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The role of the high school and church in preparing young people for marriage

Joseph Franklin White

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THE ROLE OF THE HIGH SCHOOL AND CHURCH IN
PREPARING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR MARRIAGE

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty of
The University of Richmond

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science in Education

by
Joseph Franklin White

August
~~June~~ 1953

*Approved
8/4/53
E. W. Overton*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is generally accepted by many people that marriage is the closest and most important of all human alliances. It is the union of two personalities. This union is not a gift which is presented by fate to those who are lucky in love. Furthermore, it is not conferred by the final words of the marriage ceremony. The vows and pronouncements of the ceremony are useless unless they are properly understood and accepted by the couple. A successful marriage today requires careful preparation. All who desire success in marriage have a good chance of attaining it if they are prepared for their task.¹ In former generations individual choice and responsibility didn't play such an important role. There were certain pressures which are almost non-existent today. Law, tradition, religion, and social custom all helped to give permanence to marriage. The marriage relationship was rather clearly defined in society. Male domination was accepted by tradition

¹Reuben Hill, "The Best Preparation For Marriage," National Parent-Teacher, 47:4, January 1953.

and social pressure. Adjustment was not something shared equally by man and wife. Life was also predominantly rural in America. Families were held together by innumerable bonds. Many of these ties do not exist today. The majority of people live in urban and suburban areas. This is an atomic age with all the accompanying tensions and frustrations. These conditions contribute to unrest, and make it more difficult to maintain a stable family life.² In view of these conditions, it appears that careful preparation is needed for marriage.

Youth today are very desirous to receive competent help in preparation for marriage. They know that extensive research has been done in this field.³

Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin made a detailed study of the Sexual Behavior In The Human Male. This is a progress report from a case history study on human sex behavior. It presents data about sex which represents an accumulation of scientific fact. This is completely divorced from all questions of moral value and social custom.⁴ The data in this study are secured through first-hand interviews, and are limited to persons resident in the United

²Reuben Hill, op. cit., p. 4.

³Judson T. and Mary Landis, The Marriage Handbook, (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1948), p. 12.

⁴Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin, Sexual Behavior In The Human Male, (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company, 1948), p. 3.

States. Approximately twelve thousand persons contributed histories to this study. All kinds of persons and all aspects of human sexual behavior are included in this study. Many psychiatrists, physicians, and educators contributed to the study.⁵

Robert Latou Dickinson and Lura Beam collaborated in presenting a medical study of sex adjustment in A Thousand Marriages. These are actual cases which occurred during the forty-seven years' practice of a physician.

They show the interrelation of sex experience and pelvic disease, combining detailed observation of genital anatomy and listening and questioning upon the intimate life. Copious data of medical interest were filed, indexed and used in gynecological and anatomical research. A great deal of subjective evidence given in times of emotional crisis and colored by a sympathetic appreciation accumulated. The reliability of the data is of three kinds: The subjective narratives, told spontaneously at the peak of experience, are illusive. The objective facts are of the ordinary statistical worth. The interpretation is sharply separated from these classifications and is subordinated to the presentation of facts.⁶

Lemo Rockwood and Mary Ford made an interesting study of the attitudes of three hundred and sixty-four university juniors and seniors toward courtship, marriage, and parenthood.

⁵Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin, op. cit., p. 14.

⁶Robert Latou Dickinson and Lura Beam, A Thousand Marriages, (Baltimore: The Williams and Wilkins Company, 1932), p. 3.

This study was made in connection with the course in marriage offered in the family life department of the New York State College of Home Economics at Cornell University. The attitudes expressed by these young people were compared whenever possible with similar studies at other periods and localities.⁷

These and other studies furnish a source of scientific information in preparing young people for marriage. Many young people today express concern over the lack of permanence in marriage. They are alarmed by the high divorce rate. Statisticians claim that if the present rate of increase continues in divorce the ratio in ten years will be one divorce for every marriage.⁸ This does not mean that there is anything inherently wrong with the institution of marriage, but with the mental state of many who marry.

There are really four persons involved in every marriage. There is for each person who takes out a marriage license an invisible, unconscious partner. It is not possible for an individual to escape from himself. Therefore, one should take an inventory of his own life before seeking a divorce. He may need psychiatric or spiritual guidance. It should be borne in mind that one cannot change his inner disposition

⁷Lemo Rockwood and Mary Ford, Youth, Marriage, and Parenthood, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1945), p. 1.

⁸Edmund Bergler, Divorce Won't Help, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948), p. 1.

by changing his apartment. This is exactly what one tries to do in seeking a divorce. Clinical experience proves that running from one woman to another is the typical behavior of neurotic wolves, and running from one man to another the typical behavior of frigid women.⁹

It is the purpose of this study to determine the role of the high school and church in preparing young people for marriage. This role was determined (1) by finding the contribution of those two agencies at the present time; and (2) the contribution which a representative group of young people desired them to make in the future.

In order to determine the contribution of the high school and church in preparing young people for marriage, a questionnaire was sent to the students of Richmond Professional Institute. This was directed to a total of five hundred and two students. It included students from eighteen different states and three foreign countries. Three hundred and fifty students returned the questionnaires. This was a response of 69.72 per cent. The Richmond Professional Institute of William and Mary was established in 1917. It is a technical college of higher education, supported by the Commonwealth of Virginia, and organized as follows: (1) The School of Art; (2) The School of Business Administration; (3) The School of Distributive Education; (4) The School of Music; (5) The School of Occupational Therapy; (6) The School of Clinical

⁹Edmund Bergler, op. cit., p. 228.

and Applied Psychology; (7) The School of Social Work: Graduate; (8) The School of Applied Social Science: Undergraduate; (9) The School of Writing, Journalism and Publication; (10) The Department of Engineering; (11) The Evening College; (12) The School of Applied Science; (13) The Summer Session.

The students at Richmond Professional Institute represent different cultural and financial levels of society. They represent many different states. The writer felt that the group was representative of young people in the United States. Therefore, he directed the questionnaire to this group of students.

Another source of information was extensive research by the writer. This included reading many books and periodicals concerning the subject. A careful study was made of the various experiments in this field. One interesting source of study was that of interviews with persons directly concerned with this work. One marriage counsellor taught a course on "Love, Courtship, and Marriage" to the young people at the writer's church. This course considered the problems involved and the solution to those problems. The young people were definitely interested and expressed a desire for more training in this field.

Table I shows the age, sex, and marital status of the three hundred and fifty respondents. The ages extended from seventeen to twenty-three with fourteen over twenty-three. Three hundred and forty of the respondents were single, nine

TABLE I
AGE, SEX, AND MARITAL STATUS OF THE 350 RESPONDENTS

Age	S		M		D		O		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
17	4	5							9
18	18	22							40
19	19	66							85
20	7	90	1					1	99
21		70		2					72
22		9	1	1					11
23		20							20
Over									
23		10	2	2					14
Totals	48	292	4	5				1	350

married, and one listed as an annulment. According to years in college, the respondents included ninety-two freshmen, ninety sophomores, sixty-nine juniors, ninety-five seniors, and four graduate students. Two hundred and thirty-four felt a need for counseling in the area of love, courtship, and marriage. Sixty-eight received such counseling in high school, and ninety-seven through the church. In most cases, the extent of this counseling was very meagre. The high school counseling consisted of limited sessions with the counselor. In most cases, the church counseling consisted of a brief conference with the minister preceding the marriage. Many of the youth advanced the opinion that the counseling should be more specific, and at the senior high school level. They felt that the same emphasis should be given to this as other subjects.¹⁰

The eagerness of young people to learn the roles of husband and wife substantiates the opinion that young people should receive specific training in this area at an early age. The teen-ager makes observations of married couples. When these observations are properly directed, he will gain a wholesome perspective of marriage.¹¹ The principle of learning from experienced people is as sound in the field of marriage as it is in scouting, camping, or the trades. It is particularly valuable when a young person has come from

¹⁰The above figures were obtained from the questionnaire, a copy of which is included in the appendix.

¹¹Ibid., p. 4.

an unhappy or a broken home where he has been unable to serve a happy apprenticeship for marriage.

In high school and college the young people are able to learn more about the wide variety of marriage and family patterns. They have the opportunity of reading and discussing the results of research and clinical reports on thousands of marriages from many walks of life. This gives them a good perspective of marriage. Furthermore, it provides insight into their own aptitude for it.¹²

Today more than ever young people need to love and be loved. This is necessary for their emotional security which is a "must" in the establishment and maintenance of a good marital relationship. Love provides a feeling of trust, respect, comfort, and assurance. It creates an atmosphere in which youth can thrive and grow. They in turn will learn how to express love, give it freely, and be capable of receiving it. The young minds of youth are eager to receive instruction in this vital field of love, courtship, and marriage.¹³

¹²Ibid., p. 6.

¹³Lena Levine, "The Truth About Married Love," Parents' Institute, Inc., 27:111, August 1953.

CHAPTER II

THE ROLE OF HIGH SCHOOLS IN PREPARING YOUTH FOR MARRIAGE

The fundamental views of young people toward their potential marriage partners were formed long before the age of college youth. The formative years in high school play a vital part in shaping the ideas which young people carry with them through life. Here patterns are formed, and the adjustments of adolescence are made for good or bad. It is at this stage that the sex impulse emerges as a new factor in the personality pattern. Research has shown that the dominant interest of young people in the high school years is centered around love, courtship, and marriage. The high schools have a significant role in properly directing this interest of young people. This interest must be so directed that it will express itself in wholesome and sound attitudes.¹ Some high schools are making progress in this area and accomplishing a great deal. However, many still operate by the old "status quo" method and give the impression that, as far as they are concerned, love, courtship, and marriage do not

¹David R. Mace, Marriage: The Art of Lasting Love, (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1952), p. 180.

exist. It is appalling to think that the one subject with which young people are most vitally concerned and which may determine their future happiness is in many instances ignored.²

The end goal of medicine is prevention. This means in the field of psychiatry the prevention of emotional disorders.³

High schools are striving more and more to give students a wholesome, positive approach to life. They are providing opportunities for the development of healthy personalities. This is clearly seen in the courses dealing with marriage and family life.

The respondents to the questionnaire in this study had some very definite views about the role of the high school in preparing young people for marriage, as shown in Table II.

Definite classes for this purpose. Two hundred and thirty-three felt that there should be definite or specific classes for the purpose of preparing young people for marriage. Some difficulty has been experienced in building a comprehensive file of courses of study and outlines in preparation for marriage. Some of the difficulty results from the present small number of schools offering organized courses in this field, and still more from the fact that many of the schools which are providing this kind of education have nothing

²David R. Mace, op. cit., p. 181.

³Leon J. Saul, Emotional Maturity, (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1947), p. 3.

TABLE II
AREAS IN WHICH HIGH SCHOOLS SHOULD HELP

Definite classes for this purpose	233
Personal interviews with the counselor	136
Regular classes	77
Special assembly programs	32
Other ways	11

written which is ready for distribution. A few instances can be named in which curricula have been worked out in detail. One is called "Family Relationships." This course covers the social background and structure of the family in society. It also deals with the adjustment necessary before and after marriage. A second course, "Social Behavior," includes a unit of Social Behavior in the Home. The Board of Education at Toledo, Ohio, has issued a course of study called "Child Study in High School." This course deals specifically with parent-child relationships, and family-community responsibilities.⁴

The Cincinnati Public Schools have incorporated family life material including mental health and development, sex education, mate selection, family responsibilities of husband and wife, and divorce in their course of study, "Physiology and Health," for grades 11 and 12. Kansas City, Missouri, Public Schools in their "Human Science" course of study have included material on health, reproduction, personality development and understanding and controlling human behavior. It bears less directly upon the problems of family adjustment than do the others mentioned. This is prepared for grade 10. The San Diego Schools have outlined their program in detail, and it has been published as "Education for Human Relations and Family Life on the Secondary Level" by the American Social Hygiene Association. Likewise the National Education Association has prepared a pamphlet "The American Family" which would be helpful to teachers as a resource unit.⁵

⁴Evelyn Millis Duvall, "Education for Marriage and Family Life in the Schools," Marriage and Family Living, 10:31, Spring, 1948.

⁵Ibid., p. 32.

Personal interviews with the counselor. One hundred and thirty-six desired personal interviews with the counselor. High school counselors are rendering great service in this area. The counselor will want to discuss all the aspects of marriage and the specific problems which are discovered in the interview. He should postpone his special interests until the questions of the student have been answered. The student is then mentally prepared and emotionally ready to consider the material of the counselor.⁶

After the questions of the student have been answered, the counselor should ask him what he has read on the subject of marriage and the family. Many will say that they have read nothing while the reading of others will be very meagre. It is the duty of the counselor to call the student's attention to the vast storehouse of literature concerning the subject. Appropriate literature should be available for the student.⁷ The suggested reading material will depend to a great extent upon the intelligence of the student. He will be surprised to learn that so much good material is available in this field. The counselor can render invaluable service by offering him this material, and acquaint him with the scientific methods which are being developed.

Regular classes. Seventy-six thought that the study should be included in the regular classes. This method is

⁶Sidney E. Goldstein, Marriage and Family Counseling, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company Inc., 1945), p. 35.

⁷Ibid., p. 47.

followed in some schools. The Public Schools of Tulsa, Oklahoma, have this kind of curriculum. It operates from the earliest grades to the close of high school.⁸ This kind of program reaches all of the students in the high school. It is integrated into the various classes and activities. In fact, it is taught at the various levels of understanding in the life of the child. This means that certain lessons can be taught in the earliest grades.

It is a must that teachers understand pupil attitudes and behavior. An understanding of the symptoms and problems of children is of inestimable value in the work of preparing young people for marriage. The attitudes and behavior of children should be regarded as a means of adjustment to life situations. The teacher should be quick to differentiate between symptoms which are socially dangerous, and those which are common in adolescence. Many traits acquired in childhood are instrumental in forming undesirable patterns which later wreck marriages.⁹

Special assembly programs. Thirty-two felt that special assembly programs should be utilized in preparing young people for marriage. These programs should emphasize the positive aspects of marriage. They can be in the form of lectures, dramatizations, slides, or pictures. It should be shown

⁸Duvall, loc. cit.

⁹Dollard and Miller, Personality and Psychotherapy, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1951), p. 163.

clearly that a successful marriage is dependent upon the two parties involved. Cooperation is a key word in marriage. It should permeate the thinking and actions of both husband and wife.¹⁰

There are many other areas which can be covered in these assembly programs. Some of these are: (1) the definition and meaning of true love; (2) the ability to know when one is in love; (3) how to keep love alive; (4) learning to respond to each other; (5) finances; (6) the problem of both husband and wife working; (7) religion in the life of the family; (8) recreation; (9) the problem of housing; (10) adjustments and the settling of differences; and (11) where to go when help is needed.¹¹

These assembly programs can be educational, instructive, and interesting. Each program should have a definite purpose in mind, and attempt to meet the needs of the students. There should be careful planning with the students to determine the needs of the group, and the areas to be covered by the programs.

¹⁰Evelyn Millis Duvall, Building Your Marriage, (Public Affairs Pamphlet Number 113), p. 2.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 6-24.

CHAPTER III
THE SUBJECTS DESIRED BY THE RESPONDENTS
IN THE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

The respondents were given the opportunity of listing their preference of subjects in the high school program. The preference indicated the areas with which they were most vitally concerned, as shown in Table III.

Guidance to youth about dating, courtship, and mate selection. The largest number, two hundred and seventy, selected this as number one subject. They expressed concern over dating, the recognition of true love, and the wise selection of a mate. Dating often presents many problems for young people today. Many demands and pressures are placed upon them by the group. They are often faced with the choice between premarital sex relations and chastity.¹ This whole question is placed in its proper setting when sex is regarded as a sacrament. It then becomes another symbol of an inner unity of love and kinship.² It is only in married love that two

¹Andrew G. Truxal and Francis E. Merrill, The Family in American Culture, (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1947), p. 481.

²Roy A. Burkhardt, A Guide for a Man and Woman Looking Toward Marriage, (New York: The Hearthside Press, 1943), p. 28.

TABLE III
SUBJECTS DESIRED IN HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

Guidance to youth about dating, courtship, and mate selection	270
Sex education	244
Inter-faith marriage	234
Adjustment in marriage	224
Finances	157
Completion of education after marriage	126
Divorce	126
Employment of both husband and wife	120
Other subjects	5

persons become one in body through sexual fellowship. The next step in this first subject is the definition and recognition of true love.

Love is the positive emotion experienced by one person (the person loving, or the lover) in an interpersonal relationship in which the second person (the person loved or love-object) either (a) meets certain important needs of the first, or (b) manifests or appears (to the first) to manifest personal attributes (e.g., beauty, skills, or status) highly prized by the first, or both.³

This is a formal definition of love. It is difficult to give an adequate definition because love is something intangible. Dr. Theodore F. Adams in Making Your Marriage Succeed suggests that individuals test their love by using the questions of Dr. Roy Burkhart.

Is the most wonderful thought to be with the loved person and the most unhappy thought to be separated from that person? Are you personally attracted to the loved one? Are you attracted to the physical self? To the mental self? To the social self? To the spiritual self? Do you feel proud to be with the loved person in the presence of all the people you know? Do objects or things associated with this person have greater meaning because of him or her? As you look over the history of your relationship have you grown in fondness, in mutual interests, in contagion for each other, in freedom of expression with each other, in mutual understanding? As you consider the question of attraction, does the loved one call forth a real response? On the other hand, can you truly enjoy being with the loved one without physical sharing and physical expression of your love? Have you applied the test of time? Ordinarily a couple ought to have at least a year of fellowship and acquaintance and then some months of engagement before marriage. What is the basis of the attraction? Is it what the person can give you? Or the person's family connection? Or is it the person himself or

³Robert F. Winch, The Modern Family, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1952), p. 333.

herself? How does the loved one compare with others in your own mind? Is he or she supreme? Is this loved one as vital in your thoughts when absent as when present? Is this the kind of person you would like to join with in bringing children into the world? Is the love you feel together great enough to weather the crises and conflicts and the misunderstandings that come as you grow together? Are your highest ideals shared by the loved one? Do you share together interests that are worthy of your complete devotion?⁴

An answer of yes to these questions would indicate true love, and provide a good basis for marriage.

Sex education. Two hundred and forty-four desired instruction in this field. The present trend is not to have a definite course called "Sex Education," but integrate it with other subjects. There are certain groups of courses which are logical centers for integrated instruction on the relations of the sexes. Some of these are (1) Biology, extended to include human heredity and reproduction; (2) Health education; (3) Social studies; (4) Family life courses; and (5) English composition and literature. Personal counseling is also a very vital part of this program. There are so many students who need confidential counseling. Some of the areas in which counseling is needed are personal health, physical or mental, and personal problems concerning love, courtship, and marriage.⁵

⁴Theodore F. Adams, Making Your Marriage Succeed, (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1953), pp. 54-55.

⁵Maurice A. Bigelow, "Education And Guidance Concerning Human Sex Relations," Marriage and Family Living, 8:12, Winter Number, 1946.

Sex is an aspect of normal life. Therefore, sex education is a proper field of public education. Individuals need instruction and guidance in order to function as enlightened people. The basic purpose of sex education should be the mental hygiene objective. This is to facilitate the best possible integration between the physical, emotional, and mental aspects of the personality. A further phase of this objective is to facilitate the best possible integration of the individual to the groups of which he is a part.⁶

Inter-faith marriage. Two hundred and thirty-four requested this subject. It poses a great problem in marriage relationships. This subject should emphasize the difficulties in such a marriage. It should be shown that a successful marriage is based on a vital religious faith in which both husband and wife participate actively in the life and work of the same church. Religion provides the foundation upon which the home is built. It will be more significant when both husband and wife are members of the same church.⁷ The Protestant, Jewish, and Catholic groups all agree that inter-faith marriages are not desirable. The various steps involved in such a marriage should be taught very carefully in this course.

Adjustment in marriage. Two hundred and twenty-four

⁶Maurice A. Bigelow, op. cit., p. 13.

⁷Ibid., p. 48.

indicated this subject as a choice in the high school curriculum. It can be made quite practical by having the students participate in group activities and committee work. This will necessitate cooperation and adjustment to the various views in the group. Social ideals play a vital role in a wholesome personality. The individual identifies himself with social purposes which transcend self. Social objectives which are greatly desired will lead to enthusiastic activity. The individual must learn to be tolerant of the goals of others even though they may be in conflict with his own. This is excellent training for adjustment later in marriage. The course should consider the limitations in personality development, and also the possibilities of changing the personality.

Another consideration is that of practical areas in which adjustment must be made in marriage. Some of these may be great problems, such as housing, finances, education, both husband and wife working, and many others. On the other hand, some may be inconsequential, and these in many instances give the most trouble. The minor problems have a way of becoming magnified. This can be avoided by "closing the books" on all disputes at the end of the day. The husband and wife must realize that they live in a world of constant change. They must become adjusted to the changing world, and not be content with the status quo. Neither the physical nor the social remains always the same.⁸ If they

⁸Ruth Kotinsky, Adult Education and the Social Scene, (New York: D. Appleton Century Company, 1953), p. 34.

are willing to accept this fact and engage in "give and take," marriage for them can be a heaven on earth.

Lewis M. Terman directed a very interesting and informative study on the Psychological Factors in Marital Happiness. This was a group-administered questionnaire study of 2484 subjects representing nearly 1250 pairs of spouses. Most of the study dealt with questions of personality and marital happiness, but there are also data on pre-marital intercourse and marital intercourse.⁹ This study is very helpful in studying adjustment in marriage, and the psychological factors associated with marital happiness.

Finances. "How much does it take to get married?" This is one of the questions with which young people are vitally concerned. One hundred and fifty-seven of the respondents showed concern about it. They want to know the kind of income and the amount of money it will take to launch a successful marriage. There is no single answer to this question. Obviously the young people want help in determining the minimum essentials for a successful marriage. Such a course should include a consideration of both fundamental and superficial wants. The first step is to determine those things which are most important and those which are least

⁹Lewis M. Terman, Psychological Factors in Marital Happiness, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1938), p. 2.

important of one's specific wants.¹⁰ A pattern of living may evolve from this discussion which will contribute to a successful marriage.

There are several factors which enter into the satisfaction of human wants. One is the satisfaction of those wants by wise expenditures. Intelligent buying plays a vital role in the satisfaction of human wants. This means a wise selection of commodities and services. Home production is another means of satisfying human wants. The returns from this kind of production are gratifying in many ways. The income should be properly apportioned among purchase, home production, and community experiences. All families should plan a practical budget. This will vary with the individual families. However, each budget should provide (1) for emergencies or changing business conditions, and (2) security for the future.¹¹

Completion of education after marriage. This problem has become more pronounced because of returning service men. Many of these young men married while in the service, and often return to complete their education with a family to support. One hundred and twenty-six of the students in this study thought that some course should be taught in high school dealing with this subject. In addition to the veterans, some

¹⁰Howard Becker and Reuben Hill, Family, Marriage, and Parenthood, (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1948), pp. 393-394.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 396-409.

young people marry at an early age and are then forced to complete their education. This problem is accentuated in the case of pregnancy and children. There is always the question of economic support, of being separated if attending different schools, the girl's ability to help her husband by working and, at the same time, being a wife.¹²

This course can stress the difficulties involved, and enumerate practical methods, such as part-time work, etc., in overcoming some of these obstacles.

Divorce. Modern conditions necessitate increased wisdom in the selection of a mate, and at the same time for the achievement of more complete love relationships. This would reduce promiscuous love, and the high divorce rate.

A study of tourist camps near Dallas, Texas (Hooker, 1936) was made by noting license numbers on parked cars and by interviewing managers and employees. It was discovered that large proportions of Dallas people stayed at the camps which were near their own homes. Only seven out of one hundred and nine couples gave their correct names and addresses, and many remained only for a few hours.¹³

In addition to the above figures, the statistics on divorce are alarming to all who are concerned with the future of the home. Each year in the United States 400,000 divorces and annulments are granted. Nine thousand come to Nevada alone

¹²Robert Geib Foster, Marriage and Family Relationships, (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1947), p. 82.

¹³Joseph Kirk Folsom, The Family and Democratic Society, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1947), p. 547.

every year to get a divorce. There are about 7,000 divorced spouses in the United States at any one time. At the present rate, almost one out of every three marriages entered into in this country during the past ten years will end in divorce. Every year 300,000 children are affected by the divorce of their parents.¹⁴ The apprehension of young people concerning this problem was reflected in the fact that one hundred and twenty-six of those who responded to the questionnaire desired the high schools to consider this subject. The curricula can deal with divorce laws, the harmful effects of divorce upon all parties involved, and the underlying causes of divorce.

Employment of both husband and wife. "Will the wife work?" This poses a problem for many people. The traditional assumption was that the married woman remained at home. This view has been greatly altered in recent years. There are four basic reasons why the wife should not work. (1) If the husband's income is sufficient to provide for immediate necessities and conveniences; (2) Bad health on the part of the wife; (3) The decision to have children as soon as possible; and (4) the persistence of the traditional attitude on the part of the man and wife.¹⁵ The negative aspects of the

¹⁴Harriet Pilpel & Theodora Zavin, Your Marriage and The Law, (New York: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1952), p. 297.

¹⁵Robert A. Harper, Marriage, (New York: Appleton Century Crofts, Inc., 1949), p. 105.

wife's working should also be emphasized. It is easy for the couple to become accustomed to a large income, and find it difficult to adjust when the wife ceases to work. The couple may also adjust to a kind of life in which both work and there are no children. One hundred and twenty of the respondents desired this study in high school. This course can consider the positive and negative aspects of both working. Young people would then be able to make a decision on the basis of adequate information.

CHAPTER IV
THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH AND MINISTER IN
PREPARING YOUTH FOR MARRIAGE

Religion at its best should promote family happiness. It should be a cohesive force in family relationships. The church has great socializing values. It affords opportunities for youth of similar backgrounds to meet socially. It also affords opportunities for married couples to enjoy fellowship and mingle socially.¹ The respondents indicated their reaction to the role of the church in Table IV on page 29. They mentioned special study groups for youth as being very desirable in the program. These study groups in the churches often deal with such topics as the following: (1) Producing marriageable personalities; (2) steps in love and courtship; (3) how mates are selected; (4) the engagement; (5) physical factors; (6) getting along in marriage; (7) discords in marriage; and (8) financing the marriage.²

¹Helen Mougey Jordan, You and Your Marriage, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1942), p. 132.

²Ibid., p. 169.

TABLE IV
AREAS IN WHICH CHURCH SHOULD HELP

Special study groups for youth	211
Youth programs	164
Work with parents	149
Sunday sermons	43

These study groups are somewhat informal, and young people are given every opportunity to express themselves and ask questions. The leader will be guided to a great extent by the interests of the group. All questions are answered candidly.

The youth programs are another medium for preparing young people for marriage. There are many good series or units available in this field. The youth director should be familiar with the literature available for such programs. Some youth directors are so ingenious as to have the young people write original plays concerning the theme, and dramatize them as a part of their programs. Other aids which some churches use are slides, motion pictures, and lectures on the subject.

The church can render a great service to stabilizing marriage by its work with parents. This can consist of study groups or workshops for parents. It can include such material as child rearing, behavior difficulties, personality growth, and adequate adjustment. Parents are able to see their responsibilities and opportunities in such courses. They learn to appreciate the significance of love in the life of their children. Scientific studies reveal to them that children need love in order to develop security and wholesome personalities. This approach provides a new perspective for parents. It assists parents in rearing their children, meeting difficulties, and making personal adjustments. It is one method of developing stable marriages for tomorrow's world.

Some churches have ministers who are specialists in preparing young people for marriage. These ministers have studied extensively in the field of marriage relationships. They have attended seminars and devoted careful study to the techniques of marriage counseling. Many of these ministers render a great service to their people and the public by preaching a series of sermons on "Love, Courtship, and Marriage." Dr. Theodore F. Adams, Pastor of First Baptist Church, Richmond, Virginia, has been very successful in this respect.

What did the young people in the present study feel that the church should do in preparing young people for marriage? The answers to a question to this effect are summarized in Table IV on the preceding page. A large number of those reporting, two hundred and eleven, considered that the church should have special study groups for youth. One hundred and sixty-four desired youth programs. One hundred and forty-nine indicated that the church should work with parents, while only forty-three desired Sunday sermons on the subject.

The minister is a key man in a program of marriage education in the church. A very integral part of that program is efficient counseling. The special aim of pastoral counseling is an attempt by the pastor to assist people in helping themselves through the process of gaining understanding of their inner conflicts. It is sometimes referred to as emotional re-education. In addition to helping people with an

immediate problem, it teaches them how to solve future problems.

There are certain basic aims of pastoral counseling which should be followed in each counseling situation. (1) The counselee senses that something is wrong, and at least partially that the difficulty may be within himself. (2) Counseling progresses by understanding, and not by agreement or disagreement.³ (3) The counselor attempts to assist the counselee in helping himself rather than doing something for him. (4) The counselor clarifies ethical issues, but does not engage in coercion. (5) The counselor has real respect for the counselee, and is candid in his approach. (6) The counseling situations are viewed as difficulties to be overcome and opportunities for growth and development.

Young people are very desirous to receive adequate preparation for marriage. Therefore, they will welcome counseling from competent ministers. This is a rich and rewarding field for ministers. They should avail themselves of all opportunities to counsel young people in the proper preparation for marriage. One area in which youth desire enlightenment is the understanding of mature love. Obviously, with so many kinds of love to which one may be exposed, it is necessary to have a good understanding of mature love.

³ Seward Hiltner, Pastoral Counseling, (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949), pp. 20-25.

Mature love is the only basis for a sound marriage. There are certain criteria one may use in recognizing mature love.

(1) If you think of the other in terms of how you can make him or her more happy, more fulfilled in your relationship, and less in terms of what you expect him (or her) to do to make you happy--then you have mature love.

(2) If, in your planning, you think in terms of what "we" would like, what "we" will do, and how "we" will feel, rather than always in terms of "I" and what "I" want--then your love is sound.

(3) If you would rather be with, work with, and grow with each other than with any other person either of you now know; if life together means for you both a chance to share a common life with all of its ups and downs--then your love is mature enough to marry on.

(4) If you love each other enough to work out the disagreements and problems as they arise, caring more about your relationship than your own personal pride and prejudice--then your love will probably last.

(5) If you can see each other not only as pleasant companions, but as co-partners in the routine and tasks of life; if "she" will be the kind of mother you covet for your children; and "he" the man you'd like as your children's father--then your marriage has its base in the right kind of love.⁴

This information when properly presented by the minister will serve as an excellent yardstick for young people in determining mature love. Many unhappy marriages will be averted by such counseling. The home which is the "bulwark" of America will become more stabilized.

⁴Sylvanus and Evelyn Duvall, Marriage Is What You Make It, (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1942), p. 16.

The minister has a responsibility in counseling young people about the selection of a church home and religion in the home. They should understand the importance of both working actively in the same church. It is in this kind of environment that the marriage begins on a firm foundation. The two persons are united in the strongest of all ties, "religion." "There is absolutely no place like a Christian home for developing manhood and womanhood to the very finest and best, and to assure to a man and woman and their children the highest joys and the deepest satisfactions that life can bring."⁵ Therefore, religion is of vital importance in the home. It withstands the storms and vicissitudes of life. There is sacredness in the love of a Christian home. It permeates the thinking of the parents, children, and all individuals in it. Religion should be something quite natural in the home. It should be inculcated into the daily schedule. This can include prayers, a blessing at the table, and some form of devotion or Bible reading. The responsibility of training the children in an intimate relationship with God rests upon the parents. Any minister who fails to present these facts of marriage is recreant in his duty.

It is quite necessary that each couple has a comprehensive understanding of the marriage ritual. Many ministers give the couple a marriage certificate which contains the actual ceremony. One session of counseling can be devoted to

⁵Theodore F. Adams, op. cit., p. 58.

a study of the ritual. This will give the couple an opportunity to ask questions and gain an understanding of the ritual. In this phase of counseling, the minister has the opportunity of explaining the ritual, and particularly the permanency of marriage as mentioned in it.

The minister in his counseling can help the couple gain the right attitude toward children, and plan wisely for them. The majority of couples want children. It is quite essential that when pregnancy is decided upon, the child should be wanted by both father and mother. There should be consideration given to the health of the parents, the conditions under which the couple or wife will live if the husband is away, and the necessary financial support. The responsibility for the child rests upon the parents. The mother should not have other employment, but be free to care for her child. All of these matters should be taken into account before marriage, and before pregnancy occurs. The support, proper care, and mother contact are important. Pregnancy may be classified a family affair. The husband is also affected, and should very early begin to assume a father's role.⁶ Adjustment will be necessary during pregnancy. This may include environmental factors, and problems in actual home management. It may be necessary to alter living arrangements. There will be changes in adult routines to meet the demands

⁶Seward Hiltner, op. cit., pp. 187-188.

of the baby. Sometimes additional household help is necessary for a period of months. Plans must be made for a doctor, hospital care, and the added cost in caring for a baby. The parents should understand child care, and see that he receives the proper love and attention. Furthermore, adequate plans should be made for his education and development.

One factor essential to the understanding of any couple is the sharing of interests. Here is a tie of great importance. The couple should cultivate interests and share them together. These interests may be varied in many respects. The minister may suggest hobbies which the couple can share together. Another source is found in the field of recreation. Some husbands and wives enjoy fishing, tennis, golf, swimming, and many other activities. Many share books and intellectual interests together. When the family is blessed by the advent of children, these can share in the interests. It may become a family affair. Regardless of his schedule, a man should give one night a week to his family. This will provide rich experiences for all in the family unit, and furnish an environment in which love continues to grow. This sharing of interests will be reflected in the mutual solving of problems by husband and wife. It is an important phase of counseling.

The sexual element, though often over-emphasized, has a God-given place in marriage. It is something which makes married love different from all other human relations. It

is a sacrament because it is an outer symbol of an inner unity of love and kinship. The minister can suggest to young people the importance of making the right beginning in the matter of sex.

One of the tragedies of life is that so many young people enter into pre-marital intercourse with the excuse that they want to know if they are fitted to each other. Frigidity, in my observation, is caused by pre-marital intercourse more than any other thing. The reason is that the relationship is carried on first of all with a hesitation on the part of the girl and maybe on the part of the boy. Both may be afraid of pregnancy, especially the girl. The relationship takes place under a situation that is not favorable to mutual trust and complete happiness, or for one reason or another the girl does not get fulfillment. Or if there is maladjustment because they enter into the relationship contrary to custom they find it difficult to enlist the counsel of a trusted friend, so they blunder on with their problem unsolved. The girl is aroused without release and she begins to associate with the experience feelings⁷ that make it more costly than it is satisfying.

The young couple planning marriage should have a good physical examination. Another important step is the right attitude toward the relationship. The minister can suggest good books and literature dealing with the subject. He may also administer personality evaluation tests or pre-marital tests. Some very popular tests in this field are Bernreuter Personality Inventory, Buress-Cottrell Marriage Prediction Scale, Johnson Temperament Analysis, Moss-Hunt-Omwake Social

⁷Roy A. Burkhardt, op. cit., p. 30.

Intelligence Test, and Sex Knowledge Inventory.

All young people are faced with vocational plans and problems. In his counseling, the minister can render the greatest service by (1) helping the young people discover their interests and aptitudes for different positions; (2) to discover the profession in which the interest and aptitudes are most dominant; and (3) the opportunities in this profession. A great deal of appropriate literature on the subject, and tests can be utilized. The minister may want to refer the young people to the proper agency for a detailed study of the problems involved and other technical matter about the profession.

The consideration of an adequate budget is a very definite part of the minister's counseling. The young people may prepare a sample budget under the guidance of the minister. The engaged couple may desire to consider the general aspects of the budget. In either case, some very definite procedures should be outlined. The budget should be simple and provide for flexibility. It should include necessities, anticipated luxuries, recreation, emergencies, and plans for the future. The minister can render invaluable service by causing the young people to think coherently and plan wisely for an adequate budget.

Housing is of vital concern to all couples. Wise counseling on the part of the minister may avoid many discords later in life. All authorities agree that it is not advisable

for the young couple to live with in-laws. They need to be alone so that adjustments can be worked out without interference from others. If one is forced to live with in-laws, some very definite policy should be decided upon before the marriage. The locality and type of housing should be considered. In case of children, adequate space, kind of neighborhood, and other factors should be considered. The counseling should be very definite and inclusive in this respect.

How did the young people in the present study react to the role of the minister in counseling? A summary of their answers is found in Table V on the following page. The order of their preference as to counseling is as follows: understanding of mature love, two hundred and sixty-five; selection of a church home and religion in the home, two hundred and thirty-three; understanding of marriage ritual, two hundred and thirty; attitude toward and plans for children, two hundred and six; sharing of interests, one hundred and seventy-nine; sex education, one hundred and fifty-six; vocational plans and problems, eighty-one; an adequate budget, sixty-one; and housing plans, thirty-eight.

TABLE V
 AREAS IN WHICH MINISTER'S COUNSELING IS
 DESIRED WITH ENGAGED COUPLES

Understanding of mature love	265
Selection of a church home and religion in the home	233
Understanding of marriage ritual	230
Attitude toward and plans for children	206
Sharing of interests	179
Sex education	156
Vocational plans and problems	81
An adequate budget	61
Housing plans	38
Others	3

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It is apparent from the study of the students of Richmond Professional Institute that their preparation for marriage has been quite limited. Sixty-eight of the three hundred and fifty respondents indicated that they had received some counseling in high school, and ninety-seven in church. The writer checked carefully with the students and discovered that their counseling was very limited. In the majority of cases, the high school counseling consisted of a few sessions with the counselor. In many instances, the churches offered a brief conference with the minister preceding the marriage. Since the majority of the respondents did not receive counseling, there would appear to be a need for it in high school.

The group as a whole showed marked interest in preparation for marriage. Many of the questionnaires contained notes from the students dealing with the subject. The majority felt that the logical place for marriage preparation was in the high school. They emphasized the fact that the subject

should occupy a prominent place in the curriculum, and be required of all students. Some stated that it should receive the same emphasis as other subjects in the curriculum.

The respondents felt that the rapid increase in divorce demanded constructive and preventive measures. It was felt that a concerted effort by the schools would contribute toward a stabilization of the home. It is generally accepted that young people of high school age are vitally concerned with love, courtship, and marriage. This was clearly seen in the answers of the respondents, and indicated the need for study at the high school level.

The study revealed definite views by the respondents concerning the role of the high school in preparing young people for marriage. It was felt that the schools should offer study through both definite and regular classes. The place of the counselor and the use of special assembly programs was emphasized as an area of service by the schools.

Guidance to youth about dating, courtship, and mate selection headed the list of subjects desired in the curriculum. The other subjects in order of importance are as follows: sex education, inter-faith marriage, adjustment in marriage, finances, completion of education after marriage, divorce, and employment of both husband and wife. The majority of the students felt that these subjects were a must in every high school curriculum.

The study showed a definite desire on the part of the respondents to receive guidance for marriage through the church. They rated special study groups for youth as the number one area in which the church should help. Youth programs, work with parents, and Sunday sermons followed their number one choice.

The respondents indicated the counseling of the minister as another important area in which the church can help young people. It was felt that good counseling by the minister would solve many of the problems of marriage. The majority expressed a desire for this service by the minister. The areas in which the minister should counsel were listed in their order of importance as follows: understanding of mature love, selection of a church home and religion in the home, understanding of the marriage ritual, attitude toward and plans for children, sharing of interests, sex education, vocational plans and problems, an adequate budget, and housing plans.

It is evident from this study that the schools and churches have been recreant in preparing young people for marriage. The present age demands improvement in this respect. The schools should enlarge their curriculum to include courses which will adequately prepare young people for marriage. A great deal of this material can be integrated with the regular courses. This is especially true of sex education.

Some of the material can be set up as a definite class or classes in the curriculum.

This program requires careful planning, and qualified teachers to execute it. These teachers should be of the highest calibre, and well trained in every respect. Some studies suggest that teachers and counselors in this area should be required to have a Master's Degree. They should be persons of emotional maturity. This program should be taught by the best teachers, and required of all students.

The role of the church in preparing young people for marriage is rather clearly defined in this study. This is a definite obligation of the church, and one which is being met by only a few of the large churches. This weakness on the part of the church may be due to a lack of trained ministers in the field of marriage relationships. The seminaries today are training the young ministers to assume their rightful place in this field. This should mean in the future a better program by the churches. A qualified minister can contribute greatly to the stability of the home by properly counseling young couples before marriage.

On the basis of this study, it appears that the school and church can make a great contribution in preparing young people for marriage. This requires cooperation and coordination between the school and church in attacking the problem and finding a solution to it.

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APPENDIX
QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN STUDY

QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDENTS OF RICHMOND PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTE

In filling out this questionnaire you will be helping to determine the needs of youth. The results of this questionnaire will be published in a thesis, but since names will not be used in the thesis, there is no need to sign your name. Thank you for your participation in this study.

The Rev. Joseph F. White

I PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

A. Personal Data:

- What is your age? Years.
 What is your sex? () Male: () Female
 What is your marital status? () Single: () Married:
 () Divorced: () Other
 What education have you had? (Circle your present
 year in college) 1 2 3 4
 Do you feel a need for counseling in such areas as
 love, courtship, and marriage? () Yes: () No
 Did you receive such counseling:
 In high school? () Yes: () No
 In church? () Yes: () No

II THE HIGH SCHOOL AND PRE-MARRIAGE COUNSELING

- B. Do you believe that high schools should provide help
 with regard to pre-marriage problems?
 () In personal interviews with the counselor?
 () In definite classes for this purpose?
 () In regular classes?
 () In special assembly programs?
 () In some other way? Explain.
- C. Which of the following subjects do you feel should be
 included in such a program?
 () Guidance to youth about dating, courtship, and mate
 selection.
 () Inter-faith marriage (Marriage between a Protestant
 and a Jew or a Roman Catholic.)
 () Adjustment in marriage.
 () Employment of both husband and wife.
 () Finances.
 () Completion of education after marriage.
 () Sex education.
 () Divorce.
 () Other subjects: List below.

III THE CHURCH AND PRE-MARRIAGE COUNSELING

D. Do you believe that the church should provide help with regard to pre-marriage problems?

- In youth programs?
- In special study groups for youth?
- In Sunday Sermons?
- In work with parents?

E. Which of the following should a minister include in his counseling with engaged couples?

- Understanding of the marriage ritual.
 - Understanding of mature love.
 - Housing plans.
 - Sharing of interests.
 - Attitudes toward and plans for children.
 - Selection of a church home and religion in the home.
 - An adequate budget.
 - Vocational plans and problems.
 - Sex education.
- OTHERS: LIST BELOW.

VITA

The writer, Joseph Franklin White, son of Robert Benjamin White and Elva Driscoll White, was born in Mathews, Virginia, on January 27, 1916. He was educated in the Mathews Public Schools, receiving his diploma from Lee-Jackson High School in June, 1934. He entered Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, Virginia, in September, 1935, and graduated with the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English in June, 1939. He accepted a position as teacher and coach at Gretna High School, Gretna, Virginia, in the fall of 1939. He married Miss Virginia D. Hodnett, a member of the faculty at Gretna High School, in July, 1941. They have one daughter, Rebecca Clark White, born on November 23, 1944. He became the principal of Dan River High School at Ringgold, Virginia, in the spring of 1942, where he remained until June, 1947. At this time, he entered the ministry of the Methodist Church. He served at Epworth Church, Thaxton, Virginia, for three years. The work on the program leading to a Master of Science Degree in Education was begun at the University of Richmond in the winter of 1952. He is at present pastor of Pace Memorial Church in Richmond, Virginia.