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Headlines Challenge Home Economists

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Headlines Challenge Home Economists

Eloise Davison, M.S. '24, director of Home Institute for the New York Herald Tribune, liked "Education—America's Magic" by R. M. Hughes and W. H. Lancelot so well she rewrote her speech to Iowa State home economists to quote it.

ONE OF the most heartening headlines of interest to every home economist . . . is a research study published not by a home economist, but by Iowa State College's President Emeritus Raymond M. Hughes and William H. Lancelot, professor of vocational education. The book "Education—America's Magic" was published by the Iowa State College Press recently. The chapter I refer to particularly is the one called "Education for Women."

"When we consider that 18 of our states containing 73 million of our people were failing to maintain their population in 1940 we recognize that something is wrong.

"Enormous advances have been made in the education of women. They have been offered all that has been prepared for the education of men. Many special courses of particular interest to women have been provided, even courses on marriage. However, all courses that bear on marriage and children have so far been largely incidental, casual, elective.

"A new accent is needed, a far-reaching urgency that two or three children should be in every family and that the wife's first duty is to rear such a family up to manhood and womanhood in such a manner that they will become useful, noble citizens.

"It seems important to the nation that home economics instruction be included in all high schools and colleges and that at least in part it should be required of girls. It seems further that the required courses should include homemaking and child care, definitely pointed toward the home life of the girl and not toward professional employment. Such instruction is essential to a girl's happy and most useful life. It is obligatory on schools to see that she fully understands how greatly all that concerns children concerns her. The schools must train men to serve usefully and earn a family living. They must train women to bear and rear wisely two or three children. All else of culture, of vocational ability, of everything useful or good or beautiful that can be given to youth is greatly to be desired. This is an educational imperative."

Design Courses in Step with Times

Upon the average home rests the responsibility of the decision of every present issue—we should make sure that the courses designed for helping people live in homes successfully are broad gauge enough to keep

pace with new world opportunities. We need cultural education and inter-cultural and inter-racial understanding—we need good general education just as good general education needs good home economics.

Needless to say, all the issues ahead are not crystal clear or simply solved. I'm not sure I can even state the problems correctly, but here are a few of the headlines that challenge all of us.

Just as frustrated children do strange things, so do frustrated nations.

Not enough people are adequately fed here in the richest of all countries or in any other country either.

Not enough people are adequately housed and not enough home economists are doing anything about it.

We've nothing like enough trained leaders ready to take new important jobs. We've failed dismally in training for leadership. Now is the time to begin to do something about it.

Children all over the world during the war years were taught that lying, stealing and deceit were laudable. How will we prepare today's embryonic statesmen to meet this? Homes cannot escape this implication.

In spite of all the years we've worked at our child care problem—one of the major problems the armed forces had to deal with was the large number of boys who broke under the stress and strain of war because they'd been kept too dependent too long on mothers who were too unwilling to relinquish their hold because they couldn't stand the implications of mortality.

Avoid Making Habits an End

We haven't learned to guard against getting lost in the trivia of life. There's no place like home in which the urgencies of the moment can engulf so completely. Granted that it's hard to routinize the processes of living without routinizing our thinking. Still, all too many of us have never learned to make the habits by which we live a means and not an end. When that happens, minds get fogged.

In a world where there is an atomic bomb, we begin to see the futility of getting lost in a labyrinth of anything.

So in the coming years, using as a spring board that core of definite, essential, established knowledge we have at hand—of importance in all homes everywhere, we'll have to build with sensitive hands and hearts, a changing program. This means, it seems to me, adding a leaven of the future in the lump of the past.

I hope that today's home economists can pull out a new bolt of cloth colorful beyond the spectrum with a brighter sheen than any we've known before, and that you can lay your carefully drafted patterns on with all the lines placed accurately—that the material you use, like so much of today's magic material, will never shrink or warp or buckle or get distorted and that every stain or mar will wipe right off.