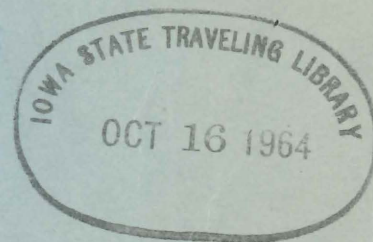


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on
A LOOK AT THE ROLES OF
IOWA WOMEN

at Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa
May 18, 1964



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WOMAN AS A PERSON --

HER SELF FULFILLMENT

1

Mary Ellen Goodman

Professor of Sociology and Anthropology
Rice University, Houston, Texas

Women have always been judged more by what they are than by what they do, more for other personal qualities than for their intelligence; more for their warmth of heart, their vivacity, and their charm than for their worldly success.

2

Women generally do not accept the standards of achievement by which men assess each other. They not only are judged differently than men - they judge themselves differently, and they aspire differently. This is indeed a double standard, supported by women as well as by men. "Emancipation" notwithstanding, women continue to be "different"! They continue to like it that way!

So says Michael Young, a lively British sociologist who has amused himself and his readers with a sketch of society as viewed from the vantage point of the year 2033. Dr. Young seems to be saying, in his sly way, that women always have been and are long likely to continue to be interested in personal qualities rather than in achievements, in being rather than doing. Is he right? What is the female of the species really like?

¹ Prepared for presentation May 18, 1964, Conference on Roles of Women, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa

² Michael Young, The Rise of the Meritocracy, 1870-2033, Penguin Books, 1963, p. 173

It is our purpose here to consider some evidence concerning the fundamental nature of women. We include fundamentals in which women are not unlike men. Assuming that we know something about her nature and potentialities we can talk more intelligently about self-fulfillment in the female of the species.

Let me anticipate a bit and state here and now my principal conviction about self-fulfillment. I can do so in four words: self-fulfillment is a by-product. By this I mean that it comes as a kind of dividend accompanying a judiciously planned investment of time and energy. It comes this way or, very likely, not at all. If this view is valid then the important questions have to do with the what and how of investing time and energy. Other speakers will discuss the major areas in which women invest their time and energies. Our concern in this discussion is not with the specifics of these major action areas. We are concerned rather with a personal philosophy which can make any kind of activity relevant to self-fulfillment.

The Nature of Woman

An anthropologist can hardly accept Dr. Young's view as a valid statement about the fundamental and inherent nature of woman. Perhaps he does not intend that his generalization apply to women everywhere and at all times. If Dr. Young is talking about women of the western European (including American) societies then I would not argue. But in that case we are not talking about the inherent and unalterable nature of woman; we are talking rather about a particular female type in a particular type of society.

The range and variety of societies and of diversity in living arrange-

ments is quite staggering and sometimes almost unbelievable. Consider, for example, the marriage arrangements common for many centuries in many parts of the world. Polygyny--an arrangement involving plural wives--has on the whole been much more widely practiced than monogamy. Polygyny not only "works" but is regarded by its practitioners as the only sensible arrangement. America's late great anthropologist Ralph Linton, recalling his work on the island of Madagascar, says:

I remember the gentle sympathy which the women of the Sakalava tribe....extended to my wife because she was an only wife.

They recognized that monogamy was a custom handed down to....

(my) people by their ancestors, hence requiring no explanation, but they regarded it only as one more proof of the inherent sadism of Europeans.¹

The customs of these Madagascar people are shared, with minor variations, by many other peoples. Among the Sakalava and many others polygyny does not involve harems, the seclusion of women, or the mistreatment of women. Marital relations are generally equitable with regard to the sexes; their mutual rights and obligations are clearly defined and enforced. Ralph Linton provides dramatic illustration:

The more intimate relations between the husband and his wives are also strictly regulated. The husband abstains from intercourse with any wife for four or five months before a birth, and for six months after. Except for this, he must bestow his favors on each wife in turn and for him to sleep

¹Ralph Linton, "The Case for Polygyny," American Mercury, 1949, pp. 535-541

with one wife on another's day is considered an especially serious form of adultery. Such an offense threatens the sanctity of the home, and the injured wife is entitled to a divorce with heavy alimony. A husband's slip from virtue with a lady to whom he is not married is regarded more leniently, since it does not threaten the family structure.

The wife on whose day it occurred may be twitted by the other wives on her inability to hold the husband, but they regard it as strictly her affair. Her usual procedure is to make things unpleasant enough for him so that he will pay her a moderate indemnity. However, if the husband really becomes involved with another woman, the wives go into action as a body. They will capture the corespondent and force her to marry their husband. This is not a matter of morals; it is based on the idea that if the lady is enjoying their husband's society she should contribute to his upkeep.

To people reared in our own tradition of romantic love and exclusive possession, such marriage arrangements seem like something out of Alice in Wonderland. Nevertheless, there are millions of people who live under very similar arrangements and who seem to be quite as content with them as we are with ours. There can be no question that, under certain conditions, polygyny works and works well. It provides for a society's surplus women, and it offers a way out for the career woman who wants a home and children but finds

taking care of them a heavy burden. At the same time, polygyny will only work under certain conditions. While it solves some problems, it creates a series of new ones.

The first objection which is sure to be raised by any one reared in the tradition of romantic love and exclusive sexual possession is that of jealousy. Given our present culture background, there undoubtedly would be enough sexual jealousy to interfere seriously with the smooth working of the system. However, jealousy based on sex is much less instinctive than psychoanalysts would have us believe. The real foundation of jealousy is ego injury, and what can cause this injury will vary with the value system of the particular society. Sex is only one of many possible causes, but it has been played up as much in our own society as it has been played down in some others.....

The main source of friction in all polygynous families seems to be the wives' struggle for dominance. A preferred sexual position is only one manifestation of this, and not necessarily the most important one. Also, the intensity of the struggle will depend a good deal on what activities the wives have to take their minds off it. Harem women seem to spend most of their time fighting, while unsecluded working women have other and equally satisfying outlets.

Studies of women in still other kinds of societies show very clearly that there are enormous differences in what we regard as the "natural" feminine personality. Margaret Mead's well-known studies of "Sex and

Temperament" may present somewhat over-simplified portraits, but evidence from East Africa and from parts of Mexico supports her general conclusions. There are other societies in which, as among Mead's Tchambuli of New Guinea, women are expected to be "the competent, economically responsible, initiating members...., and men the responsive and compliant ones."¹ Mead of course recognizes the unarguable fact that "human character is built upon a biological base." Customs notwithstanding, men are still physically stronger and women still bear the babies. Nonetheless, the roles and personalities of women are "capable of enormous diversification in terms of social standards."²

Anthropology supports common observations in recognizing a wide range of individual differences in any society. And, as Mead concludes, The regimentation of human personality in terms of age, sex, class, or race standards (is).....always likely to do violence to the actual temperaments of many individuals.³

Self-fulfillment and Self-determination

All these anthropological observations tell us two things we ought to remember while we talk about American women and their self-fulfillment. We ought to remember that the kind of life which will prove self-fulfilling is heavily dependent on the expectations standardized in a given society. Moreover, these expectations are subject to change and, in our own society, they are indeed changing. A second major fact has to do with individual

¹Margaret Mead, From the South Seas, Morrow & Co., N.Y., 1939, p.xxii

²Ibid., p. x

³Ibid., p. xxi

variation: what will prove self-fulfilling for one woman will not serve for another; interests and abilities vary enormously, and so does the capacity for self-determination. Probably no personal quality is so relevant to personal fulfillment as is this capacity for self-determination. We see the extremes of the capacity in those who habitually drift with the social currents as contrasted with those who firmly steer the ship of self, or never stop trying to do so.

Some of our psychologists and social scientists tell us that no human has any real control over his own course. They say that we delude ourselves when we think we have even a degree of freedom to choose our way and to shape our lives. In a book just published the author (an anthropologist) says:

Whatever you are doing at this or any other moment you do because a cultural pattern of behavior has been fed into you like a taped order into a computer.....We are inevitable, and there is nothing we can do about it except appreciate it and enjoy ourselves.¹

The author of this statement is helping to build what has been called "the myth of social determinism." Writing under this title, philosopher Kinstantin Kolenda points out that as we accept the myth we make it true. We become indeed the pawns of circumstance when we resign ourselves to the view that we are. Conversely, through conscious, rational and sustained effort one maximizes the degrees of freedom in his own situation; he - or she - may radically alter that situation in time. Fortunately it

¹John Greenway, The Inevitable Americans, Knopf, N.Y., 1964, p. 40.

goes against the grain, for most Americans, to fold the hands in apathy or to retreat in resignation. Vigor and a sturdy faith in the self are more in keeping with our national ideals. Perhaps this is especially true for men, in whom these qualities are expected and admired. Men are expected to do, to achieve. Women, as Dr. Young says, can usually get acceptance without exerting such efforts to do or to achieve.

An inclination to accept the "myth of social determinism" is understandable but it is also destructive for the individual and for society. "Social determinism" when stripped of formal language and of its flavor of cynicism and sophistry, turns out to mean something very like social irresponsibility. Of our behavioral scientists enthusiastically teaching deterministic theories one is inclined to hope that they may be forgiven, for it seems they know not what they do! The teachers have been all too successful; even our delinquents and criminals now know how to explain away their misbehaviors. They couldn't help it; their course was determined by the errors of their parents and of society in general. They callously exploit and absurdly stretch a theory which easily lends itself to such ends. Not are our social deviants the only ones among us who are affected by determinist extremists. There is some truth in the charge that in many Americans "the philosophy of responsibility has been replaced by the philosophy of excuse."

The readiness to assume responsibility for oneself, the conviction that one should and can act rationally and responsibly, are essential to the kind of living which brings self-fulfillment. The psychologist A. H. Maslow describes what is probably the very epitome of the responsible and self-fulfilling type of person. Maslow calls this the 'self-actualizing'

type. He describes his "self-actualizer" as one who strives toward "the full use and exploitation of (his) talents, capacities, and potentialities" and toward achievement in the areas of his interests. And the self-actualizing person has absorbing and vital, usually multiple interests. Busy and productive, he generally feels and is unanxious, accepted, and respected. He works out his "bearings"--his values and philosophy of life--and he keeps moving ahead as well as he can toward the objectives which seem to him important.

Maslow says that the fully self-actualizing people he has studied, men and women, are notably zestful. They are, that is, enjoying health and living vigorously. They are committed, involved, and concerned; they care about people, about skills and attainments. They care about much that is beyond the self and its strictly personal concerns. Self-fulfillment is unquestionably theirs in high degree, yet they are not self-centered people. Quite the contrary is and probably must be true; self-fulfillment is, as we suggested earlier, a by-product.

Another distinguished psychologist--Erich Fromm--comes to similar conclusions about what makes for satisfaction in life. Note that neither Maslow nor Fromm differentiates along sex lines. Both seem to assume, quite rightly I think, that in our society in these times the circumstances of living allow the individual, woman as well as man, much latitude, much freedom for choice and self-determination. Fromm writes:

We are....not helpless victims of circumstances; we are indeed, able to change and to influence forces inside and outside ourselves and to control, at least to some extent, the conditions which play upon us.... Man...is the only creature endowed with

reason, the only being who is capable of understanding the very forces to which he is subjected and who, by his understanding, can take an active part in his own fate and strengthen those elements which strive for the good.¹

Being active, responsible and self-actualizing can be viewed as a requirement for psychic health and even for truly ethical behavior. Fromm says:

The problem of psychic health and neurosis is inseparably linked up with that of ethics. It may be said that every neurosis represents a moral problem. The failure to achieve maturity and integration of the whole personality is a moral failure in the sense of humanistic ethics.²

Some authorities go further. A psychiatrist writes a book entitled The Myth of Mental Illness. He is in essential agreement with a few others (psychologists and psychiatrists) who now conclude that to talk of "mental illness," or of alcoholism, as "disease," is to talk only in analogies. Psychologist O. H. Mowrer, University of Illinois distinguished research professor, points out that what is involved here is not illness or disease in any true sense, but of malformed character. The "mentally ill" person is not really sick; the problem is rather one of error. He is not sick but wrong.

The point is dramatized by Dr. Philip A. Anderson, Professor of Pastoral Theology at Chicago Theological Seminary, who has provided a

¹Erich Fromm, Man for Himself, p. 233

²Ibid., p. 224

handy guide toward what is customarily labeled "mental illness." In his "Twenty Steps to Trouble" (subtitle: "How to become neurotic, or more neurotic, or--with practice--psychotic), Dr. Anderson recommends, for example:

Take it easy: you've probably been working too hard.....,

Indulge yourself:.....eat too much, drink too much, be 'sick,'

....sleep too much,....get an analyst or minister or friend who will sympathize with you....

Blame others: whatever your predicament, it is somebody else's fault and responsibility.....

Use other people:ride rough-shod over them....Blame, criticize.....

Never be thankful:expressing appreciation is a form of weakness.....

Assume people are out to get you:beat them to the draw.....

Never admit you were wrong:

Don't do anything for anybody else:.....

Nurse your resentments:.....

Postpone everything: only suckers work. Never do today what you can put off until tomorrow. With luck you'll be in a mental hospital by then, and other people will take care of you.

There will likely be a vast amount of controversy as the inheritors of Freud rise to defend their prophet and themselves. We who are not cultists may take a certain satisfaction in hearing, after many long years, words from experts which square with human experience generally and our own particularly.

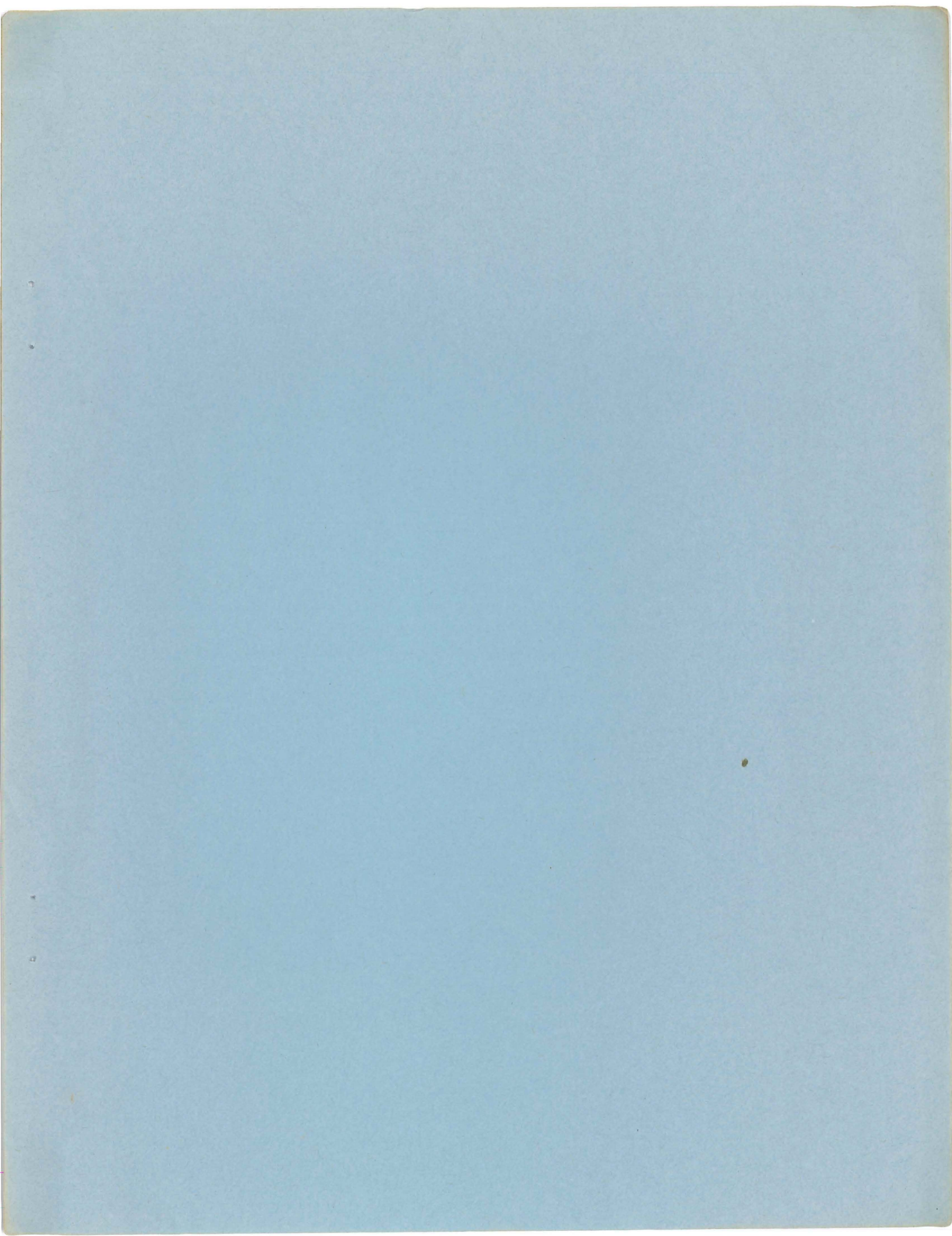
Conclusion

Self-fulfillment is, I believe, a watchless prize within the reach of most of us. However, the best things in life are not free; neither can they be bought. One does not achieve personal satisfaction and the productive life except by sustained effort, supported by full use of the mind and carried out with enthusiasm and even joy. It is necessary that we accept this principle of life, along with the principle that self-determination is possible for most of us, within quite generous limits at any rate.

It is the proudest achievement of our kind of society that it allow freedom, and for women, as well as men. But freedom has two faces: on the one face there are rights and on the other are responsibilities. In our fortunate situation, as women in America today, there can be self-fulfillment. It can be won if we assume responsibilities. It will come to us as a by-product of commitment and involvement, of concern for people and events beyond the self. Whether the concern is primarily with work, with family, or with community, this is a matter for individual choice. But commitment and involvement there must be, and the individual must choose and direct her own course. Dorothy Hopper puts our situation neatly and tersely. She writes:

The woman of the past knew what was expected of her; the woman of today must decide for herself....Life deals us a set of cards, and then says, 'Here, see what you can do with them.' To take an unbalanced or mediocre hand and play it brilliantly--this is what makes the game exciting.¹

¹Dorothy Hopper, "But We Must Cultivate Our Gardens," in American Women: The Changing Image, edited by Beverly B. Cassara, Beacon Press, Boston, 1962, pp. 26 and 27.



WOMAN AS THE EMPLOYED WORKER

Helen R. LeBaron¹

Women have always been a significant economic force in our American society. In the many years that we lived in an agricultural economy, all but a very few in the wealthy upper-class added to the real income of their families by producing goods and services within their own homes. And when we talk about real income we are talking not about money alone but all the income that is useful to the family. Now such a contribution is still possible, but increasing numbers of women are choosing to work outside their homes for pay and to purchase a growing variety of goods and services in the marketplace for their families.

It is difficult to say exactly when this all began. It appears to have been a natural result of the industrial revolution, which made it possible to produce some of these necessities for family living on a mass scale. But it also follows the women's rights movement -- that long fight for recognition of the woman as a person, as someone with voting privileges, someone that should have equal opportunity to be considered worthy of education and so prepared for employment.

In the early years when women worked outside the home, they did things that they had been doing within their family situations all along. For example, they left their hand looms to enter the textile mills. Instead of taking care of their own family members when they became ill, they entered hospitals and other institutions to take care of them in groups.

¹Helen R. LeBaron, Dean, College of Home Economics, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa.

They entered teaching and household service. During the First World War they were encouraged to enter occupations previously reserved for men only. And after that war was over, many of them continued at such posts through the twenties.

But when the great depression of the thirties hit our country, many women lost this right for paid employment for scarce jobs were considered more important for men. New barriers were established, this time legal ones to prevent married women, at least, from holding positions in government agencies, even from teaching in local school systems because such jobs were considered more important for the single women and for the men who were supposedly responsible for supporting their families. And then, many business and industrial firms followed suit. This was a realistic attempt to spread earned incomes among as many families as possible.

Then the Second World War occurred and once again women were recruited -- this time for an even wider variety of jobs. Now, for the very first time, women had an opportunity to enter all occupational fields, and this time they stayed in them too. In the twenty years since that war, there has been a steady increase in the proportion of women in our nation's work force. Women are in all these professions and in to stay. Even today when unemployment has become a chronic and growing problem, women are continuing to enter paid occupations in increasing numbers. And now, no one questions their right to do so, at least out loud.

It is difficult to talk about this problem without quoting pages of figures that describe what has happened and what the present situation is like; but if I should do so, you would soon become confused, and then bored and it would soon become a meaningless jumble of words to you.

It is easier to understand if we round off the figure to the one fraction - $1/3$. For example, a little more than $1/3$ of our present labor force are women. And when I mention the labor force, I am talking about all those in our country who are 14 years of age and older and are employed. A little more than $1/3$ of these are women. And $1/3$ of all the women of working age are working. That means that $1/3$ of all of us who are 14 years of age or older are employed. And $1/3$ of all the women who are working have children under 18. This is a larger figure that we sometimes recognize. Here I have to digress a little bit from the $1/3$ figure and say that about 20% or $1/5$ of all these women have children under 6, and that is a little more startling. In Iowa, these figures are a little lower than they are for the nation as a whole, so we can say that in our state, a little less than $1/3$ of our working force are women; and a little less than $1/3$ of all the women 14 years old and older are employed. It is just a little under the national average in each case.

It is interesting that in the nation as a whole there are more older women working than was the case twenty years ago. Since 1940 the percentage of those over 45 years of age has increased from 22% to 39%. That is, it has almost doubled. And we expect more women over 45 to be seeking employment this year, next year and the year after. Now why does this happen?

Let us look at the matter of married women working. Why do married women work outside the home? There are a variety of reasons. First, many of them work to contribute to the family income. They earn money because they want that money to buy goods and services for their families. As a matter of fact that is a real determinant in the standard of living of

many of our American families. We know now, that one-half of the families that we class as middle-class in terms of income, would not be in that position if they did not have two wage earners in the family, one of which happens to be a woman working outside the home. So many of them work to raise their standard of living. A second reason is to use the time on their hands. Now, I almost hesitate to say this because I don't suppose there is a woman who has time on her hands. But, there are women with time on their hands if they are not working.

Admittedly it is misleading to talk about an average woman because there is no such thing. I don't know one and you don't know one. But if we discuss this mythical woman it may help us to see what I am talking about. It is said that the average woman today has her last child when she is 26. Now, this is hard for me to accept because I know a woman who had her first child at 41 and perhaps you know of other such examples. If the average woman has her last child when she is 26 today, this is a much younger age than used to be the case. It follows that by the time she is 32 they are all in school. And then she has a few free hours, perhaps six a day when her children and husband are not at home. She doesn't spend many hours in housework if she's a good manager, because there are so many gadgets that help her.

By the time she is 45 the children have left home; they are working, or in college. They are no longer around to be transported to scouts, 4-H, church activities, and dancing lessons and the like. So she does have some time that formerly was set aside for her children. For many women it is more satisfying to work, to do something that is contributing to society, than to spend this extra time in socializing. And so, many women work outside

the home because they have time on their hands which they prefer to use in this fashion.

And some women work because they find it a way to have that sense of self-fulfillment about which you have been hearing. In our middle-class America, work has been a virtue. It is a good thing to do; society accepts this as desirable and if a woman contributes to the world of work just as a man contributes, this is a good thing. As you know, when we meet others for the first time, we ask each other this question, "what do you do?". Many women prefer to name a vocation when such a question is asked.

What do women do when they work outside the home? Theoretically they can do anything, but in reality they do not do anything and everything, in large numbers at least. Thirty percent, or almost 1/3 of them are in the clerical field; this is the fastest growing of all for women. And 30% of the women are in what we call service and operative field. This means that they are working as helpers in industry, in many kinds of businesses, as clerks in stores, and the like. Only five percent are managers and officials and only 12 percent are in the professions. I think that one other figure is rather interesting -- that one out of every four employees in our federal government is a woman. This is a much larger number than would have been the case a number of years ago and I suspect that one reason for this is there are so many, many clerical workers in our Federal service than there were a few years ago.

Wherever there are women employed, if there are also men, women tend to get less salary than men in the same or comparable positions. Some of them work full time and some of them work part time; but if they are working part time they tend to do this on a continuing basis -- this is a

permanent part-time job, not just a temporary part-time job. It is very interesting to note, too, that the higher the level of education, the more apt they are to be working on a full-time basis. The more education women have, the more they continue to work full-time. Many people have tried to guess why this is true; some are of the opinion that those in the professions for which they have to have high level education, cannot afford to stay out of it very long because they will become obsolete; that the profession will move beyond them, and they have to keep active if they are to remain up-to-date. In some of the other occupations, it is easier to leave and re-enter.

But let us look for a moment to see if we can find some reason why it is that there are so few women compared to men in managerial positions and in the professions; in positions where important decisions are made. Why is this the case. For one reason, most women have a discontinuous life, since nine out of ten women are married. We are told that at the rate marriage is increasing, that in another decade perhaps 97 or 98% of all our women will be married. Since this is the case, women do not start working and continue over a long period of years without interruption, when men do just this. A man can start at the bottom and take one step at a time and climb rather steadily, whereas a woman may be in and out of employment so much that it is difficult to advance very far. Some women are working before they are married, work for a little while afterward, then stop when the babies come. After the children are in school, the mother may work part-time, and so she only dabbles a bit and does not get a real firm foot on the ladder again. Then other things may happen; such as the movement of her husband to another locality so she cannot really continue her employment as she had planned. This may be one reason why few have enough experience to get to the top level jobs.

Another reason is that fewer of them have higher education. There are fewer young women in college than men and fewer graduate from college. About a third of college graduates are women; about a third of the college students have been women up until the last few years, and now it has risen to about 40%. We can be hopeful that the time may come in the foreseeable future, when half the college graduates will be women, and if so, this may no longer be a major problem. We know that out of every 300 women capable of going on to earn the Ph.D Degree, one does so. Perhaps one reason why there are not many women in top level jobs is that there are not enough who have had sufficient education to prepare for such responsibilities.

The third reason is related to the talk you just heard. For many reasons that are hard to understand, fewer women seem to care about becoming prominent. Few seem to care about achieving status through work. It is hard to know why this is true. Perhaps it is our social system. Research recently completed reports that 55% of the women are willing to be bossed by someone else, to have another person make the decisions. If that is the case, it certainly is a factor to be considered. Perhaps we start indoctrinating both boys and girls when they are babies and when they are too young to know this is happening, with the idea that certain things are expected of women and certain things are expected of men. There are some people who think there may be some physiological basis for this preference for dependency. We really don't know enough about human physiology and the chemical system of our human body to understand. And possibly there are some physiological reasons why women do not wish to achieve in some of the ways that men have achieved in the world of work. We know that there are many women who do not want to pay the price, who do not want to pay the cost in

terms of hours of work and dedication. They prefer to share their work lives with other interests.

We do know that many women are not very mobile. They are attached to husbands, and when wives move husbands must move too; and when husbands move, wives must move. I think one of the reasons that it is more difficult to find women for administrative positions in colleges and universities these days is that a larger percent than in former years are married. In the older age group of which I am a member there are fewer that are married and therefore they are not as mobile. At least a move must be a joint decision -- something good for both of them.

There are some people who say that this scarcity of women in top level positions is the result of the attitude of men; that it is men who are holding women down. I find this attitude particularly prevalent among liberal arts college women who have not themselves found an opportunity to contribute as they would like. My personal opinion is that this is over-emphasized; I do not think that men are such terrible creatures and I do not think that they really have it "in" for women. Some are very much concerned that men seem to be taking over jobs that women previously held. This is not the fault of the men. There just aren't enough qualified women to take some of these posts and therefore, there is no way out but to share them with men. If women are moving into jobs that are traditionally held by men why shouldn't men move into jobs that were traditionally held for women? Certainly we have some evidence that for some positions there is a real search for women. I am thinking of our Ames school system for example. There are some people who remember the day when most of the elementary school principals were women. Now most of them are men and there is just one woman. But that

is not the fault of the School Board, nor the fault of the Ames community. It is because they cannot find women willing to take the jobs. I know that there have been times when the Ames school board has personally talked with different elementary school teachers and pleaded with them to accept jobs as principals and they have said "no, I don't want it. I like what I'm doing and I'm not interested in taking this much responsibility." All of us are aware of what has happened in our own government. Certainly the last three presidents have all tried to find women to take high level cabinet positions. It would be politically to their advantage to do so; after all, there are three and one-half million more women in the country than there are men; but even if this were not so, it would be good to do so. But they have found it very difficult for there are just not enough who are qualified by education and experience. So I tend not to blame men, but to blame circumstances of our present-day living for this situation.

What of the future? To what can we look forward? I would like to talk about the immediate future first, because that is all it is really safe to talk about. Things are changing so fast in our society that if we say anything is going to happen ten years from now it probably won't. We can only predict for a few years at a time with any degree of assurance.

Certainly there is a change in attitude regarding the education of women. I have already given you some evidence of this, and I think this is going to bring about a change; there will be more women that are prepared through education for jobs of responsibility. The attitude concerning education for women has changed to the point that it is accepted now that they will go in and out of educational program for all of their lives, some of them even after retirement years. Education is a continuous process. Some

women are entering the university as freshman after their children are launched. Sometimes they are returning for refresher work, sometimes for graduate work. Eventually this will change the picture of the availability of women.

The new vocational bill which has been passed by Congress certainly should help the matter of employment for women and step it up somewhat. Miss Faltinson mentioned the fact that I served for a couple of years on a Panel of Consultants on Vocational Education where we were trying to look at the program, evaluate it and make some recommendations for new legislation. Of about 25 on the Panel there were four women. It was very interesting to note that the final report contained an entire section on the special needs of women for vocational education, indicating that they had some special needs that were different from those of men. Now the bill has been passed, but there hasn't been any money appropriated as yet. I learned last Saturday that probably there will not be anything done about this until after the civil rights legislation has been resolved. So it may be another year before any money is available for use. But when it is, there will be a definite emphasis on helping women prepare for some new kinds of occupations for which there is great need. For instance, there is a great need for women to work in day care centers for children, to take care of some of the children of working mothers. Certainly there is a great need in Iowa to establish such centers and to prepare women to work in them. There are new kinds of occupations for which women are a natural, such as homemaker services. We know that there is a great need for more women in practical nursing, in secretarial jobs. In Iowa many of our educators are not as aware of some of the possibilities for women through this education as we might wish. Most of the conversation that I

hear, the radio, the things I read in our paper have to do with preparing men and boys for employment, with no mention of the needs of women. It behooves a group like this to keep a very strict watch so that when plans are made for increasing vocational education in Iowa, there will be consideration of occupational programs for women.

On the national scene there is now a law which says that one must give equal pay for equal service, man or women. This, has implications that the future may be a little better as far as pay for women is concerned. Of course there will be all kinds of reasons why there will be differences in pay for the two sexes. It will be said that the services are not equal, but at least there is now the legal structure.

We must look, too, at the situation as far as unemployment is concerned. It has not hit us in Iowa as yet, but in the nation as a whole, we know that 1,350,000 additional young people are going to be seeking jobs each year for the foreseeable future. Each year this happens, there will be 3,000,000 put out of work because of automation. At the same time there will be an increasing number of women over 45 seeking jobs and some of those will get them. So this will become a mixed picture. As we are thinking of ways to help women find a way to serve in employment perhaps we will have to be a little more diligent about finding those areas where women are particularly needed; where their services will be of real worth and where they can do a job better than can some that are very young and inexperienced and better than some men who happen to be unemployed. I said earlier that I hesitate to look very far ahead because things change so very rapidly. Something could happen in our economy that would mean that all of us should turn to and enter the employment field in another few years, although all indications now point in

the opposite direction. Many of us have been making some pretty glib statements for the last few years that we should reconsider. We have said to high school seniors, to college students; "all of you who are here now will be working 25 years of your life, whether or not you are married, and outside the home." This is the way it appeared. Now I am not sure that it is going to last that long. It may or it may not. Certainly we do not know what is going to happen with cybernation. We don't know how rapidly this is going to mechanize even much of our decision making in this country. Richard Bellman of the Rand Corporation made this statement a short time ago. He said "in the discernable future" (and I don't know what he means by that, whether he means within your lifetime and mine or whether he means one hundred years from now) "In the discernable future, 2% of our population at the upper administrative levels will be able to produce all the goods and services to feed, clothe and run our society with the aid of machines." Robert Theobald, who is an economist has said "that the time will come when work will no longer be essentially a labor payment to society, but rather the use of an individual's potential for the material benefits of his fellows and his own self-fulfillment." This brings us right back to the first talk we had this morning. There are many things that can be done; some of them will bring in money, some of them will be a contribution to our fellow men in the community; some of them will be in terms of developing ones own potential and developing as a person.

I do not think this move toward equal opportunity for women in employment, whatever the employment picture is, will stop now. It is too firmly entrenched in our economy and our society. Whatever happens, whatever the movement is, whatever the situation, I think that we can be assured that if women wish it to be so, and I think they do, the opportunity will be there for them to share in the work to be done.

THE WOMAN AS A FAMILY MEMBER

David M. Fulcomer¹

What is the potential of a woman as a family member? In modern day USA, this is quite a question. In examining the woman as a family member, we come face to face with four significant questions: 1) Who is she? 2) What is she like? 3) What should she be doing in the family; that is, how should she invest her time and energy? 4) How can she improve herself, and live her best as a family member?

As a man attempting to examine this subject of the woman as a family member, I find much which tells me that this is not an easy subject for many women to examine for themselves. In a woman's college (not my own), I saw recently this old bit of advice tacked to the wall:

Look like a girl;
Act like a woman;
Think like a man;
Work like a dog.

If I were a woman, this would be hard for me to follow, I am sure. So would it be hard for me to appear both strong and weak to my husband, as depicted in this little poem titled, "Paradox:"

I strive to appear unflinchingly stable,
Because he admires the fearless and able.
Then, baffled, I find his love for me heightened
Whenever I seem inept, weak, or frightened. (Irene Warsaw)

But now let us deal briefly with the four basic questions this topic raises.

The Woman as a Family Member: Who is She?

Someone once said that the woman of the past knew what was expected of her; the woman of today must decide for herself. There certainly is much more opportunity for her to choose today. Unfortunately, many girls and young

¹David M. Fulcomer, Director, Home and Family Living Center, Colorado Woman's College, Denver, Colorado

women do not recognize either the right or the importance of making such choices. Many such decisions are made with little or no thought. Sometimes a decision is made in one direction because there is no realization that she has a choice at all. I am most concerned about how this works in the decision to marry. All too many girls are made to believe that every healthy, worthy adult woman should marry; and, thus, many get into marriage without ever having thought through the various alternatives open to her. In my own counseling - and I am sure that it is quite prevalent throughout society - I have worked with many wives who have discovered all too late that they resent having made such a decision before deciding carefully on the basis of the alternatives. I am still in favor of marriage for most young women; but there are many fine women who could make excellent wives who will find single life even more self-fulfilling and who will make a greater contribution to the world if they remain single. And they can still have families, too - only not in the roles of wife and mother.

At this point I want to call your attention to the fact that a woman can be a family member in many different ways, other than as a daughter, wife, or mother, - many different kinds of women are family members. According to the Population Reference Bureau, American women are staying in school longer, marrying younger, divorcing more, working until they are much older, and averaging just under four babies per family. As never before, they are combining education and marriage, work and motherhood. It is well for us to remember that women of different ages, roles, nationalities, classes, races and statuses can be - and are - family members. One can be unmarried and adult and still have a family. One can be divorced, and still have a family other, and in addition to, one's children. One can be widowed, and have a family. So it goes.

It would be impossible to list all the different kinds of women (and their situations) who have families; but let me list just a few to show the

tremendous variability of types of women family members:

- 1) There are women family members of different races, who must live their family roles in relation with certain facts. For example, negro women are twice as likely as other women to have to seek employment while they have preschool children at home. (See: "American Women" Report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women, 1963, p. 5)
- 2) "Many single women have relatives other than parents who are dependent on their earnings. (Ibid., p. 42)
- 3) Approximately 11 1/2 million women are wives and working outside the home for wages, along with their husbands. (This is about 3 out of every 10 couples.)
- 4) Of the 68 million women and girls 14 years and over in the United States today, 44 million are married and keeping house. ("American Women," op. cit., p. 18)
 - Approximately 3 out of 5 women workers are married; among married women, 1 in 3 is working. (More than 50% of women age 45 to 55 work regularly at pay jobs)
 - In 1890, less than one wife in 20 worked; in 1950 it was one in five - now one in three.
- 5) The number of working mothers with children under 18 has increased 66 percent in the past ten years. About 8.7 million mothers of children under 18 were working for income outside the home in 1961. There are about 15 million children under 18 whose mothers are working outside the home. Four million of these are under 6 years of age.
 - To put it differently, 3 out of every 10 mothers with children under 18 are working outside the home. (Spring, 1963 - U.S. Labor Dept. Handbook on Women Workers)

6) It is estimated by the Population Reference Bureau that 4,600,000 working women in this country are the sole support of their families - this is about 1 in 10 families. (1963)

7) Single, widowed, and divorced women make up a fairly good proportion of our women family members, too. About one-fifth of the working women in the USA are divorced, for example. (There are almost two million divorced women in the country. Almost one out of every ten married women are divorced each year.)

- Approximately 8 million children are being reared by one parent - mostly by mothers.

8) The 230,000 unwed mothers this year are family members of some sort, too, in most instances.

9) There are many teen-age mothers, who are family members. A report from the Population Reference Bureau for 1959 says that over half of the teenage wives become mothers while still in their teens, and one out of six of these has two or more children. In 1950, 27% of all teenage wives were mothers, nine years later, 53% of all teenage wives were mothers.

- Today more wives have their first child in their 19th year than in any other.

10) Many women family members are middle age or older, too. Such women have a quarter of a century of family living more than their grand-daughters did. Life expectancy for women is now 73 years; in 1900 it was 48 years.

- Along with this, I must point out that quite a few older widows are family members. There are almost 800,000 more women than men 75 years of age and over, many of whom are widows.

I do not present these facts to alarm anyone. But we must keep in mind the vast variety of women who are family members, and the tremendously different types of situations under which they play their roles as family members. Our society must be aware of these facts; and each individual woman family member must cope with her own situation as adequately as possible.

Along with their individual situations, women as family members live in a society where many families are confronted with bewildering and confusing choices and decisions, where families are on the move (about one family in four moves each year), where there is much emphasis upon staying young, especially for the woman, where there is great stress on finding happiness in life, and where women must plan on a much longer life span.

These, then, are some examples of who women family members are in our society. Most females are girls, then wives, then mothers; and sometimes we tend to think that all have the same experiences and similar situations in which they live. Their life experience and their situations, as we have seen, are very different. Thus, we must be cautious in speaking of the woman as a family member - we must keep in mind at all times that this is really a "collective" term, referring to many types of women.

The Woman as a Family Member: What Is She Like?

As we have already demonstrated, I hope, there is much individual variation among these women as to their places in society and their situations. But now we want to discuss briefly the more personal angle. What will prove self-fulfilling for one of these women will not necessarily serve for another. As Mary Ellen Goodman has pointed out, their interests and abilities vary enormously; also, their capacity for self-determination varies greatly.

Even within families, the major differentiations among people are not along sex lines. The difference between men and women have been exaggerated in our society, usually in favor of the male sex. In recent article, Brigid Brophy expresses here feeling that much of this does not make sense. She is speaking of society:

"...it goes on insisting on the tradition that men are the ones who go out to work and adventure - an arrangement which simply throws talent away. All the homemaking talent born inside male bodies is wasted; and our businesses and governments are staffed largely by people whose aptitude for the work consists solely on their being what is, by tradition, the right sex for it." (SATURDAY EVENING POST, "Women are Prisoners of Their Sex," Jan. 2, 1963, p. 10)

IT is time we think more of human beings, and less of the two sexes. This is not to deny that there are differences, both biologically and culturally; it is simply to state that: 1) We are stressing differences where they do not exist, and 2) In stressing so much the differences of the two sexes, we have too often lost sight of the human being in each. At a family life conference on the Iowa State University campus on April 3, 1962, Professor Helen G. Hurd said this: "We have not become accustomed to people being persons, rather than men and women." Women, then, are people; and we cannot evaluate them fairly as family members unless we keep this in mind.

Women as family members have another characteristic which is quite common among them, and to be expected in our day: confusion as to what they should be like and what they should do. One of my college girls wrote this in a paper recently:

"I think that the position of any career-minded woman is subject to the dangers of a non-integrated personality. I find myself looking at the role of homemaker with a certain amount of distaste, yet realizing the social, emotional, and physiological advantages of marriage. I feel that I would miss many of the satisfactions of life by remaining unmarried. I know that I can combine a career with marriage, but many compromises

will need to be made. Also, it is important for me to find a mate who understands my position...I hope that I can eventually integrate my interests and reach a consistent and mature compromise.

Even men are confused about whether Betty Friedan is correct, or whether her opponents are more nearly right. Is it really true that for women of ability, there is something about the housewife state itself that is dangerous? Are the women who "adjust" as housewives actually in peril? Does the feminine mystique mask the emptiness of the housewife role? Is a lifelong commitment to an art of science, to politics or profession necessary for every able woman to find creative work? Is Betty Friedan talking about all women family members who are married? I know that I have some very intelligent girls and mothers who agree with her, and some who do not. Writing in the Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Edna G. Rostow says:

"The persistent primacy of marriage among the aims of a woman's life is hardly a surprising finding, although the fact goads some surviving members of the old feminist orthodoxy to protest against the "mystique" of femininity. Attitudes based on millennia of experience could hardly have been expected to vanish in a couple of generations. Women are not storming the professions or providing leaders for industry and government in large numbers - a condition which disappoints the hopes projected by the suffragettes and their crusading daughters. But this is not because women are all sheep, at the mercy of soothsayers who have led them astray down the path of least resistance. Most educated women want to participate in the world's work, but principally in ways which do not imperil their fulfillment in traditional roles as wives and mothers."
 ("Conflict and Accommodation," DAEDALUS, "The Woman in America," Spring, 1964, pp. 747-8)

It seems clear to me that women are human beings, and like all other human beings they vary much from each other. Thus, even for women family members, it would follow that in a society undergoing such rapid changes one could hardly write accurately of the vast number of women family members using broad generalizations. I think I prefer to dig out my own answers from the facts I can gather, using Friedan and all the others only as they present me facts.

So, of course, the woman as a family member is often confused about where she really belongs and what she should really do. But this does not mean she has to be ashamed of herself, or that she is stupid or inadequate. Sometimes it is a sign of high intelligence to be confused - and even to admit it. It is never comfortable, of course. The woman as a family member is merely experiencing great changes and confusion in regard to what is expected of her. Many of the changes have been subtle and drastic. There are so many kinds of women, and so many different kinds of family members - and so little of a definite cultural pattern to follow. Fortunately, each woman - most of them, anyway - have the capacity to determine their own destiny. And this ability is much greater than many women realize.

The Woman as a Family Member: What Should She Be Doing in the Family
How Should She Invest Her Time and Energy?

We have already implied that each woman should choose wisely, and that most women have the ability to choose wisely if they only know what they have to do and are helped to become aware of the alternatives. (This implies need for some real education, which will be dealt with in the next section of this address.)

All around me I see young women marrying, who will be all right as wives; but who would find more self-fulfillment as single women - and who would also, make a greater contribution to their world as single women. All around me I see girls marrying long before they are ready to contribute to and find satisfaction in marriage. Marriage still seems (eventually, anyway) to be the wise choice for a majority of American women; but not marriage entered into automatically, with no thought or consideration given to the fact that there are other productive ways of life for women.

Most important for any woman as a family member, I believe, is the achievement of a good degree of self-fulfillment. First off, this sounds selfish; but it is quite the opposite; because one cannot find a true sense of self-fulfillment while he remains self-centered. Give me the woman family member who feels a high degree of self-fulfillment; and I shall not worry about her as a family member. (Nor would I worry about her in any other role she must play, either.)

The kind of life which is self-fulfilling depends a great deal upon both the standardized expectations of a given society and the inner drives and aspirations which the woman has developed out of her own experiences and background. But the encouraging thing is that most every woman can find a sense of self-fulfillment if she works hard enough at it. (I am well aware of emotional factors which can sometimes almost block such achievement.) Despite what the Freudians (some of them) seem to say to us, the human being has considerable ability to control and direct his behavior. But he has to believe in himself to get the job done. I think this is very true for the vast majority of women who are family members.

Mary Ellen Goodman has pointed out to us that the capacity for self-determination is probably more important to personal fulfillment than anything else. (Address, ISU conference, May 18, 1964) The extreme conformist is a danger to our society - and our family; because he lacks so much in self-determination. Democracy depends upon many persons having a high capacity for self-determinism; for it is this "belief-in-action" that permits both individuals and society to progress. Increasingly, I believe, men in our culture admire this and desire it in women, despite the following poem:

"A girl who gives up all her time
To write a stuffy thesis;
May have to give up love and joy
And be content with nieces."

(This comes from "Ballyrot" a column of the Iowa State Daily.
Jan. 25, 1951)

There are, of course, various skills and abilities which are desirable or necessary, for the woman family member to have. The capacity to relate effectively and positively with other family members most of the time, goes without saying. Division of labor and allocation of authority has to be worked out in all families, for example. The mother must obviously have a good ability to understand and cope with children. It is becoming more and more important to be able to make wise decisions about leisure. Also, it is becoming increasingly important for the woman family member to be able to take the long view - to plan ahead for the long life she will probably live. These are only samples of necessary skills and abilities.

There is knowledge and understanding which is desirable, or necessary, also. For one thing, to live in the world adequately, you must know something about it. It would be very wise for a mother to know the effect it will probably have on her daughter if she tried to make her grow up too fast, and take on adult ways at an early age. It seems to me that it would be necessary for any woman family member to be aware of some of the major problems of her own culture, and of her world; because these are so important to living in families. A knowledge of her community, its resources, and its needs, would enable a woman to be a more adequate family member. Yes, there is much in the way of knowledge and understanding that is important; and these items that are mentioned are only samples.

The Woman as a Family Member: How Can She Improve Herself and Live Her Best"

For middle-class family members, especially wives and mothers, I would say that the most important thing is to have confidence that you can be a good family member, and then go out and be it. (I realize that this is over-simplified; but I do believe it is a very important basic principle.) How can you be the family member you are capable of being? No one, in an address to a number of people, can answer that question specifically for each woman; but some suggestions can be made which might help all.

One of my students said to me recently that she needed help in finding "where I belong amidst all these different demands and expectations." She was speaking of some from society, some from her parents, and some from within herself. Obviously, as for any other woman, her self-fulfillment will depend upon her interests and abilities, and her capacity for self-fulfillment will depend upon her interests and abilities, and her capacity for self-determination. Fortunately for this young lady, she has a high capacity for self-determination.

I am not sure that I am competent to give a great deal of advice to women regarding their roles as family members; but out of my professional training and experience, I should like to pass on the following suggestions for what they are worth:

- 1) Remember you are a woman; and be proud of it. Do not make the mistake of trying to prove you are a good woman by showing you can do well exactly what men do. Ashley Montague refers to all the complaints about women making some women try to act like men, when he writes: "The sad thing about all this is that a good many women have paradoxically sought to validate themselves (as persons) not as women, but as men..." ("The Triumph and Tragedy of the American Woman," SATURDAY REVIEW, September 27, 1958, p. 13)

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- 2) Become committed and involved in something worthwhile in your community and the larger world. You as a family member have many important possible roles you can play. Remember, that the little contributions you can make to others are not really little - either to you or to them. (You can find a meaningful and constructive place for yourself in your community. It need not be outstanding.)
- 3) Do some studying (it need not be a great deal) on what is happening in regard to women in our society: what are the expectations, what are the choices of roles. A bit of reading about other cultures will give you a wonderfully important perspective on your own. (This suggestion implies the use of libraries - going beyond your regular slick, monthly magazine sometimes.)
- 4) Do what you can to really understand yourself as a person: your weak points, but also your strengths. A few good strengths put into use can overcome the influence of quite a few weak ones. Also, do not expect of yourself exactly what another can do - you are different and unique in some ways. Find out what you are best equipped to do, and do it the best you can.
- 5) Do not accept the idea that you can do nothing to change your lot, nor the course of the world. You, as is true of each other woman, have an important role to play in your family, too. Through conscious, rational, and sustained effort you can achieve much for yourself and those around you. There is nothing wrong with "do-gooding" except when you really do not do good."
- 6) Do all you can to stop the trend toward self-centeredness in our culture: the striving for happiness for oneself, the drive for status and prestige, the worship of money and material things. You and your family will benefit if you put your values on more worthwhile things, and you can.
- 7) Help your own daughters, if you have them, (and other girls) achieve a good degree of self-assurance based on information of the world and what it is about. Help them to develop attitudes which will help them cope with life as they will meet it.
- 8) Do all you can to learn (in libraries, in small discussion groups, at church, anywhere the opportunity is offered), about: educating children for living in the modern world, educating yourself for marriage - if you are married, learning how your community really works, how other societies live, what is happening in the world. All this will help you as a family member. I do not know of any community where a woman cannot learn and grow if she has a mind to and follows through in her own style. This goes for formal classes when they are available, too.
- 9) Learn what resources there are in your community for your family, and make use of them: child care, family services, health services, etc. Also, help them in their work, whenever you can. Do not hold back from offering to work with local volunteer agencies. Your families can gain much help sometimes in your service to these agencies.
 - Every community has some resources for health, education, safety, recreation, and similar things. Be acquainted with them, use them and support them.

- 10) If you are middle age or older, I hope your community people will "find" you and use you as a babysitter and many other things. I am convinced that we hardly touch the surface in using the resources which we have right at hand in our middle-aged and older women.
- 11) Work for improvement of conditions that affect families, your own and others. [For example, our Federal system of social security makes no provision for compensating a working wife for loss of income due to childbearing; yet you remember how many such women there are, with some 4,600,000 being the sole support of their families. Not more than a third of American working women have such insurance from either private or public sources.] [Even writing to your representatives in Congress can do much for you in a positive way - and be good for your family, too. To be active in something worthwhile is awfully important. (I would not discount the importance and necessity of balancing this with time for yourself - just yourself and things you enjoy.)]
- 12) If there are young teenage mothers in your community, see if you cannot be of some help to them. Many young marriages today need help; and we need to find much more effective ways to gear the resources for help in the communities to the needs of these young marriages. Just simple things like babysitting and friendliness and a helping hand will do wonders for you and your family, as well as for them.
(Did you know that there are a quarter of a million boys between 14 and 19 married, now out of school and at work?)
- 13) You are going to hear much more about "continuing education" - make use of it whenever you can. Learning is fun; and it is very broadening and self-fulfilling too. Communities should work hard to set up adult education opportunities for women beyond school and college. Mature women need opportunities for education, too.
- 14) Much more should be done in most every community to educate women for their varied roles as family members. Take advantage of all this available to you; and look for opportunities to aid and support such programs.

In Conclusion

It is so easy for a woman to feel that she has failed as a family member. It is very easy for a woman to talk herself (or let someone else talk her) into thinking too little of herself as a family member. Your expectations must be realistic, and that is hard for the women of today - especially the one who listens to such an address as this. But please do try to be reasonable

in your expectations of yourself. Max Lerner claims that the American Woman makes huge psychological and physical demands on herself in attempting to satisfy her own strenuous self-image. ("The Ordeal of The American Woman" THE SATURDAY REVIEW, October 12, 1957) Edna G. Rostow points out how easy it is to feel like one has failed as a wife:

"...But the dimensions of present-day marriage, with its high standards of sharing, understanding, and accomplishment, and with its expectation that middle-class women will function regularly in 'masculine' spheres as well as in 'feminine' ones, add up to a large order -- and not just for the wife. It is characteristic of American optimism that we expect ambitious targets to be attained, and feel the guilt of personal failure when they are not." ("Conflict and Accommodation," in DAEDALUS, "The Woman in America," Spring, 1964, p. 739)

Therefore, if you are normal - and you probably are - you could stand some reassurance (the honest type) to comfort you in what you may feel are confusing roles as a family member. Remember that in referring to women, Shakespeare wrote: "They are the books, the arts, the academies, that show, contain and nourish all the world."

I would have to agree with an editorial, which appeared in the SATURDAY EVENING POST for March 17, 1961 (p. 110) which had this to say:

"...We have, in the American woman, one of the nation's great neglected resources. We have always admired her, pursued her, whistled at her - even enshrined her. Now we need to use her. Not just for the jobs men don't want to do. Not grudgingly because we want to shut her up. Not slyly because we think she is cute. But thankfully - because she has brains, time, knowledge, courage, sensitivity and dedication that are needed in our struggle for survival."

So do not worry about what you are not, nor about who does something better than you do as a family member. Just be the best of whatever you are; and you will most likely find life well worth living and make it much more so for other family members.

WOMAN AS A CITIZEN AND COMMUNITY WORKER

Mrs. Mary Grefe ¹

I thought of many reasons on the road this morning as to why I should not come today. I hope I am not the only lady in the room with unmade beds at home. I am not well organized, as someone suggested women should be this morning; and although I did arise at what I thought was an early hour; Monday morning is just horrible at our house. I don't know what it is like at your house, but this is always the day that our son has some special project which he knew about all weekend; but we have to find it fifteen minutes before he goes to school on Monday morning. My husband and I decided that we would change cars because his is air-conditioned and mine is not -- you speak about the difference between the sexes ! And so there was a little mix-up over the keys and altogether, the beds just didn't get made and if I don't get home at a reasonable time this afternoon, they probably won't get made.

Now those things were going through my mind as I drove up here and looked at the corn, as any good farm girl should. Then, I hadn't seen this list of speakers until I got here. Well, I tell you, I looked at the Doctorates and the colleges represented and then you come down the list to Mrs. Mary Grefe and I can't even claim the distinction of being the only Mary Grefe -- there are three of us including my sister-in-law, and this has led to a little trouble in our family because my husband and I were married first; so some of the relatives refer to me as 'old Mary' and she as 'young Mary'. So, I have to work doubly hard to achieve a little status.

¹Mary Grefe, Member, Board of Education, Des Moines, Iowa

In fact, when I saw this list of speakers (all of whom were excellent I felt), even if I would have gone home at noon I would have felt that I had gained a great deal from this conference. Probably I should have gone home at noon!

I am sort of in the position of one of our former employees in our school system. In Des Moines we have quite a large system and consequently we can't screen everyone we hire as we might like and every now and then we get one who doesn't work out too well. This particular fellow was hired by the maintenance department and instead of working up he sort of worked down and he went from custodian to sweeper, to this, to that, and just didn't fit in anywhere; mostly because he just wasn't too bright. Finally we decided that there was one place where he couldn't get into difficulty and that was in the school bus garage. So we put him in the school bus garage as the sweeper and his whole job was to sweep out the garage when the buses left and so forth. Well, one morning, after all the buses had gone out (most of our buses make two or three runs a morning, as I'm sure yours do), the telephone rang. This fellow answered "hello" and on the other end was a very indignant person whose car had just been scraped by one of our school buses. He proceeded to tell this employee what was wrong with the Des Moines educational system, what was wrong with the school board, what was wrong with the superintendent and everything else. He was just very unhappy. Finally he said to this poor fellow, "And what do you propose to do about it?" The fellow said "Listen mister, when I said Hello, I told you every darn thing I know". So here I am, I've said Hello.

I was quite relieved, and some of you who know me so well would know the great relief that I enjoyed when they told me that I did not need

to bring a written copy of my speech -- that they would be taping it as we went along. My family just literally gets down and rolls on the floor when anyone requests that I write a copy of the speech because for the most part I speak extemporaneously; sometimes I do go so far as to jot down a few notes on the back of a Sears Roebuck envelope. Please do not judge the Morningside Speech Department by the efforts of one of its graduates. It was some time ago that I graduated and they've improved greatly.

So at any rate, this is going to be more or less a folksy visit, because that is the kind of person I am, as many of you know. But folksy or not, I am very interested in women's activity -- that topic which has been assigned to me -- citizenship and as a community worker.

It was interesting to me because I did not know who the speakers were this morning, or what they were going to say. But as they went along I found myself thinking: "Well, I had intended to say that; or I had planned on saying that." So it seems to me that we can't be too far wrong when people from such divergent areas geographically and educationally are all thinking along the same lines. But I have long been interested in the fulfillment of women and I feel that in order to do so, a woman needs to do more than be a homemaker if that is her chosen vocation; or she needs to do more than just have a job; or she needs to do more than just be the head of the family.

Now all of those are very time consuming and very important and should probably have first place in her life. But, I think a woman should also be interested in what goes on outside her home. The reason is this: If you are truly interested in your home and your family, you can't help

but be interested in what goes on outside your home and family, because forces outside are working, which will affect what happens to your children and to you.

Now, as I look out into the audience, I see some good P.T.A. people as well as people who have belonged to other organizations and I know that one of the things that inevitably comes up when it comes to P.T.A. is the safety of our children as they go to and from school. The first thing that happens when we start talking about safety, is that we discover we must go to one, two, three, or I don't know how many governmental agencies in order to secure sidewalks or traffic patrols or whatsoever. And so right away, because we are interested in the safety of our children, we are drawn into the activities of government. We can't escape it.

I found myself on the way up here as I said, thinking of the things that needed to be done at home that I wasn't doing. I have a good friend in Des Moines who has the same amount of education as I; we were both teachers; but when she retired, she really retired! She has a schedule and if you are going to get attention from her, you had better jolly well get on her schedule. I thought to myself -- if they had called her to speak (and she could do as good a job as I could, or probably better), she would have said "Now let's see -- Monday -- that's my day to wash, and that's my day to straighten up the upstairs; and I couldn't do it on Tuesday because that's my day to iron; and Wednesday is the day to clean the kitchen (I know her schedule); and Thursday is her day to do this, and Friday is her day to do that. Nowhere in her life does she have time for anything outside the confines of her own home. This is admirable. I can be sure that anytime I go to her home, the furniture is dusted, the dishes are

done, the house is in perfect order. But she also had an interesting experience. Their first son (oldest son) became eligible to go to college, and they naturally assumed that he would go away, but he didn't want to leave home. His mother had never left him and he did not want to leave home; and so he is attending Drake University, which is very fine, but he is living at home. He is not experiencing some of the things which perhaps a man of 21 or 22 should be experiencing, because he is still adhering to mother's schedule. The whole family adheres to it. She and I have had some very interesting discussions from time to time. She thinks I'm just as crazy as I think she is crazy. We have very healthy discussions. I think we are both partly right and both partly wrong. She won't go to P.T.A. (this is a waste of time); she is not active in church, although she does go to church on Sunday, but as far as women's organizations, they leave her cold. I have talked to her several times about joining some of the organizations to which I belong and that I feel she would be interested in but she keeps telling me that later on she will join but I don't know how much later on it is going to be. I have asked her how she can justify the many services that are being done for her children through some of these organizations, when she stays at home and does not take part in some of them. So I think that if for no other reason than that we are here on earth, we owe a debt to the society around us and that the more interested we are in our families, the more interested we should be in our government.

I sort of got into politics like the crab (you know the crab backs into everything); and I became interested in other things as a mother and as a former educator. I got so stirred up inside that I felt I had to do something about it and when I started trying to find out what to do about

it, I found that although I did have a Bachelor's Degree, I knew very little about the field of practical politics which is quite different from that which you may have studied in school. In fact, that was brought home to me when I taught at Roosevelt. I made it a practice (with the legislature meeting in Des Moines) to take my senior American Government class over to the legislature to see what was going on. Like all good teachers, we spent about a week getting ready for this field trip. We read in the book what would take place. I herded them all on the bus and we went over. We sat up in the balcony of the House of Representatives and none of the things were going on which I had told them were going to happen. Nothing that was in the book and nothing that I had told them, because oddly enough, I hadn't been there either. So, down this long row of seats came a note to the teacher. (I was sitting at the end so no one could leave early). The note said "Dear Mrs. Grefe: Either somebody should write a new book or else the legislators should read the one we have." So I decided that there are two different worlds. There is the world of theory and ivory towers, which we find in some government text books, and there is the world of practical politics. They are quite different.

Now when I try to interest women in participating in politics, the word "politics" itself scares some people to death. They think of it as something in a smoke-filled room and something shady; or sneaky going on, and that it is no place for a lady as several have told me. This is not true. Politics is the art of government and we are the government, so every single woman should be interested in politics. Now if you can't stand the rough and tumble world of partisan politics, there are many things you can do on the non-partisan side; but at any rate, you should be interested.

So the first point that I would like to make is that every woman should be interested in government -- Every woman. We have apathy. This is the hardest thing to conquer. It's a disease -- believe me, we have apathy.

We had a bond issue for a new school in Des Moines, and some of you are in the viewing area, couldn't very well ignore that I am sure. But we took petitions out to have people sign, requesting the bond election. (This is a sample of the apathy I am talking about). At one home I went to, a lady refused to sign the petition. And I thought that I would inquire as to the reason as there are various reasons for not signing; taxes are too high or they don't have children. Or, they support a private school or for some other reason they just aren't interested. But this lady blithely informed me that she had five children going to our public schools, but they were taken care of and she didn't care what happened to the rest. Well, I suppose that poor woman is still wondering what hit her, because I was tired; but I proceeded to inform her that there were a lot of things that could happen to her five children as far as housing is concerned before she had all five of them through high school. But she just didn't care. I asked her if she had read the paper. No she hadn't. She hadn't heard anything and she just didn't care. Her kids had a place to go and that was all she cared about. She was just glad to get rid of them and why couldn't they stay in school longer -- that is what she said. "How come we let them out at 3:00 or 3:30?"

So, first of all, you have to tackle apathy. Now if people want to be apathetic, the human mind is a wonderful thing. We can concoct all sorts of reasons why we cannot do things. Now you know, and I know (I use

them on some occasions), your head aches, your back aches, you have work to do at home -- all sorts of things why you should not interest yourself in what is going on. But the unfortunate thing, that I hope all of you will remember, is that if you don't interest yourself, someone else will and that someone else may not be the type of person you want, or their thoughts may not be the same as your; and one of these days we could possibly wake up (and some of us have in some communities) with some people representing us who do not really represent the way we think, or the way we want them to represent us. So you cannot afford the luxury of being apathetic.

So, first of all, be interested in something more than whether you are going to get a new davenport. I'm interested in that too, but you don't worry quite so much about the davenport if you are interested in something else at the same time.

Now the second thing, inform yourself. People say to me, "Well, of course you've gone to college. You know all about this." There couldn't be anything further from the truth. What I learned in college in the 1940's is very out-of-date. In fact my son, in the eighth grade, has already passed me up in most fields. One of the ways you can be informed, but certainly not the only way, is to read, read, read! Now if this sounds like an English teacher, take it for what it is worth. I doubt if there is a home into which some kind of a newspaper doesn't come these days. Now most of us pick up a newspaper and we read the society page about who is getting married; and we read the social notes, etc. But, in most large papers there is an editorial page, and if you do nothing more than read the editorial page as you drink your second or third cup of coffee in the morning, you

would be a better informed, in fact a pretty well informed person by the end of the week. You would be surprised at the things you would learn. This morning in my haste to get Roger off to school, I just quickly grabbed up yesterday's and today's editorials. Now this is the kind of an education you would have gotten if you had read this morning's editorial page, and maybe some of you did.

In the first place, here is a debate on the civil rights between Fulbright and Javits, representing both points of view. Here is an article on "Red China Watches as Formosa Prospers". If you don't think this is important, you don't have any sons becoming draft age. I am very concerned about it. Someday he may be over there, or they may be over here. Of course that worries me even more. People who say they are not interested in what goes on in Europe and China, and don't care about the national government -- all right, here is a local article on "Consolidating County Jails" -- this concerns all of us. Not in the way you may think, but prisoners are escaping much too fast to suit me.

There is quite a liberal education on one page in the paper. The average person reads 300 words a minute so I would say you could probably read this in 15 to 20 minutes.

Sunday's paper covered some other areas. Here is an interesting article by Lawrence Soth, graduate of this very university, on how we are scared of anybody who is smart. He said that is the reason Adlai Stevenson was defeated. That's not the reason I didn't vote for him. He says people were scared because he was an intellectual and yet this country was founded by intellectuals -- Jefferson, Madison, etc., but anymore we just don't trust the smart person. We want somebody dumb. Here is a review of

the negro schools situation after ten years of desegregation. Here is one that affects everyone of us -- unequal taxes. This is the situation right here in Iowa, where every county and every corporation are paying a different amount of taxes for governmental purposes. So by reading you can become informed; and there isn't a soul who can tell me that they don't have time enough in their day, even if they work and have a family, to at least read one page of the paper. If you have more time than that, then there are many, many magazines, pamphlets, books which are available to us all to continue our education. You don't necessarily have to go back to college; although that is fine, and many of my contemporaries are doing just that. But, really and truly, no woman in the United States has any reason for saying that she is not informed on a subject when all this material is available to her.

After you get informed and interested, what do you do? Well, I hope you become active. I hope that you are so interested and you have all this knowledge that you want to do something about it. Of course, there are many things that you can do as far as your governmental bodies go. You can go and observe them. How many of you who are not on the school board or on the city council ever have gone to a meeting and have just sat there and watched what they did? There are many people who have never visited one of these governing bodies to see what goes on. Of course these people always tell me that they read about it in the paper the next day. Well, this isn't a very safe thing to do because reporters pick out what they think is interesting and colorful and controversial. We have had the experience in Des Moines, at least, of spending three hours discussing something and five minutes on something else and the subject that

gets into the newspapers because it appealed to some reporter. So if nothing else, you can at least visit the governing bodies in your locality. You should all visit the legislature, and I'm sure this group has, as I look around and see the Farm Bureau and the League of Women Voters represented, among others. I know that most of you have been to the legislature. But get other people to go so that they see what goes on. It gives you a much better understanding of this governmental process.

Now the next thing is get involved in some way in this activity. There are all kinds of activities just begging for somebody to do. It may be stuffing envelopes if you feel that you can't go out and ring doorbells; or you can't meet somebody face to face; or you can't call them up on the phone. You say you don't want to go to caucuses because if you go to caucuses there are so few people there that you may get elected as a delegate and the first thing you know you are in the state convention, etc. and it is just horrible. So, people stay away from caucuses. And I've even had people tell me that they don't vote because if you vote you end up on a jury and that is just terrible; because you have to decide whether or not a man is drunk or not.

But there are just all kinds of little jobs in connection with the government that are crying for volunteer workers which you can do. And you will find when you start doing these things (as some of you have), you get drawn into a much broader activity and you become interested in spite of yourself. You get to know the people who are making the decisions. Really, when you get right down to it, that is about the only way you can influence decisions. You have to know who is making the decision for you and who might be making the decision that will affect your life in the

future. Once you know that, you will find that it gives you a much greater confidence in yourself as a person who can affect legislation.

Let me share one little experience I had with you. For three different sessions of the legislature I lobbied for the League of Women Voters in Iowa. Personally, I could do very little just as Mary Grefe coming up and talking to a representative or senator. He didn't give a hoot because I didn't vote for him. He didn't know who I was and he didn't care. But there was a real service I could render (and I saw this happen right before my very eyes in one instance.) As a lobbyist you try to keep track of how people are going to vote. You get to know who is for what and who is against what. There is always this never, never land of the few who are floating around whom we are all trying to pin down. There was a very vital issue which the League was interested in and the vote was going to be close. We knew that. I got word that one of the men, whom we thought we had nailed down to vote on our side was wavering. This particular man happened to be from a town where there was a League. I knew that if I went up to this representative and said "I'm Mary Grefe and I want you to vote this way" he would say, "Who are you and don't bother me. I'll tell you about him a little later). So I called the president of the League in this particular man's home town and I asked "Who does this man listen to?" "Well", she said, "he listens to the banker, and he listens to so and so who is president of the Rotary." So I said, "Get them on the phone and get them calling him because he is wavering. Now that he's here in Des Moines somebody has gotten ahold of him and he is undecided." So then I went back to the floor of House and pretty soon I saw the page tap this fellow on the shoulder. Well, I knew he had a long-distance call and I

knew where it was from and I knew who was calling him. He came back to his seat and pretty soon another tap. That man had to leave three times in about half an hour; but when he came back to cast his vote, he cast it the way he originally intended to and I felt that unbeknown to him, I had stirred up a little interest back home. This is what I mean by observing. You learn quite a bit about practical politics from that angle.

Incidentally, I must share this with you. People have asked me how I have the courage to go over to the legislature and lobby. At one time, there were no women in the legislature and they felt that the men sort of looked down their noses on women. This is not true. The only men who are ever rude, I feel are those who are basically insecure themselves and are quite afraid of any women appearing to be a little bit smarter than they are. They have other problems along with this insecurity. But at any rate, there was only one man who was ever rude to me. He is the one who told me to go home and take care of my children and not bother him. But he did not return. He was not elected by his own people to come back, but I was back the next session so I have always cherished that. He went home instead of me. At any rate, you can learn a lot from just observing, even if you don't want to participate.

Then the final thing, and the thing that I get the most excited about (and people say "If you are so excited about it, why don't you do it yourself," and I have in a limited way), is that I think more women should seek public office. We heard this morning that there are 3 1/2 million more women voters than men. Now, why in the world don't we get together and put some women in office? I don't understand our own sex. I wish the anthropologist would have stayed around a little longer -- I wanted

to ask her some questions. I have been at candidates' meetings and do you know who are the most critical of women candidates? Women! They say, "I'm not going to vote for her because she smokes." Have you ever heard a woman say "I'm not going to vote for that man because he smokes?" (I don't happen to smoke and it doesn't matter to me whether women smoke or not); or they will say, "I wonder where she got that crazy hat"; or if she doesn't have a hat on, "she doesn't know enough to wear a hat." We cannot be objective about our own sex. There is no such thing as a woman's vote. It is a myth, believe me. Now unfortunately, some of the men believe it! I have had many calls from men candidates who say "can you tell me how the women's vote is going?" I can tell them nothing about the women's vote because as sure as you get three women together, they are going to vote three different ways. We just simply do not stick together. Now at the risk of being paradoxical, I'm going to point out one other thing. (I wish I came from Houston or someplace where I didn't know anybody -- you all know me) I have had calls, "Of course you are going to support so and so" and I ask "Why?" "Well, because she is a woman." Now I am as much opposed to that as I am to women not supporting well-qualified women candidates. I feel that if a woman runs for office she should be as well qualified as any man who is running for office. We should not vote for her just because she is a woman or because we need a woman. I have heard this so often -- "Oh, we need a woman on the school board"; or "we need a woman on the city council"; or "we need at least one woman over on the legislature to keep the men in line"; or something like that. I think that we should dedicate ourselves to the task of seeing that the women who seek public office are well-qualified and that is all we should be concerned about. We should not be concerned

about their hat, their lack of a hat, or whether they are fat or thin or anything else. We should be concerned that they are well-qualified. We should go to women who are well-qualified and ask them to seek office. Do you know who came to ask me to run for the school board? Not a single woman. A businessman came and asked me. I was flattered to death that he would take the time to make an appointment, come and sit in my livingroom and say "would you please run for the school board?" But, I think we can do a great deal more in assuring well-qualified women that we will help them and we will support them. We can get more in office this way. Now, I'm not a feminist, nor a suffragette, but I'm quite in sympathy with the women's right to vote. We become terribly concerned about reapportionment in Iowa and whether we are being represented equally. You know who is really being discriminated against? The women! We outnumber the men and yet they outnumber us in every governing body. There are many reasons, and I'm not going into them. I know why a lot of women don't seek public office or feel that they can't seek public office; but I'm simply saying to you and also to myself at the same time; that we do owe this to those whom we know are well-qualified. That we do support them and work for them and in case somebody asks us to run for office sometime we should give that a great deal of thought.

I think I have given you several things to think about. In summary, you should have an interest outside your home. It should be in the government because government affects your home. You should be informed, and if by no other means, you can always do it by reading. Then you should become active. You don't need to travel the state, you don't need to run for office. There are plenty of jobs all the way down to stuffing envelopes

and all the way up to stuffing envelopes. That can be pretty important sometimes you know if they don't get stuffed and mailed out at the right time.

There are many things that women can do in the field of government which are directly related (I can't think of any other field which is more related to the welfare of your children, if you are interested in children than your government) because what that government is deciding regarding health, education, military service -- all of these things will affect the lives of your children. So if you care about your children at all, the next logical step is of course to be interested in government.

There is a niche for every woman when it comes to influencing governmental policies. Whether you ring doorbells, stuff envelopes or enter the heady world of politics by running for office yourself, I am sure that your activity will bring you satisfaction. It will bring stimulation to your community and a new surge of talent to fill our nation's needs.

Thank you.

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