shown by the small list of purchases made within the last three years. The list was headed by radios, purchased by 65 families; small tables, bed, davenports or

studio couches, and dining room chairs followed in frequency of purchases.

The majority of rural homes are not satisfying in their physical attractiveness. This may be partially due to the limited budgets, but more to the fact that the homemaker, through no fault of her own, lacks originality and knowledge for making ingenious and inexpensive improvements.

Wallpaper was the finish most frequently used on the walls. In the living room, the median price per single roll was 15 cents, for the bedrooms 12 cents, and for the kitchen 10 cents. The woodwork was varnished generally, with paint following closely in importance, except in the kitchen where it became the most common finish.

The floors were usually varnished in the living and dining rooms, while more of the bedroom floors were painted. The homemakers renewed the wall and woodwork finishes at the median of every three years and the floor finishes were renewed every two years.

The common floor covering for the living room is the patterned rug used by 47.59 percent of the homemakers and half as many use the patterned linoleum. In the dining room the order is reversed by having 48.28 percent of the

homes using patterned linoleums and 12.76 percent the patterned rug. Fifty-three percent of the bedrooms used throw rugs.

Glass curtains were used at 59.31 percent of the windows, most of which were of marquisette or lace; and 29.66 percent had draperies of some type, usually of rayon damask. Fifty-six percent of the window shades were cloth and 22.06 percent paper. None of the homes had Venetian blinds.

The furniture as a whole was adequate in quantity, except for small pieces needed to make comfortable units in arrangement. Prices paid for furniture were too low to receive quality in construction. Much of it was purchased secondhand but, in spite of this, the median ages of the pieces were quite low. The pieces now used need to be made more attractive by slip covering or refinishing when these original pieces are good enough to justify the time and effort required. Upholstered furniture, especially the couches and day beds, was reported unsatisfactory most frequently. The most common cause for dissatisfaction of furniture was that the furniture was not used or was uncomfortable. The rocker is still an important piece of furniture in the home; it was found in 202 homes and al-

so was fifth in the list of furniture most needed.

The description of accessories in the home indicated that the possibilities in adding interest to the home through this medium were not realized. Seventy-three percent of the homes used calendar pictures on the wall; half of them were left unframed. Pictures painted by family members and friends were second in importance. The mirrors and clocks, used in large numbers, were ordinary in selection. The hobby of cultivating potted plants made these important accessories. Books, sofa pillows, and vases were also frequently used.

The drab atmosphere in most rural homes may be blamed on the lack of color. The most popular colors for the living room and dining room were tan, cream, brown, green, grey, and blue. In the bedrooms, white and pink were added to the list.

Farm Bureau was listed as the most important source for decorating ideas. Magazines ranked second, the most important of which were the Country Gentleman and Better Homes and Gardens.

It was encouraging to find that the majority of homemakers realize the importance of art principles in planning a home for lasting satisfaction. Information about

color was most frequently requested, followed by that about furniture arrangement, furniture design, wall finishes, and accessory selection.

Adequate storage facilities have always been a problem to the homemakers. A need was expressed for more space for bedding, dishes, linens, and recreational equipment.

The theme statement expressed in personal interviews and echoed in the check lists was "not enough money". Many homemakers felt that new furniture was the solution to their problem. However, this reason is frequently given to compensate for the real reason - a lack of knowledge on how to make the home attractive on any income level. Any educational program must consider the resources available to the homemaker and stimulate her to make ingenious, inexpensive, and attractive improvements which will give the home character and provide a satisfying and stimulating background for family living.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of this study, the following recommendations are made for the Kansas extension program in home furnishings for adults.

1. The program should provide information on the following topics:

- Use of color in all phases of homemaking.
- Selection of wall finishes.
- Selection of woodwork and floor finishes.
- Selection of linoleums and rugs.
- Selection of wood furniture.
- Selection of upholstered furniture.
- Arrangement of furniture.
- Curtaining for windows.
- Selection of slipcover and upholstery material.
- Use of textiles in the home.
- Arrangement and selection of accessories, pictures, and flowers.
- Selection of mattresses and springs.
- Selection of blankets and bedspreads.
- Selection of sheets, pillowcases, and linens.
- Storage for bedding, dishes, clothing, linens, recreational equipment, books, and hobby materials.
- Renovation and repair of furniture and furnishings.
- Designs for home built furniture.

2. The program should develop an appreciation of beauty in the homemaker and help her to translate this into the home.

3. The program should be flexible enough to be

easily adjusted to the resources, incomes, needs, and capacities of the homemakers in the various localities of the state.

4. Those responsible for organizing the program and teaching classes in home furnishings should avail themselves of more firsthand information on the conditions existing in the rural homes, including incomes, material possessions, philosophies and patterns of family living.

5. Home visits should be made frequently by those responsible for organizing adult programs and teaching adult classes in home furnishings in order that more vital and functioning programs can be attained.

6. Illustrative material, including kits of actual samples, portfolios of pictures and charts, and slides showing good practices, should be used freely in teaching home furnishings to adults.

7. Blue prints for homemade furniture should be prepared for pieces which may be easily constructed by amateurs.

8. Handicrafts in home furnishings which express originality of design and color should be encouraged rather than those which follow set patterns.

9. There is need for further study of human values in relation to home furnishings so that ways may be devised of enriching the rural homes through this means. The program should help the rural homemaker realize the significance of home furnishings in attaining a satisfying home.

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APPENDIX

Check List

A study is being made at this college to secure information concerning Kansas rural homes. Will you help me by checking the enclosed blanks?

Please use the suitable answers in the blanks such as: check (), word (yes, no or other term), number (3) or phrase (mirror, round without frame). Whenever you are to indicate in order of importance, place in the blank number one (1) for most important, two (2) for second important, etc. The term "furnishings" includes all furniture and equipment, such as bedding, curtains, and rugs used in rooms other than the kitchen.

After you have checked this list, will you please return the list to your Home Demonstration Agent or your County Agricultural Agent located at the County Farm Bureau Office?

Rachel Martens
Kansas State College, Manhattan

1. Name _____
2. County _____ Post Office Address _____
3. Do you live in the country? _____ or in town? _____
4. Do you own your home? Yes _____ No _____
5. Are you a member of Farm Bureau? Yes ____ No ____ Number of years _____
6. How many members are living in your home?

husband _____
 wife _____
 boys _____ ages _____
 girls _____ ages _____
 others _____ ages _____

Do any of these members live in the home only a part of each year?

7. How many rooms in your house?

Room	:	Number
hallway		_____
living room . . .		_____
dining room . . .		_____
bedrooms		_____
breakfast nook . .		_____
kitchen		_____
closets (of all kinds)		_____
bathroom (modern). .		_____
bathroom (not modern)		_____
washroom		_____
storeroom		_____
finished basement .		_____
attic		_____
others		_____

8. Does your family spend its evenings and Sundays in the dining room? Yes _____ No _____ If so, why? _____
9. Do you use your living room for rest during the day? Yes _____ No _____
10. Do you use your living room throughout the year? Yes _____ No _____ If not, why? _____
11. What type of amusement do you use for family recreation at home?

Recreation						Describe
reading aloud	
reading silently	
family singing	
radio programs	
indoor games	,	
outdoor games	
hobbies	
handicraft	
cards	
none	
other						

12. How do you entertain friends who visit your home?

serve meals _____
 conversation _____
 indoor games (list kind) _____
 outdoor games (list kind) _____
 radio _____
 cards _____
 dancing _____
 other _____

13. Where do the children study?

at the library table _____
 at the dining table _____
 at the kitchen table _____
 at their own desk _____
 at the family business desk _____
 other _____

14. For which of the following do you need more storage space:

clothing _____
 bedding _____
 bed linens _____
 table linens _____
 silverware _____
 dishes and glassware _____
 toys and recreational equipment _____
 suitcases or luggage _____
 miscellaneous _____

15. List the pieces of furniture which you have purchased in the last three years.

Furniture: New :Second-
: :hand

Furniture: New :Second-
: :hand

16. List the additional pieces of furniture which you need most now.

17. How often do you buy the following: (Indicate in terms of years)

Article	:	Approximate time
curtains		
sheets and pillowcases		
bedspreads		
mattresses		
blankets		
table linens		
pictures		
linoleum		
rugs		

18. Do you allow a certain portion of your income for furnishings at the beginning of each year? Yes _____
No _____ Approximately how much? _____
19. Approximately how much do you spend each year for home furnishings in rooms other than the kitchen? _____

20. Do you now have a plan for purchases you wish to make within the next three years? Yes _____ No _____

21. When buying furniture are you most influenced by:
(indicate in order of importance 1, 2, 3)

the design and general appearance _____
color _____
cost _____
construction _____
what the salesman says _____

22. Where do you buy your furniture?

locally _____
in a nearby city _____
mail order house _____

23. How often do you refinish the following:

walls _____
woodwork _____
floors _____

24. What is the average amount you spend for wallpaper per single roll?

for living room _____ for bedrooms _____
for dining room _____ for kitchen _____

25. How are your windows curtained in your living room?

	:Describe the kind of material
Curtaining	:used
glass curtains alone	_____
draperies and glass	_____
curtains	_____
draperies alone	_____
draw curtains	_____
shades (paper or	_____
cloth)	_____
Venetian blinds	_____
other:	_____

26. What type of floor covering are you using in the following rooms?

Type	:Living :room	: Dining : room	: : Bedroom
inlaid linoleum			
printed linoleum			
plain rug 8x10 or larger			
patterned rug 8x10 or "			
throw rugs or small rugs			
bare floor			
other:			

27. Check the furniture which you have in your living room giving the approximate cost: (If you bought a set of furniture, put x after the articles included in the set and give the one cost and age.)

Furniture	:Number: :of :pieces:	:Approx- :imate cost: :of each	:Approx- :imate :age	:Bought new :or second- :hand
davenport				
day bed				
upholstered chairs				
rockers				
straight chairs .				
foot stool . . .				
piano				
library table . .				
end tables . . .				
coffee table . .				
magazine rack . .				
desk				
bookcase				
radio				
other:				

28. Check the furniture in your dining room: (If you bought a set of furniture, put x after the articles included in the set and give one cost and age.)

Furniture	:Number: :of :pieces:	:Approx- :imate cost: :of each	:Approx- :imate :age	:Bought new :or second- :hand
table				
chairs				
buffet				
chest of drawers				
china closet . .				
day bed				
rocker				
easy chair . . .				
radio				
desk				
other:				

29. Check the furniture in one of your bedrooms: (If you bought a set of furniture, put x after the articles in the set and give one cost and age.)

Furniture	:Number: :of :pieces:	:Approx- :imate cost: :of each	:Approx- :imate :age	:Bought new :or second- :hand
beds				
bedside table .				
chest of drawers				
dresser				
vanity dresser .				
chair				
cedar chest . .				
wardrobe				
desk				
other:				

30. What kind of lights are you using?

Type	Number of lamps	Directoor	indirect	lighting
	floor:table:other:			
kerosene straight burner.				
Aladdin				
gasoline				
bottled gas				
acetylene gas				
natural gas				
electric (city or high-line)				
electric (home plant)				
No. of volts _____				
other: _____				

31. What kind of pictures are you using on the walls of your home?

Kind	Number	Framed	Unframed	Describe briefly
calendar				
magazine				
mottos or verses				
photographs				
prints (etchings, reproductions, etc.)				
hand painted				
other: _____				

32. What other accessories are you using in your home?

Accessory	Number	Brief description
vases		
artificial flowers		
flowers, branches, grasses, etc.		
potted plants		
books		
clock		
family heirlooms		
mirror		
scarves for furniture		

32. (cont.)

Accessory	:Number:	Brief description	:
screen			
small sculpture . . .			
sofa pillows			
wall hanging			
what-not shelves . . .			
others:			

33. Check the wall finish you have in the following rooms:

	:Living room:Dining room:Bedroom:Kitchen
paint	
wallpaper . . .	
calcimine . . .	
wall board . . .	
other:	

34. Check the woodwork finish in the following rooms:

	:Living room:Dining room:Bedroom:Kitchen
oil	
wax only . . .	
shellac . . .	
varnish . . .	
shellac and varnish . . .	
paint	
other:	

35. Check the finish used on your floor.

	:Living room:Dining room:Bedroom:Kitchen
oil only . . .	
wax only . . .	
shellac . . .	
varnish . . .	
shellac and varnish . . .	
floor sealer	
paint	
other:	

36. Where do you get new ideas for improving your home?
(List in order of importance 1, 2, 3, 4)

newspapers _____	magazines _____
local stores _____	city stores _____
mail order catalogs _____	friends' homes _____
Farm Bureau _____	other _____

37. List in order of importance the names of magazines from which you gather most suggestions for home furnishings:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

38. Name the colors which predominate in your living room:

walls	_____
woodwork	_____
floor	_____
rug	_____
curtains	_____
davenport	_____
chairs	_____
accessories	_____
other	_____

39. What colors predominate in your bedroom?

Bed-:	_____	Wood-:	_____	Furni-:	_____
room:	Walls:	work:	Floor:	Rugs:	Curtains:
				ture	Accessories

- 1st. _____
- 2nd. _____
- 3rd. _____
- 4th. _____

40. Is there a place for every family member in your living room? Yes _____ No _____

41. What pieces of furnishings or equipment do you own which you have found unsatisfactory?

Unsatis-	:		:	Not	:
factory	:		:	suited	:
piece of	:	:Too hard:	Uncom-	:Not	:to rest:
furniture or:	Never	:to care	:fort-	:dur-	:of fur-:
equipment	:use it:	for	:able	:able:	niture :Ugly



42. On what subjects would you like to have more information? (Indicate in order of importance 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

how to use color effectively in my home _____
 how to select furniture of good design _____
 how to arrange my furniture more conveniently _____
 how to select the correct finish for my walls _____
 how to select curtains _____
 how to select rugs _____
 how to buy upholstered furniture _____
 how to buy wood furniture _____
 how to appreciate and select good pictures _____
 how to select and arrange accessories in my home _____
 how to select bedspreads, sheets, blankets _____
 how to buy mattresses and springs _____
 how to use textiles in the home _____
 how to arrange flowers _____
 other _____