

Housing Lack Blamed For Marriage Chaos

The critical lack of adequate housing was given as one reason for the present chaos in marriage, by Dr. Katherine Whiteside Taylor, vice president, National Conference on Family Relations.

No Family Life

Speaking at the annual meeting of the Marriage Council of Philadelphia, which held a luncheon in conjunction with the National Conference and the Pennsylvania Conference on Family Relations at the Bellevue-Stratford yesterday, Dr. Taylor said, "Among the most obvious and universal of the difficulties causing continual irritation and conflict among returned veterans and their wives, are those arising from the tragic lack of housing, so that it is almost impossible to establish the fundamental values of family life.

Dr. Taylor told her audience of more than 500 people that the feeling of having no status in his own home is another thing which contributes to marital unrest of the returned veteran. His wife and children have gone to live with his, or her parents, relatives are "entrenched" in the home and the wife has learned to be dependent on people other than her husband.

Civilian Life Hard

Also, husbands have become used to regimentation of army life, returning to family life is difficult. The man who has gone through years of war finds it hard to be patient about conversations pertaining to shortages. A wife may resent, even if she doesn't actually realize it, the foreign places he has visited, the experiences in which there was no place for her.

"It is in situations such as these," Dr. Taylor emphasized, "that marriage counseling services such as you have in Philadelphia, can be of great value. Married couples can talk over these problems with experts and can get advice which helps them readjust themselves."

Frequent clashes between different values and expectations of what married life should be, especially between people of widely different backgrounds who married in haste and have built up different dream pictures during separation, was cited as another reason for conflicting values in postwar marriages.

Women Want to Work

"Recently discovered woman power," said the speaker, "is another extremely important factor in present day marriages. Women left homes to work, and a very large group of women have discovered they need not depend upon their men for relationship to the outside world. They are able to establish this relationship for themselves.

"A large amount of aggressiveness will be released when women who have prized the outlets of paid or volunteer work during the war, have to go back to functioning as homemakers. This, like atomic power, can explode destructively, breaking up marriages and families."

Urges Community Programs

Dr. Taylor suggested one solution to this might be the establishment of community programs for life education to offer

strategic opportunity for the constructive use of unused woman power. This same power, she feels, can be used to excellent advantage in starting co-operative play groups and leading local study groups under the professional supervision provided by educational agencies.

Tribute to the work done by the Marriage Council of Philadelphia, of which Mrs. Stuart Mudd is executive director, was paid by Rabbi Sidney E. Goldstine, president of the National Council of Family Relations, and Bertram Fowler, of the Germantown Friends School. Dr. Frederick H. Allen, president of the Philadelphia Council, presided at the luncheon.

An afternoon session at the Bellevue closed the two-day session of the National and Pennsylvania Conference on Family Relations.