HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The home economics discipline grew out of a time when few colleges were open to women. Land-grant colleges, established as a result of the 1862 Merrill Act, helped to change this. These colleges were not only open to women, but also included “domestic science” courses.

The term “home economics” was first used during the 1899-1909 annual Lake Placid Conference in the Adirondack Mountains. The conference was held to discuss a new educational field that dealt with home and family life. Influential women, such as Ellen Richards and Isabel Bevier, attended these conferences in hopes of creating an academic curriculum that would encourage professional opportunities for women. These series of conferences eventually led to the establishment of the American Home Economics Association (AHEA) in 1909, which in turn laid the foundation for the Family and Consumer Sciences (the modern term for “home economics”) programs offered today.

For more information, visit the University of Michigan Web site that discusses the evolution of home economics in America or the Purdue University Web site that discusses the importance and impact of the Lake Placid Conferences.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

There is a wide variety of primary sources for home economics available on the Library of Congress Web site, including cookbooks, posters, and photographs. This primary source set contains a collection of sources on several topics discussed in home economics classes:

- p. 2 Sustainable Strategies
- p. 3 Economic Development & Advertising
- p. 4 Home & Family
- p. 5 Health
- p. 6 Nutrition

(pp. 7-8 are bibliographic citations)

Students can try out one of the many recipes found throughout the cookbooks or they can research some of the nutritional tips and medical advice found in the books as well. Are these tips and suggestions still applicable today? Why or why not? Students can also investigate how women were portrayed in print media over the years. There are also a wide variety posters and advertisements. What messages are these sending to the public? Which ones are examples of propaganda?

For more lesson ideas see the December 2009 TPS-MTSU Newsletter.
SUSTAINABLE STRATEGIES

Prepare! A Book of Practical Information on Canning and Preserving  [ca. 1920s; 18 pages]

Grow it yourself Plan a farm garden now. [between 1941 and 1943]

Your wartime duty! Don’t waste water Do not use more water in the kitchen than is necessary / / Kerkam. [between 1941 and 1943]

How To Do Pickling [1917; 9 pages]

Daytona Beach, Florida. Bethune-Cookman College. Students attending the agricultural college picking cabbages and other vegetables, which help the school stay on a self-sustaining basis [1943]
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & ADVERTISING

The Story of Coffee and How to Make It [1925; 11 pages]

Coca-Cola television commercials:
- Stop motion: Walking hot dog, hamburgers, and disappearing Coca-Cola [between 1954 and 1956]
- Hilltop [1971]
- Polar Bear – Northern Lights [1993]

Uncle Sam says - garden to cut food costs Ask the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., for a free bulletin on gardening – it’s food for thought / [1917]

Quaker Oats Factory, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Labeling and inspecting [ca. 1920-1950]

Hershey’s Sweet Milk Chocolate [n.d.]

Uncle Sam says - Garden to cut food costs Ask the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., for a free bulletin on gardening - it’s food for thought / [1917]

Coca-Cola television commercials:
- Stop motion: Walking hot dog, hamburgers, and disappearing Coca-Cola [between 1954 and 1956]
- Hilltop [1971]
- Polar Bear – Northern Lights [1993]

Natchez, Miss. [1940]
There are jobs for you, if trained Complete free course in household training : You learn meal planning, cooking, table service, laundry, cleaning and child care. [between 1936 and 1940]

Pumpkin pies and Thanksgiving dinner at the home of Mr. Timothy Levy Crouch, a Rogerine Quaker living in Ledyard, Connecticut [1940]

The Kitchen Encyclopedia [1911; 18 pages]

Family record and marriage certificate [c. 1873]

[Eric and Edith Matson with their children, (left to right) Anne, David and Margaret, seated around a radio reading, at their Jerusalem home] [between 1937 and 1941]
HEALTH

Obey cancer’s danger signals Do not wait for pain: Go to a physician if you have […] / / Herzog. [between 1936 and 1938]

American Red Cross health center Your membership helps to put a health center in your town. [1919]

“Just a scratch” But! : Infection is avoided by immediate first aid on-the-job! [between 1936 and 1941]

Washington, D.C. instructor in a health education class at Woodrow Wilson High School [1943]

A Mother’s Manual [1928; 17 pages]

Swim for health in safe and pure pools [1940]
NUTRITION

Eat these every day [between 1941 and 1943]

Milk - for health, good teeth, vitality, endurance, strong bones [1949]

Eat fruit - be healthy [between 1936 and 1938]

Rawleigh's Good Health Guide and Cook Book [1929; 20 pages]

Conducting diet and nutrition experience on rats in the animal lab of the home economics department at Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa [1942]

All About Milk: Our Best Food [1929; detail]

Health measures for low home temperatures. With less fuel available to heat America's homes, youngsters must have the right kind of inner fuel to keep them warm and healthy in sixty-five degree rooms. A balanced, vitamin-rich diet will aid materially in enabling children to build up resistance to the colder temperatures which will prevail this winter in homes and schools. [1942]
Teachers: Providing these primary source replicas without source clues may enhance the inquiry experience for students. This list of citations is supplied for reference purposes to you and your students. We have followed the Chicago Manual of Style format, one of the formats recommended by the Library of Congress, for each entry below, minus the access date. The access date for each of these entries is March 21, 2011.


Wolcott, Marion Post, photographer. “Natchez, Miss.” Photograph. 1940. From Library of Congress: America from the Great Depression to World War II: Photographs from the FSA-OWI, 1935-1945. http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/fsaall:@field(NUMBER+@band(fsac+1a34333)).

Hilltop. 35 mm film. McCann-Erickson, 1971. From Library of Congress: Fifty Years of Coca-Cola Television Advertisements. http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/cola:@field(DOCID+@lit(kocl332j_01)).


CITATIONS, cont.


Mathews, John, designer. ““Just a scratch” But!: Infection is avoided by immediate first aid on-the-job!” Poster. Federal Art Project, between 1936 and 1941. From Library of Congress: By the People, For the People: Posters from the WPA, 1936-1943. http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/wpapos:@field(NUMBER+@band(cph+3b48706)).


Freeman, Albert, photographer. “Health measures for low home temperatures. With less fuel available to heat America’s homes, youngsters must have the right kind of inner fuel to keep them warm and healthy in sixty-five degree rooms. A balanced, vitamin-rich diet will aid materially in enabling children to build up resistance to the colder temperatures which will prevail this winter in homes and schools.” Photograph. 1942. From Library of Congress: America from the Great Depression to World War II: Photographs from the FSA-OWI, 1935-1945. http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/fsall:field(NUMBER+@band(fsa+8b04538)).