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Whose Souls do Bear an Equal Burden of Love

Recognizing the Value of the Work of the Home in Law

By J. Michelle Datiles
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WHOSE SOULS DO BEAR AN EQUAL BURDEN OF LOVE*
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¹ Intern, Department of Economics at the Catholic University of America

I. INTRODUCTION

This work of the home, this mother's work, which men poetically praise (praise is so cheap!), is not recognized by the State as having any value whatever. Neither does society recognize a value in it, notwithstanding it never tires of lauding and flattering.

- Helen P. Jenkins,² 1872

What is work worth? Is its value solely economic, and market value the only genuine value? We know this not to be true but the reasons are not so readily articulated. From the earliest years of the women's rights movement, advocates struggled with this question of what value to give the work of the home. "Life before law" is a common expression; life spurs legal action where it is needed. And since work is twin-born with life, arguably work gathers the fruit of an active legal system, primarily in labor and employment law but over-flowing into other areas as well: the realms of civil rights, tax, divorce, contracts, and immigration. Is this true of all forms of labor? And is all work treated equally, or do some workers bear 'unequal yokes,' lesser degrees of legal or social or cultural recognition, or all three?

Work, in its multitude of forms, is recognized and valued as work, protected in labor law as work, and remuneration is given to those who work. Domestic work or housework, though called *work*, remains an anomaly. The bulk of literature treating the work of the home ranges from labor law-focused research to feminist theory. This paper will provide a review of the historical and legal reasons why the work of the home is not fully recognized as 'work' by a brief over-view of the legal treatment of domestic work in the United States, the United Kingdom and Singapore.³

While our focus is on paid housework, necessarily we will take into account *unpaid* housework because it has a critical impact on how we view its paid counterpart. This review will consider the work of the home from a specific viewpoint: that of seeing domestic work, this care for the home, not only as real *work* but *humanly essential work*. Although paid domestic work is given a place within labor law, such work is not given due social and cultural recognition⁴, which is unfortunate since it stands paramount in the context of human flourishing. The paper concludes with a proposal to remedy this lack.

² Helen P. Jenkins, *Do Mothers Earn Their Own Support?*, New Northwest, July 5, 1872, at 2.

³ Of course, this over-view is by no means exhaustive. The main focus of this paper being the discussion in Part IV, Parts II – III welcome future and further research.

⁴ Donna E. Young, "Working Across Borders: Global Restructuring and Women's Work," Utah L. Rev., 1 2001.

II. CRITIQUE

A. LEGAL TREATMENT OF THE WORK OF THE HOME

1. *Unpaid Domestic Work in the United States*

The “legal erasure of unpaid (domestic) work”⁵ may seem a strong statement yet reflects the reality. Housework done within the home by a family member is unpaid ‘work’ but not considered ‘work’ as in a commodity because it is not seen as marketable productivity. As we will see in Part II B, the reasons spring from long-held custom regarding the privacy and intimacy of family decisions. This rationale aside, the legal treatment of paid housework is affected by its comparison with unpaid housework. Materially the same, the difference is the *doer* and context. The work done—the practical, material execution of taking care of a home—is the same. A mother may prepare the same meals as a paid domestic worker⁶. A domestic worker may carry out the same round of chores a housewife would. Although the *what* is identical, the *who* changes the legal framework. Yet such work, whether or not remunerated, is still considered ‘less’ than other types of work.

Naturally, unpaid domestic work is not recognized under the law as ‘labor’ in the sense that should be regulated by labor and employment law. And not being labor, neither does it come under the law of contracts, social security, tax, or most areas of family law. Paid domestic work, in contrast, comes under all of these jurisdictions. As a contractual relationship, the houseworker is a worker, though in some countries (e.g. the United States⁷) they are not protected by employment law.

Labor Law. Unpaid housework is not considered ‘labor’ properly speaking. It is considered to be above the law. Within the familial context, housework remains beyond the law’s boundaries since, according to the court, housework is “loving and devoted ministrations.”⁸ Even if housework is translated into familial agreements, they fall outside of the law of contracts. The court has held that these agreements, particularly between spouses, are “against public policy.” In a particular case, a contract in which the wife would act as her husband’s nurse was held as “void as against public policy and there is no consideration for the husband’s promise...Whether or not the modern marriage has become like a business, and regardless of whatever else it may have become, it continues to be defined by statute as a *personal relationship of mutual support* (author’s italics). Thus, even if few things are left that cannot command a price, marital support remains one of them.”⁹

Social Security and Tax Law. The work of the home is also denied legal existence in social security benefits, which has been argued to be detrimental to life-long homemakers. Only labor is taxed so

⁵ Katharine Silbaugh, “Turning Labor into Love: Housework and the Law,” 91 Nw.U.L.Rev. 1 (1996-1997). A pioneer in work-home research, Prof. Silbaugh here explores and describes the value of housework as changing within sociology and economics but remaining static in law.

⁶ Within this paper, the following terms will be used interchangeably: houseworker and domestic worker; and housework, domestic work, the work of the home and domestic science.

⁷ *National Labor Relations Act*, 29 USC 152(3), those falling under the category “domestic worker” are exempted from employee status.

⁸ *Brooks v Brooks*, 119 P.2d 970, 972 (Cal. Dist. Ct. App. 1941).

⁹ *Borelli v Brusseau*, 16 Cal Rptr. 2d 16, 19-20 (Cal. Ct. App. 1993).

non-labor, i.e. unpaid, housework cannot be taxed. However, some argue that if it was, it would be beneficial to the houseworker, her family, and society at large. The limits of this paper allow only a cursory view of this argument.

Proponents reason that families should be taxed on the ‘benefits’ received from housework because the houseworker will then qualify for social security credit. The family then will have that ‘security’, and it will give domestic work better social recognition by placing a financial value on it.¹⁰ This author believes such reasoning repeats the fallacy of equating the value of work with a dollar amount. Social recognition is a related, yet separate kind of value. While there are professions, such as teaching and nursing which are paid and considered ‘work’, it is clear we do not give them even the financial value they deserve, as seen in the standard salaries for these careers. The education of youth and the health of individuals are important assets, not in terms of monetary worth, but of human growth and flourishing. Oftentimes, the monetary value does fail to reflect the human value. It is this human value, which concerns us here, and the human value of the work of the home will be considered in greater detail in Part III.

2. Paid Domestic Work

a) United States

Labor Law. “[W]here housework is done by a paid employee, its public nature is often obscured by a common understanding of the house as a private entity. This common understanding permeates various state and federal labor laws treating household employees differently from other workers.”¹¹ In the case of paid domestic work, it clearly falls under labor and employment law, contract law and the rest of the body of law ordinarily governing labor in general. While there is no question about this, there are clear legal differences regarding domestic work.

Unlike other forms of work, domestic work is a specific exception in key employment legal instruments. At the same time, a domestic worker, as a matter of *praxis*, seems to bypass those exceptions. For instance, on the Department of Labor’s webpage, ‘a household worker is an employee who performs services in and around your home. If you hire someone to do household work and you are able to control what work he or she does and how it is done, you have a household employee. This is true even if you give the employee freedom of action. What matters is that you have the right to control the details of how the work is done.’¹² This, however, contradicts the *National Labor Relations Act* definition of “employee” which specifically excludes those who perform the work of the home.¹³ At the same time, domestic workers are excluded from most state

¹⁰ This proposal has been given in several articles, including Nancy C. Staudt, “Taxing Housework,” 84 *Geo. L.J.* 1571 (1996) and Lisa M. Colone, “Taxing Housework...with a Deeper Purpose,” *Va. Tax. Rev.* 417 (2001-2002). which takes Staudt’s argument further but in a different direction.

¹¹ Young, *supra* note 3, at 20-21.

¹² From U.S. Department of Labor Women’s Bureau, *Facts on Working Women*, “Hiring Someone to Work in Your Home,” http://www.srskansas.org/KEESM/Appendix/C-5_hiring_someone_to_work_in_your_home_5_05.pdf (last visited on December 16, 2009).

¹³ *National Labor Relations Act*, 29 USC 152(3).

collective bargaining statutes,¹⁴ although recent lobbying efforts by domestic workers' right organizations have drawn increasing attention to these gaps in the law.¹⁵ In addition, the Department of Labor's Occupational and Safety Health Administration (OSHA) explicitly exempts household workers.¹⁶

Social Security and Tax Law. The *Social Security Domestic Employment Reform Act of 1994*¹⁷ sought to simplify the tax filing process for employers of domestic workers. It raised the required amount for filing (from US \$50 to US \$1000) and stream-lined provisions. As intended, this proves more beneficial to the employer than the employee. By raising the required monthly wage, the Act automatically removed a large number of domestic workers from social security coverage. Over the past year, there has been a decrease in the number of reported houseworkers. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics,¹⁸ the national estimated wage for the 915, 890 houseworkers in 2007 (closest occupational description is "maids and housekeeping cleaners") averaged an hourly median rate of \$8.82 (mean value \$9.40), or \$19,550 per annum.¹⁹ As of October 2008, the median salary for the new count of 717,000 houseworkers was \$357/week.²⁰ Currently, the median salary for 847,000 houseworkers is now \$378/week.²¹

Family Law. Since there is no difference, legally, between paid domestic work and other forms of wage work, nothing in family law is particular only to domestic work.

b) United Kingdom: Labor Law. The point of interest regarding the British treatment of domestic work is the UK's creation and maintaining of special schools, which provide training for domestic workers. These institutions, usually independently/non-government run, have helped the field of domestic work become increasingly professionalized. In contrast to similar schools in the US, the British schools have been able to improve the situation and status of housework. This will be discussed in more detail in Part IV.

c) Singapore: Labor Law. The *Singapore Employment Act*,²² which covers everything from contractual definitions to holiday requirements, like the *National Labor Relations Act* in the U.S., explicitly excludes domestic workers from the definition of "employee." Domestic workers are defined broadly as "any house, stable or garden servant of motor car driver, employed in or in

¹⁴ ND Cent Code 34-12-01(2) 1997.

¹⁵ As of July 15, 2008, Montgomery County, MD passed Bill 2-08, which requires certain employers of domestic workers to offer written employment contracts; it went into effect on January 18, 2009.

¹⁶ 29 CFR 1975.6 (1998).

¹⁷ Public Law 103-387 [H.R.4278], October 22, 1994.

¹⁸ Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2007, Occupational Series 30-2012 ("Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners").

¹⁹ 0.3% relative standard error (RSE); RSE is defined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics as a "measure of the reliability of a survey statistic. The smaller the relative standard error, the more precise the estimate."

²⁰ Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Highlights of Women's Earnings, Report 1008*, October 2008, p. 20, Table 2 "Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers, by detailed occupation and sex, 2007 annual averages." This figure has a \$7.00 Standard Error of Median.

²¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Highlights of Women's Earnings, Report 1017*, July 2009, p. 20, Table 2 (most current statistics).

²² *Singapore Employment Act* ("Chapter 91).

connection with the domestic services of any private home.”²³ In addition to domestic workers, seamen and certain executives in managerial positions do not come under the definition of “employee.” The language offers no explanation but does state that the “Minister [of Labor] may, from time to time...apply any or all of the provisions of this Act... to all domestic workers.”²⁴ On January 1, 2009, the Act was amended to include and protect confidential staff, a class which had been excluded. Domestic workers, however, continue to be specifically excluded.

B. RATIONALE BEHIND THE LAW OR LEGAL ASSUMPTIONS

In general, we have seen that paid domestic work is recognized within the law, like any other form of wage labor. At the same time, it does suffer from a persistent social stigma of being perceived as a ‘lesser’ form of work because it resembles unpaid, familial housework. Historically, the work of the home has been considered “inferior” to other types of paid work, “in terms of financial status, security and recognition.”²⁵ This will be discussed further in Part III. The common view is that the closer to private life, the farther from the market. However, this was not always the case, e.g. as agrarian societies attest, when a family-run farm existed for the family and the market. Yet the notion of work in general possesses a value transcending the market, and even the family.

*[W]ork can also be understood as a broader social activity where relationships do not always lend themselves easily to economic measurement even though they require skill and expenditure of time. In this sense, the notion of work covers all sorts of activities, including those, which contribute to maintaining and strengthening social bonds. **In place of work in the strict economic sense, one can define social activity, which both includes it and transcends it.** (...)”²⁶ (author’s emphasis)*

The worker, in working, by acting on the world,²⁷ performs a service to society, be it ‘goods and services’ in a broad or more private sense. In fact, 19th and turn of the 20th century reformers emphasized “a belief in the economic value and social importance of paid household labor.”²⁸ In the intervening decades, which saw civil war, the dominance of the Industrial Revolution, and social and civil unrest, this focus diminished. Women worked for wages outside their own homes, yet the majority opted for factory and shop work rather than housework. (Possible reasons for this shift will be discussed in Part III, *Critical Gaps*.) Yet an exclusively monetary value system ignores the fact that work is work.

²³ *Id.*, at Part I.2 “Preliminary.”

²⁴ *Id.*, at Part VII “Domestic Workers.”

²⁵ Debra Cohen-Whelan, “Protecting the Hand that Rocks the Cradle: Ensuring the Delivery of Work Related Benefits to Child Care Workers, 32 *Ind. L. Rev.* 1187 (1999), at 1197-1198.

²⁶ Raymond Le Guidec, “Decline and Resurgence of Unremunerated Work,” *International Labour Review*, Vol. 135 (1996), No. 6, at 645.

²⁷ Anthony Kronman, “Meaningful Work” 15-20, 24, 27 (Feb. 1995), an unpublished manuscript, on the file of the Columbia Law Review (also see note 41) cited by Vicki Schultz in “Life’s Work,” *Colum. L. Rev.* 1881 (2000).

²⁸ Peggie Smith, “Regulating Paid Household Work: Class, Gender, Race and Agendas for Reform, 48 *Am. U. L. Rev.* 851 (April 1999), at 900.

Although the professional landscape for women has improved (in terms of higher education, women entering the professions, and holding public office), domestic workers remain a ‘problem.’²⁹ The fact that we do not adequately appreciate the work of the home reflects our poor understanding of both the meaning of work in general and the importance of taking care of home and family.

Unpaid Housework

The central rationale for not recognizing unpaid housework as work is public policy regarding the identity of the family and home. To recognize housework as “labor” would place it under labor law and require compliance with market regulations. This is a step the courts will not take because it would interfere with the familial and private³⁰ part of human life where law should not unnecessarily interfere. But would legal recognition of housework as *work* automatically do this? Isn’t it rather a question of *value*, not strict market rules or legal requirements but a framework?

Housework is done in a home and usually by a family member who, arguably, already has a moral obligation to provide that kind of service. Usually falling to female responsibility (recognizing, of course, that others within the family also take on those duties), the court has denied housework the status of labor. “Persons engage in a trade, business, profession, occupation for profit, or as a means to gain a livelihood, but not so in establishing and maintaining a home.”³¹ “[H]ousework is generally not considered employment” because it expresses those familial “loving and devoted ministrations”³² which are outside legal considerations.

First, there is a firm assumption of family independence, i.e. a certain autonomy since it is a non-public sphere. The private, familial sphere has traditionally been untouched by the law unless considered necessary, for instance, in cases of spousal or child abuse, divorce proceedings and parental consent requirements for minors. Housework, which is done in and for those in a home, is an anomaly because it is ‘work’ when done for pay, and an ‘expression of love’ when not. The law’s focus, then, is not on the actual work done but rather on who does it and where. As the court in *State v Cooper* described it, “the home is an institution, not an industry.”³³ As such, it remains “a sanctuary of the individual and should not be interfered with by industrial disputes.”³⁴ Second, even if paid, it is still undervalued. It is seen as menial and of low value (in the sense of wealth production) and an extension of what someone would be doing for their own home anyway.

The undervaluing of housework thus comes from both directions: it is ‘above the market’ in the sense that exists within the family, done by and for the family, which is a non-public sphere of life, outside the law’s unnecessary interference. At the same time, it is also ‘below the market’ because

²⁹ Mary Romero, “Labor Law and Latcrit Identity Politics: Immigration, the Servant Problem, and the Legacy of the Domestic Labor Debate: “Where can you find good help these days?”, 53 U. Miami L. Rev. (1999), 1045- 1059. Here the “servant problem,” basically poor quality of work or a worker’s poor attitude, is described within the context of immigration.

³⁰ Private as in what lies beyond government regulation, ref. *Symposium on the Public/Private Distinction*, 130 U. Pa. L. Rev. 1289 (1982); See *Prince v. Massachusetts*, 321 U.S. 158, 166 (1944) stating there is a “private realm of family life where the state cannot enter.”

³¹ *Prince v Massachusetts*, *d*, at 4.

³² *Brooks v Brooks*, *supra* note 7.

³³ *State v. Cooper*, 285 N.W. 903 (Minn. 1939), at 904.

³⁴ *Id.*, at 905.

the kind of work done, these particular physical and material tasks, are considered to have little or no market or wealth production value. This undervaluing resonates in the status of paid domestic work, as will be discussed below.

Paid Housework

The conception of ‘work’ in law and flowing into the general culture, and *vice versa*, is restricted to labor performed for wages, or wage labor, thus having direct market value (DMV). As Silbaugh argues, the “significant relational component” of housework should not automatically mean it cannot be “productive and contribute(s) to family wealth.”³⁵ Paid housework, however, does inherit certain negative connotations from its unpaid cousin.³⁶ The work itself can be classed into two sides: the spiritual and the menial. Rather than see the holistic reality of caring for the home, society, and in turn law and other fields, we fragment what is primarily a complete service.

‘Spiritual’ housework is the caring of the home as an idea and highly valued obligation³⁷ menial housework is the multitude of small, often tedious tasks and chores coming with the obligation. And paid housework, still being housework, is comprised of all menial tasks stripped of the spiritual. At the same time, being wage labor, paid domestic work is governed by labor and employment law as any other form of work. And yet, it is not. As seen above, domestic workers fall under labor law but specific exceptions are carved out for them³⁸.

Why this ‘carving out’ and peculiar perspective on this occupation out of others? A brief look at the history of domestic work³⁹ shows that the Victorian household make-up (roughly from the Industrial Revolution onwards through to the early 1900s) consisted of the family with at least one household servant. Though this was a major area of women’s work, the first conference focusing on paid housework was not held until 1928. Prior to this, the *National Conference on Employer-Employee Relations in the Home Fair Labor Standards Act* specifically excluded domestic workers when it was written in 1938. Almost forty years would pass before domestic workers would be included in 1974. The exclusion of domestic workers from social and labor legislation has been the norm and not an exception.⁴⁰

III. CRITICAL GAPS IN THE SYSTEM

The central point around which everything turns is the mentality that the only possible value of housework is DMV. Consequently, there is no social recognition for this kind of work, regardless of

³⁵ See Silbaugh, *supra* note 4, at 26.

³⁶ See Smith, *supra* note 27; see Silbaugh, *supra* note 4 (discussing the link between unpaid and paid housework as detrimental to society’s holding the paid houseworker as a worker when standing alongside her unpaid counterpart) and Nancy Folbre in “The Unproductive Housewife: Her Evolution in Nineteenth Century Economic Thought,” 16 *Signs* 463 (1991).

³⁷ Dorothy E. Roberts, *Spiritual and Menial Housework*, 9 *Yale J. L. & Feminism* 51 1997, p 51-80.

³⁸ See Silbaugh, *supra* note 4, at 72.

³⁹ See Smith, *supra* note 27.

⁴⁰ Rae L. Needleman, “Are Domestic Workers Coming of Age?”, 46 *Am. Labor Legis. Rev.* 1070, 1070 (1939).

who does it and whether it is remunerated. Again, law and life being inter-related, a fault in one has ramifications in the other, just as an improvement in one can improve the other. The work of the home has been misconstrued to be *less* than other kinds of work because (1) historically, those who provided this work had been slaves, servants, or members of lower economic classes, and (2) a focus on the ‘materiality’ of housework, considering the physical work alone and ignoring its context and purpose. Law may be able to help correct this wide social misconception.

A. HISTORICAL BIAS

George Stigler, writing in the mid-20th century, stated that “[i]n 1908, for example, the Maine Bureau of Labor Statistics found that perhaps 10,000 permanent jobs for domestic servants were unfilled in that state’s cities and towns.”⁴¹ Stigler emphasized that the intense aversion to domestic work was due primarily to one thing. “The explanation, snobbery—that a ‘distinct line of social caste separates the ‘house girl’ from other female workers—was held to be most unreasonable: domestic servants earned more than girls in stores and factories; and their health, morals and dress and manners were at least as good.”⁴²

This sense of ‘social caste’ in such work, as well as slavery connotations, persists today and maintains domestic work’s social stigma. Complaints made by 19th century advocates could easily be a 21st century statement: housework is “socially productive work that systematically devalued by reason of the caste status of the women who performed it.”⁴³ Though there have been critical changes in societal views of domestic workers⁴⁴, it has not been enough to erase such an entrenched social stigma. In the 1970s, domestic work was even considered ‘obsolete’ in today’s world.⁴⁵

From the *who* to the *what*: why is this work seen as the work of the lower classes? The stigma originates in misunderstanding the work itself; since the work is disregarded as menial, those who should do it are taken as ‘menial.’ This brings us to the second, and more critical, point.

B. MATERIAL BIAS: THE PHYSICAL, MATERIAL WORK DEVOID OF CONTEXT AND MEANING

⁴¹ George J. Stigler, *Domestic Servants in the United States, 1900-1940*, Occasional Paper 24, April 1946, National Bureau of Economic Research, at 1, 6.

⁴² See Stigler, *Id.*, at 1.

⁴³ Abigail Scott Duniway writing for *The New Northwest* in 1871, cited in Reva B. Siegal, “Home as Work: the First Woman’s Rights Claims Concerning Wives’ Household Labor, 1850-1880,” 103 *Yale L. J.* 1157 (1993-1994).

⁴⁴ Generally, from slaves to servants, ‘the help’ as they were commonly called through the Victorian era into the 1920s; see Amey E. Watson, “The Reorganizing of Household Work,” 160 *Annals. Am. Acad.* 167 (1932), at 167.

⁴⁵ Lewis A. Coser, “Servants: The Obsolescence of an Occupational Role,” 52 *Social Forces* 31, 31-32 (1973), cited in Peggie R. Smith, “Organizing the Unorganizable: Private Paid Household Workers and Approaches to Employee Representation,” 79 *N.C. L. Rev.* 45 (2000), at 46.

*Even housework done by paid (largely female) employees continues to be underpaid and undervalued. A clear social message emerges: **women's work within the home is economically inconsequential.***⁴⁶ (author's emphasis)

Considering the second point, the focus on the work itself but viewed without context and meaning, this is the crux of the problem. The quote above focuses on domestic work as being devalued within the market. While this is true, the greater devaluation is the social stigma associated with housework, caused by a dual devaluing of the work done and the women who perform the work.⁴⁷

As a microcosm of the wider hospitality services, this kind of work is one of the most direct ways to change society, to transform it from within. The purpose of this kind of work is to provide care for the family and the home; it is primarily a service, which benefits more than those who are being served directly, those who are receiving the very concrete goods and services provided by domestic workers. Its impact reaches beyond this immediate circle, to others who receive services from that immediate circle. When the home is provided for and is nourished, those family members are able to carry out their own work. Due to its purpose, the work of the home has to be recognized as a worthy and worthwhile occupation in itself. In a word, "domestic service must become a self-respecting occupation rather than a state of servitude."⁴⁸

At the same time, those who perform domestic work also benefit *as workers*. This understanding of work, of the meaning of work as multifold, is anchored deep in the Western Tradition.⁴⁹ Work, no matter what work, is creative: it demands a certain personal contribution, regardless of extent or degree. It activates a central important human capacity: that ability to perform, to accomplish something which demands personal effort.⁵⁰

Various authors⁵¹ have highlighted the fact that housework has been held "economically invisible" for decades, if not an outright "illegitimate form of labor"⁵² though historically the prevalent occupation of women. The work of the home, although necessary for human life and flourishing, has been denied 'legitimacy' through economic, and even social, value.⁵³ "There is no tangible, commercial product of domestic service," as one court put it.⁵⁴

To this question of monetary worth as the only value, we can answer a definitive 'no.'

⁴⁶ Young, *supra* note 3, at 2.

⁴⁷ Cohen-Whelan, *supra* note 24, at 1198, commenting that it is debatable what causes this lower status, either the work or the women; we argue it is attributable to public disdain for both.

⁴⁸ See Watson, *supra* note 43.

⁴⁹ I agree with the points made in Anthony Kronman's "Meaningful Work," (an unpublished manuscript with the *Columbia Law Review*, *supra* note 26). Schultz' commentary on the manuscript: "According to Kronman, the idea that work can possess intrinsic value was made possible by the Judeo-Christian tradition. With the story of divine creation and humankind's fall from paradise, the realm of necessity—work—became imbued with a spiritual significance that was unimaginable for the ancient Greeks. [...] (this) belief in the historicity of the world made possible the idea of human agency—the view that people could act upon the world, by working on it, to complete God's work. [...] it implied that human labor—not just the holy labor of monks but the most mundane activities of men and women too—might be viewed as possessing a spiritual value of its own."

⁵⁰ On the importance of work for the worker, see generally, Schultz, *supra* note 26.

⁵¹ See Smith, *supra* note 27.

⁵² See Smith, *supra* note 27, at 899.

⁵³ Highlighted in Staudt, *supra* note 9 and Colone, *supra* note 9.

⁵⁴ *Tunnichiff v. Betterndorf*, 214 N.W.516, 518 (Iowa 1927).

“The estimated worth of a thing, ‘as the world goes’, is its money value. Law and society say this home work need not be paid in money; therefore, society and law value this work of the mothers of the nation at—how much? Nothing.”⁵⁵

The critical gap, as seen in the above complaint about society and law not giving domestic work a financial value, is the failure to appreciate the work of the home as true work benefiting humanity, irrespective of the monetary. Not only a work benefiting the human person, it is an essential work. The service of domestic work is vital for the individual, personal good of a human being because the home provides security & stability, the ‘space’ necessary for those “less tangible things, such as health, happiness, mental progress and social value.”⁵⁶ Those original individual values multiply into more far reaching human and social benefits.

This gap, then, is primarily conceptual and translates into a weak legal framework. Housework, like some types of work, e.g. the education field, fails to count as productive or marketable within the global arena. This devaluing clearly translates into the monetary compensation received by persons in those particular fields, even if they seem praiseworthy as part of a political platform. Education is touted as necessary, vital to society; average school teachers, though praised as essential, expect and receive salaries that speak the contrary.

This disregard of housework as productive work effectively kept paid domestic workers from the legitimate protective legislation meant for most forms of work. The history of legislation which restricted working/wage hours⁵⁷ reflects society, and thus the legislators’ misunderstanding of the domestic worker’s life. Not only was the work not considered work, the mentality held that even if it was ‘work’, compared to the rougher albeit at time equally demanding jobs such as factory work, it was a comfortable, satisfying existence that did not demand any government protection or recognition. As other authors have discussed, this was not always the case. In the United States, when the agrarian economy prevailed, housework was productive, in fact and in common thought. Real social and economic value was given to paid housework.⁵⁸ Such a view was widely shared. Is there any feasible way to reclaim this common vision of the work of the home as a productive and beneficial work? We propose one possible avenue in the next section.

IV. PROPOSAL TO HELP REMEDY THE GAP

The over-riding question is this: *is the work of the home truly a profession?* Is it a profession, according to the five elements, or is it a profession according to a liberal understanding of the word? Or is it yet, an incomparable kind of work, falling outside the traditional marks of a ‘profession’ because it not only crosses many subject areas, but more importantly, integrates them into one field

⁵⁵ See Jenkins, *supra* note 1, at 2.

⁵⁶ Mata Roman Friend, *Earning and Spending the Family Income: A Textbook in Home Economics* 67 (1930).

⁵⁷ See Smith, *supra* note 27, at 890-908.

⁵⁸ Jeanne Boydston, “Home and Work: Housework, Wages, and the Ideology of Labor in the Early Republic”, 5-8, 31-74 (1990); also see Smith, *supra* note 27, at 900-901.

of work, not meeting all five elements? As such, does it merit a specific *kind* of professional recognition?

These questions will be addressed in the following sections. There is another level of questions which will also be discussed, namely, what is the relation between the work of the home as (a) an academic discipline, (b) as a particular ‘career path,’ and (c) as domestic work in *praxis* within the home? As discussed earlier, there is that negative link between paid and unpaid domestic work. Yet there is a disconnect between the work of the home performed at an institutional level, which are accepted careers (e.g. within the hospitality industry), and the work of the home done within the smaller world of one household (whether or not done by a paid employee or an unpaid family member). The proposal in Section C will bring these questions full circle back to the first: what kind of professional recognition, if any, would ‘fit’ the work of the home?

A. THE MEANING OF A PROFESSION

Considering its etymology, *profession* is one of those words having a recognized classical, and at the same time, a colloquial and somewhat ‘relaxed’ meaning. While some words evolve, leaving behind their original context and usage, *profession* is used regularly in different, even contradictory ways. Some authors have pointed out, and rightly so, that the debate can degenerate into a circular justification: “assuming an accepted list of professions, a set of characteristics is generated that confirms that list, but may not admit other occupations.”⁵⁹

Before launching out into the key question of the work of the home *as a profession*, we must clarify this term. All meanings of the word pertain to one’s relation to one’s work: “engaged in a *specified activity* as one’s main *paid occupation* rather than as a pastime: a professional boxer; having or showing the skills appropriate to a professional person; competent or skillful; worthy of or appropriate to a professional person: his professional expertise.” Taking this somewhat loose understanding, we contrast it with the *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*’s more classical “lays claim to knowledge; the occupation professed.”⁶⁰

The legal recognition of a profession, meaning regulating that profession according to certain local or national laws, usually results from the government granting the *license to practice*. As we will see in Section B.2 (*The License to Practice*) and B.3 (*The Meaning of Certification*), *profession* construed strictly includes the governmental oversight which comes with licensing. In contrast, *profession* taken more liberally does require certification of some kind by a professional organization, while being free of unnecessary governmental regulation.

1. Evolution of the Original Professions

⁵⁹ Robert G. Kennedy, “The Professionalization of Work,” *Work as Key to the Social Question*, 2002, at 101. This article also proposes a new set of criteria for a field of work to be called a *profession*, namely (1) specialized knowledge, (2) commitment to service, (3) autonomy in decision making, and (4) sound judgment. While these are excellent, we chose to work with traditional criteria.

⁶⁰ *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, under the term “profession.”

Traditionally, the professions *per se* were limited to these three disciplines: medicine, law and divinity/clergy. Some would also add the military as the fourth profession.⁶¹ Other fields of work were not considered as part of ‘the professions’ strictly speaking although they may have required advanced education and training.⁶² While all kinds of full-time work were considered occupations, there were only a handful of professions. As will be seen in Section 2, certain occupations gradually evolved into professions as their structure, requirements and membership status changed over time. We will briefly look at the traditional professions, by way of a foundational definition, before considering if, and if so, how, the work of the home falls into a professional context.⁶³

Professionals, or those who professed (lat. *professio*), i.e. who swore an oath to uphold the principles of their specific calling, were limited to practitioners of medicine, law and the clergy (divinity). For our purposes, we will adopt five elements that all professions share: (1) an occupation, that is, work performed for pay (as opposed to leisurely pursuits or hobbies); (2) requiring a level of education or training in that particular field; (3) there is a local or national association of all members of the profession; (4) formulation of a code or ethical standards for the profession; and (5) license to practice as a member of that profession is governed by local, state or national laws⁶⁴. These five elements are found in the original professions in most Western countries where there is a regulatory body authorized to oversee professional admission and discipline.

Medicine. For instance, in the United Kingdom, the General Medical Council (GMC) regulates all stages of admission and practice of the medical profession. According to the *Medical Act of 1983*, the GMC’s “statutory purpose is to protect, promote and maintain the health and safety of the public by ensuring proper standards in the practice of medicine.”⁶⁵ Starting in Fall 2009, the GMC will require that physicians have a license to practice, which will be handled by the UK Revalidation Programme Board, directly accountable to the GMC.

Law. In the US, admission and authorization to practice law is governed by each state. At the same time, voluntary organizations may be involved with some aspects of the educational requirements, e.g. the American Bar Association oversees law school accreditation. However, attorney discipline, including suspension or disbarment, remains with the states. For instance, grievances in New York City are made to the Departmental Disciplinary Committee for the First Department, Appellate Division of State Supreme Court. In Washington, D.C., the D.C. Bar administers a mandatory course on the DC Rules of Professional Conduct upon admission to the Bar of the District of Columbia. While the D.C. Bar itself is a voluntary organization, it oversees this course. Attorney compliance with the Rules, however, is regulated by the Office of Bar Counsel, which was established by the D.C.

⁶¹ “To fulfill these societal needs, professions—such as medicine, law, the clergy, and the military—develop and maintain distinct bodies of specialized knowledge and impart expertise through formal, theoretical and practical education,” *U.S. Army Field Manual*, “The Army”, at 1-10, June 2005 edition.

⁶² For instance, some institutions, e.g. the *Intercollegiate Studies Institute*, stipulate that graduate fellowship applicants cannot be attending a “pre-professional school, e.g. law or medicine.”

⁶³ N.B. here we mean “professional” in relation to a *profession*, not as an adjective, i.e. competent and of high quality, which we take as a given standard for any field of work, professional or otherwise.

⁶⁴ These five are chosen from a larger list proposed by R.W. Perks, *Accounting and Society* (Chapman & Hall, London 1993), at 2.

⁶⁵ *Medical Act of 1983*, Part I, 1-a

Court of Appeals, to “act as chief prosecutor for attorney disciplinary matters” involving members of the bar.⁶⁶

2. Current Understanding of the Term: the “Professionalization” of an Occupation

Narrowing the definition to essentials, a profession is a “paid occupation, especially one that involves prolonged training and formal qualification,”⁶⁷ the practice of which is governed by an authoritative body to ensure a standard level of competence.

Over time, the list of professions has expanded to include fields of work previously regarded as trades or occupation, including engineering and architecture. By the turn of 20th century, nursing, pharmacy, and accounting had become widely recognized as ‘professions.’⁶⁸ The process by which a specific line of work incorporates the five elements listed above, evolving from an occupation into a profession, is commonly referred to as ‘professionalization.’ Essentially, such work is shaped into a profession by “the formation of a professional organization, (...) the struggle to gain legal support of exclusion, and culminating with the formation of a formal code of ethics.”⁶⁹

In this liberal sense of the word, the door is open to multiple fields based on education and training and a specific standard of competence. In most professions, such education and training are focused on providing the individual with specialized knowledge. The standards pertinent to the profession are not static. Even after being admitted as a member, regular review of internal changes and improvements are usually required, e.g. annual continuing education credits. Professional organizations exist largely to provide its members with continuing professional advancement, and to protect the integrity of the profession itself by upholding a specific ethical code.

We would argue that the work of the home has evolved, in fact, into a *de facto* profession. As we will see in the next few sections, it presently does encompass three of the five elements. Briefly, (1) it is an occupation or remunerated work; (2) it does require a certain level of education or training; and (3) local, national and even international organizations for the profession do exist.

The remaining two factors, namely (4) a professional code of ethics and (5) a license to practice, or as formulated above, legal restrictions regarding admission into the profession, are not firmly in place. However, there are proposals at the national and international levels for industry-wide standards of professional competence, which amounts to a professional code. Regarding the factor of (5) legally limiting admittance, we would argue that at various stages of education and training, already there are set requirements to meet in terms of university degrees or vocational training diplomas (see the next section IV B.1 & B.2), or requisite training/work experience periods before employment within the industry, whether in institutions or private homes.

⁶⁶ *Rules Governing the District of Columbia Bar*, Rule XI. Disciplinary Hearings, Section 6.

⁶⁷ *The New American English Dictionary*, under the term “profession.”

⁶⁸ Ref. J. W. Buckley, *The Accounting Profession* (Melville, 1974).

⁶⁹ Jennifer Roberts, Michael Dietrick, “Conceptualizing Professionalism: Why Economics Needs Sociology”, *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, Oct. 1999.

The degree of education, training and work experience requirements will necessarily depend on the employment context. For instance, a *Masters of Science* will be required to teach Home Economics at the secondary level in Switzerland. However, to work as a Home Economist Manager or Household Manager, one must take an examination and receive a *Swiss Federal Certificate*. In contrast, one may also receive vocational training in Home Economics, integrating theory with industry-related work experience, and work in household administration.

There are multiple routes to reach various levels within the profession itself, allowing a more liberal admittance than other professions. However, this directly relates to the nature of the work of the home. Such work is not necessarily *exclusive* in the same sense that for public health and safety, the medical profession must be exclusive. Medicine and Law must necessarily set strict, unquestioned limits to admission and practice. Home Economics, on the other hand, is and should be more accessible to more people. Since it is a ‘human applied science,’ as well as a socially necessary one, it is only natural that it gives wider access to those interested in pursuing it as a profession.

B. EDUCATION IN *HOME ECONOMICS* OR *FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES*

“To promote (...) the universal values of households and families as environments within which individuals are assisted to reach their full potential and to acknowledge their global interdependence.”⁷⁰

This “universal value” highlighted by the International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE), once accepted as such, turns us to the question of education. If we place such great importance on a healthy domestic environment, those who are responsible for that environment need the proper educational assistance and support.

Brief History

What we have been calling *the work of the home* is interchangeable with *home economics* in most countries in Europe and Asia-Pacific. The recordable history of home economics begins roughly in the mid-1800s when the United States was still largely an agrarian society. Men and women both shared the work in maintaining household and farm. From basic household training found in rural areas to the cooking schools in Boston, these education centers contributed to solidifying those life and family skills into an identifiable applied science. The key legislation which helped to jump-start home economics as an academic discipline was the *Morrill Act of 1862*, establishing land-grant colleges. These colleges incorporated applied or practical sciences, including “domestic science” into the traditional curriculum and admitted women, an uncommon practice at the time.

Several decades later, in 1909, the American Association for Home Economics (AAHE) was established by Ellen S. Richards, the first female graduate and professor at the Massachusetts

⁷⁰ *Mission Statement of the International Federation for Home Economics*, at point 1.

Institute of Technology, a critical figure in home economics history. The AAHE later changed its name to the American Association for Family and Consumer Sciences.

Barely one year before the AAFE was founded, in 1908 the International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE) was established in Fribourg, Switzerland. In 2008, looking back on its 100 year history, the IFHE stated that from the beginning it has remained faithful to its mission “to advocate for and to strengthen through education the economic, social and psychological well-being of families and households and thus improve the well-being of the larger society.”⁷¹

While the use of *Home Economics* remains alive in Europe, the terminology changed in the United States. The title was used until the 1960s when university departments and home economics colleges gradually changed their names to Human Ecology, Human Sciences & Education, or the more prevalent Family and Consumer Sciences. This was due partly to certain negative social connotations within the very feminist movement home economics had helped to foster.

In recent years, however, historical and social science research have helped to reassess home economics in a more positive light. One notable project is *HEARTH* at Cornell University’s Mann Library (*Home Economics Archive: Research, Tradition and History*), which is gathering historical documents into a central location to facilitate research precisely in home economics as a profession, its history and effects on society.⁷² Another recent initiative is the 2007-2009 research framework undertaken by the University of Helsinki, which proposes to continue much-needed development of the field at the “conceptual, theoretical, and methodological levels.”⁷³

An Academic Discipline and Applied Science

A complete and useful definition of *Home Economics* has been given by Prof. Kaija Turkii of the University of Helsinki, mentioned in the preceding section. She states that the field is both a science and a discipline, which “takes input from *nearly all kinds of sciences and humanities ... (with) deep roots in society*” (author’s italics). It is “a combination of personal development, healthy lifestyles/living, social responsibility, sustainable use of resources and cultural diversity. Home economics knowing have influences to all sectors of society by intervening and transforming social, cultural, ecological, economics and technologic systems. It has its own ethics based on caring, sharing, communicating and foreseeing.”⁷⁴

As we will see in the next section, *Home Economics* crosses many different subjects and, more importantly, integrates them into one field of work. As an applied science, there is a necessary

⁷¹ *Preamble, History of the IFHE*, www.ifhe.org

⁷² “The discipline of home economics (now human ecology, or consumer and family studies) played a vital part in the growth and development of our nation: it strongly influenced the growth of women's professions, the role of women in the community, public health and nutrition policy, and gender roles, among others. This essential applied discipline has long been a focus of both academic research and teaching and of agricultural extension, and progress in this field has materially affected the health and well-being of our citizens for the last 150 years.” From the *HEARTH* (Home Economics Archive: Research, Tradition & History webpage, <http://hearth.library.cornell.edu>, last visited on December 16, 2009).

⁷³ Kaija Turkki (Professor of Home Economics, Department of Home Economics and Craft Science, University of Helsinki), *Home Economics as a Discipline and Science: Introduction to the Research*, “Frameworks and Emphasis,” 2007, at 1.

⁷⁴ See Turkki, *Id.*, at 2.

dynamic between the academic discipline or body of knowledge and direct practice in society and work. Having the marks of a profession, including professional organizations promoting its members' competence and further training, *Home Economics* is not only a profession but a necessary profession.

Regarding the current status of *Home Economics* as a discipline and profession, we will consider the three prevalent education levels available. At this juncture, it is important to discuss home economics as an academic discipline, and its future growth in the European context (United Kingdom, Switzerland, Denmark, Germany and Sweden), in the Asia-Pacific region (Singapore and the Philippines), and in the United States.

1. Academic Degrees

Europe

In the European countries reviewed here, home economics is an academic discipline within a university course, not only at the Bachelors but in some cases, the Masters and Doctoral levels as well. The connection between academic coursework, teaching and *praxis* is very strong within the home economics context. In some countries, modules in particular areas have become part of the established curriculum; in others, modular instruction is still a recent development.

In the United Kingdom, the university level course is in Consumer Studies, Home Economics and/or Retailing. Available degree programs vary from the Diploma for Higher Education (about 2 years), Bachelor and Master of Arts, and Bachelor of Science. In addition, it is possible to combine coursework with practical industry experience.

Often the curriculum integrates home economics with education, as is the case in Denmark, Germany, Latvia, Sweden, and Switzerland⁷⁵. For instance, Denmark's University of Education offers a Masters in Home Economics and Education. In addition, the Bachelors Degree at Danish Teacher Training Colleges include home economics course in their curriculum. In Latvia, a 5-year Professional Study Program in Home Economics Education confers a Bachelors of Education degree, equipping their graduates to teach home economics. In Sweden, there is a 3-year Bachelors degree through the Teacher Training Program in Home and Consumer Studies. A further Masters and Doctorate in Home Economics (4 years) can also be pursued. Germany also offers a Bachelors and Masters of Science. Such courses are clearly focused on a teaching career, either at the secondary or university level.

The University of Helsinki's Department of Home Economics and Craft Science is a notable example of a holistic approach to the field. Offering several different degrees, the department shows a wide-range of career possibilities from academia, secondary education, as well as community-oriented practical experience. In their own words, they describe their approach as "comprehensive and multi-disciplinary...allow(ing) research in the...academic field" coupled with "competence in the

⁷⁵ Further information on these countries is available by contacting a country's representative at the *International Federation for Home Economics*, which lists contact information on its website (www.ifhe.org).

theoretical and practical aspects of the subject with teaching skills.”⁷⁶ Their multi-faceted approach reflects the complex nature of the field itself.

Asia-Pacific

In the Philippines and Singapore, several universities have solid faculties or colleges of home economics. The University of the Philippines’ College of Home Economics offers the Bachelor, Master and Doctoral Degrees. Complementing coursework are various Extension Programs, which are modular-based sessions in specific areas such as Household Resource Management and Entrepreneurship. The curriculum is created in such a way that it provides graduates with the education and experience necessary for academic careers but also for leadership roles in research, management and administration.

Singapore differs in this respect. The focus is on teaching and education. Its Ministry of Education provides four Teacher Training Schemes, one of which is for Home Economics Teachers at the secondary level. As trainee teachers, students who complete the program are given 5-year contracts to teach home economics in a secondary school.

2. Vocational Training

The other career path, and perhaps the most common, is household and/or institutional management. Vocational training is a general term, which would include actual vocational schools for home economics, universities or colleges of applied science where periods of industry work experience complements traditional coursework, and shorter more focused courses preparatory to an examination. In a word, specialized training focused on competent work and management within the industry as opposed to teaching it as a subject.

3. “License to Practice”

We need to distinguish certification from the narrower ‘license to practice’. The professional license to practice is a government-regulated authorization to practice one’s profession. Basically, it is legally required for one to hold oneself out to the public as a member of a profession.

C. PROPOSAL: INDEPENDENT CERTIFICATION

While this paper does not propose a complete solution for the work of the home, it does suggest a new look at an older proposal. During the Depression, and later in the 1960s, ideas for specialized training programs and a certification process were introduced in an attempt to ‘professionalize’ the

⁷⁶ The University of Helsinki, Department of Home Economics and Craft Sciences/Faculty of Behavioural Sciences, information on Degrees at <http://www.helsinki.fi/kkt/english/studies.htm> (last visited on December 16, 2009).

field.⁷⁷ In addition to improving worker competence, status, wages, and conditions, it also sought to place domestic work on par with other forms of wage work.⁷⁸

“It is the home’s dual nature, as a refuge for a private family and a workplace for a domestic worker, which has hindered efforts to find the appropriate level of state intervention. Once one concedes that housework is indeed work, and that the workers who perform it are employees, it must be recognized that the home has a ‘public’ dimension.”⁷⁹

There has always been recognition of more or less ‘better qualified’ domestic workers, be they housekeeping or kitchen staff or child care providers.⁸⁰ Advanced degrees aside, education is necessary for all occupations and housework is not an exception. There are specific skills and knowledge which make for the effective, well-done care of a home. The fact that professionals in the service and hospitality industry, such as chefs, receive specialized education and training, highlights those jobs as genuine work. In a real sense, the entire hospitality industry is the work of the home writ large.

The history of nursing provides us with a proven example. From the most well-known figure of modern nursing, Florence Nightingale, to the nursing university degrees given today, the transition was from one of first-hand training in a hospital to training within an academic and clinical context. As one author put it, “Young women wishing to train as a nurse during the early part of this century, entered into a hospital environment which taught them not only the skills of nursing, but also skilled them in how to be a nurse.”⁸¹ Consisting of direct hospital experience, similar to type of skilled apprenticeship culminating in an examination, this form of nursing education was common in the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and some other countries from the turn of the 20th century onwards. The certification process entailed this direct hospital work under supervision, passing through junior and middle trainee, senior nurse trainee and on passing the nursing board exam, a certified nurse.

Transposing a parallel but not identical framework on the paid home economist, it is increasingly clear that both the professional as well as the profession itself always improves considerably with training and certification. This need for training to carry out housework demands well was recognized early on in the women’s movement to improve the status of housework, albeit focusing more on the middle-class housewife managing employees (and not so much the domestic worker herself). Experience and education⁸² to take care of the home in a professional manner are and have been recognized as vital to society.⁸³

⁷⁷ Romero, *supra* note 28, at 1055.

⁷⁸ Romero, *supra* note 28, at 1058.

⁷⁹ Young, *supra* note 3, at 20.

⁸⁰ Cohen-Whelan, *supra* note 24, at 1201; regarding more ‘qualified’ nannies, this could mean anything from those who are English proficient with some college education to those who have some child-care training.

⁸¹ Wendy Madsen, “Learning to be a nurse: the culture of training in a regional Queensland Hospital, 1930-1950,” *Transformations*, No. 1 (Sept. 2000).

⁸² David M. Katzman, “Seven Days a Week: Women and Domestic Service in Industrializing America (1978) at 253-258.

⁸³ Watson, *supra* note 43, at 170-173.

1. Pros and Cons of Certification

The work of the home, like any other profession, requires that those performing this work and service benefit from a strong, foundational education in their field to a level corresponding to their choice of specialization. The numerous work choices within family and consumer science include careers in academia, in an industry-specific job such as hospitality management, and in the domestic context, i.e. in “direct service to children” or “direct service to families.”⁸⁴

By shifting the focus from remuneration to being “acknowledged as socially useful, thus laying the basis for its formal recognition,”⁸⁵ we give the work of the home greater equality within the world of work. In the end, we are recognizing the truth that, more than mere survival, or even a means to reach independence, work is “also a means of participation and social integration and as such deserves to be supported in the name of social solidarity.”⁸⁶

Social acknowledgement comes in various forms. As we have seen, the work of the home, compared with other forms of work, suffers from lack of recognition within the world of work and before the general public. In proposing certification as a remedy, we will briefly consider its advantages and disadvantages. As with any other occupation, those who perform the work of the home would benefit from a strong, foundational education in their field. Some kind of official certification process would establish an expected standard of competence and provide an industry-wide, as well as a socially-recognized status within the world of work. The possible drawbacks, on the other hand, would be the amount of regulation involved if the certification process was overseen by a government entity, federal or state. Other disadvantages would be unequal access to such certification due to limited educational, social or economic resources. For instance, high application fees or educational requirements may effectively bar certain parts of the population.

The solution would be certification, yes, but a certification process provided by an independent, non-governmental organization that was recognized as an authority in the field. In the United States, such an organization exists and its certification process could serve as a model in the field.

2. American Certification: An Existing Process and Possible Country Model

Home Economics, or Family & Consumer Sciences as it is referred to in the United States, has been described by the *American Association for Family & Consumer Sciences* as “the only profession that brings a holistic, integrated, preventive course of action to bear on technological, economic, social, and public policy changes at the same time.”⁸⁷

The opportunity of a lifetime to participate in the defining moments of the most basic unit of society... the family. The outcomes and consequences for the next three generations at least will depend upon what we do now as professionals in collaboration with individuals,

⁸⁴ AACFS webpage at <http://www.aafcs.org/students/career.html> (last visited on December 16, 2009).

⁸⁵ Le Guidec, *supra* note 25, at 651.

⁸⁶ *Id.*

⁸⁷ *Association for Family & Consumer Sciences* (AACFS), www.aafcs.org. “Ahead of Our Time”, short essay available at <http://www.aafcs.org/students/res/aot.pdf>.

foundations, businesses, and non-profit organizations to empower individuals, strengthen families, enable communities.⁸⁸

These words are on the first page of a short publication by the *American Association for Family and Consumer Sciences* (AAFCS), one of the oldest professional organizations in the United States. The vision expressed in the passage above permeates the AAFCS and its approach in identifying and promoting HE/FCS as a profession and taking the initiative in professional training and development. It is important to note the use of the word *profession* by the AAFCS. While the term was not always used referring to home economics in the United States, the AAFCS continues to make a concerted effort to identify it as such.

While there are institutions, such as colleges and technical schools, focusing on specific aspects of home economics, the AAFCS has made a point of highlighting the integrated, multi-dimensional nature of the work of the home. As others have pointed out, for instance Prof. Turkki who was cited earlier, it is at once an academic field to be studied, a social reality which affects and is affected by policy issues, and an intimate part of everyday family life.⁸⁹ And, in turn, those who have chosen this as their professional work should be recognized for the important service they give to society. Although this recognition is sorely lacking, the AAFCS and similar organizations are promoting greater awareness about the importance of the work of the home.

Based near Washington, D.C., the AAFCS “conducts a comprehensive volunteer certification program for all family and consumer sciences professionals, which assures employers that those who are certified have attained a verifiable level of competence and continue to enhance that knowledge base.”⁹⁰ The program, overseen by the AAFCS Council for Certification, is nationally recognized across the industry.

Certification certainly benefits the individual and potential employers, but also serves the profession itself. As the AAFCS itself states, certification “promotes continuing education and professional growth, provides recognition of individuals, fosters excellence in the family and consumer science profession, and markets the profession.”⁹¹ ‘Marketing’ here is not only in a strict ‘consumer’ sense; it is placing value on the work done, as well as on those serving society by doing it. AAFCS Certification requires that a person (a) have a baccalaureate degree and (b) successfully complete one of the three available national examinations: (1) Family and Consumer Sciences Composite Exam, (2) Human Development and Family Studies Exam, and (3) Hospitality, Nutrition and Food Science Exam. These exams are conducted several times year and administered via computer testing sites.

AAFCS Certification is voluntary but clearly beneficial. It provides a national standard of knowledge that can “assur[e] the public that family and consumer sciences professionals have attained a threshold level of knowledge and competence in family and consumer sciences subject matter.”⁹²

⁸⁸ AAFCS, *supra* note 86.

⁸⁹ See Turkki, *supra* note 72.

⁹⁰ AAFCS, *supra* note 86.

⁹¹ *American Association for Family & Consumer Sciences*, “Professional Assessment and Certification Program,” at <http://www.aafcs.org/certification> (last visited on December 16, 2009).

⁹² See Appendix A, Introduction, pt 4.

Once the standard level is reached, the certification program does not end there. The AAFCS realizes the importance of continuing education, especially in such a developing, multi-disciplinary field. To maintain certification status, professionals must earn a specified number of professional development units (PDUs)⁹³ which can be met via many different activities, including academic courses, continuing education, workshops, publications, book reviews, internships, and education travel. As a whole, the entire program is designed to encourage and facilitate professional growth.

At the state level, the AAFCS has 54 affiliated state associations, including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, American Pacific and American Overseas that have governance and operational units modeled after the national Association.⁹⁴ Working at this local level, these associations bring the work and vision of the AAFCS directly to their communities.

3. International Cooperation

Finally, we transition from the local and national to international. While the AAFCS certification program has proven to be an effective and desirable way to promote and recognize the work of the home in the US context, we should return to the critical role of the *International Federation of Home Economics* as a unitive, global institution. The AAFCS itself cooperates with IFHE-US, the IFHE's coordinating body in the US.

The IFHE, founded to be a "platform for international exchange within the field of Home Economics,"⁹⁵ has offices in five main regions, Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe and Pacific. Each region has its own officers, member organizations and host of initiatives. As stated in its mission, the IFHE's "ultimate goal of the Federation is the improvement of the quality of everyday life for individuals, families and households through the management of their resources." From the wide range of IFHE-promoted initiatives, one can see the living realization of this goal.

The uniting force of the IFHE is also obvious. Each region has officers from different countries, member organizations of various types and influences, and initiatives affecting daily life from specific angles. All regions are represented at IFHE international congresses, and an open cross-country network of communication and cooperation exists.

- Within Africa, for instance, the officers are from the Sudan and Cameroon. In addition to those two countries, the country representatives are from the Middle East, Ghana, Nigeria, and South Africa. The 2007 3rd African Regional Conference, entitled "Home Economics: from a non profit sector to the market area for sustainable and better quality of life," was hosted in Cameroon and included governmental participants, such as the Minister of Secondary Education.
- Within the Americas, the officers are from Guyana and the United States; country representatives are from Canada, the Caribbean and the United States. Out of the More than 50+ member organizations are from the United States alone, including the AAFCS

⁹³ The current professional development unit requirement is 75 PDUs every three years. Ref. AAFCS webpage: <http://www.aafcs.org/certification/pdu.html>

⁹⁴ AAFCS, *supra* note 86.

⁹⁵ *International Federation for Home Economics*, "What is the IFHE?" at <http://www.ifhe.org/34.html>

and 10 universities. By far, its most active member organization is the AAFCS whose newsletters, journals and online resources can be accessed via the IFHE webpage.

- The Asia Region's officers are from Thailand and Singapore; its country contacts are from Japan, Korea and Thailand with 7 member organizations from those countries.
- Europe, being the founding region, is also the most developed. Officers hail from Ireland and Finland; there are country representatives from Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The Region has almost 50 member organizations from the above countries plus France, Italy, Slovenia, and Turkey.
- The Pacific Region's officers are from Australia and New Zealand; country representatives are found in Australia, Fiji Islands and Samoa, and New Zealand. Within Australia, the Home Economics Institute of Australia has 8 divisions based on geography; all divisions are member organizations of the IFHE.

In addition, within a region there are several countries with developed sections such as IFHE-US and IFHE-UK, which have independent websites with substantial content and offering many resources, e.g. various events and workshops on current issues, and a contact system which easily locates a home economist in a specific area.

4. In Conclusion

Helen Jenkins' complaint that society at large fails to recognize the value of "this work of the home, this mother's work"⁹⁶ still resonates. The contemporary misunderstanding, however, may be on an upward path due to the dedicated efforts of national and international organizations as seen above.

Their work stands paramount in "promoting the concept of families and households as operating within a larger social, economic and physical environment with a myriad of exchanges between individuals and these larger environments on a daily basis."⁹⁷ While not completely bridging the gap between the very real, vital value of the work of the home and global recognition of that value, our proposal for independent certification is one proven way of attaining some degree of social and cultural recognition of the value of this humanly essential work and those who serve society through it.

⁹⁶ Jenkins, *supra* note 1.

⁹⁷ *International Federation for Home Economics*, Mission Statement (cf. <http://www.ifhe.org/127.html>)

APPENDIX A

AAFCS Information Brochure for candidates sitting for the national examinations
(Original available at <http://www.aafcs.org/certification/res/CandidateInformationBulletin.pdf>)

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES AAFCS/CFC National Examination Candidate Information Brochure

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Introduction

1. About AAFCS

The American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) was established in 1909 as the American Home Economics Association. Since that time, AAFCS has been committed to optimizing the well-being of families and individuals by empowering members to act on continuing and emerging concerns; focusing the expertise of members for action on critical issues; and assuming leadership among organizations with mutual purposes. To this end, AAFCS is involved with a range of activities such as advocating the Code of Ethics, publishing a professional journal, accreditation of academic programs, and offering professional certification opportunities to those practicing in the field.

2. About Certification

The program for national certification of Family And Consumer Sciences professionals involves three components: specified prerequisites, a standards-based examination system, and

continuing professional development. The Council for Certification (CFC), an autonomous unit within the AAFCS association, is charged with assuring the integrity and high standards of its professional certification program. The Council is responsible for developing criteria, standards, policies, and procedures that govern the national certification program for Family and Consumer Sciences professionals. Although the Council for Certification reports to the AAFCS Board of

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Directors and Senate, the Board of Directors and Senate have no authority to overturn the Council's decisions on matters pertaining to professional certification, including the examination system. The Council regularly reviews, revises, and publicizes policies guiding the certification program. Information about the certification program appears in AAFCS publications, in newsletters of affiliate family and consumer sciences associations, and in annual mailings to those who are certified.

3. About The AAFCS/CFC National Examinations

AAFCS offers standards-based examinations that test the subject matter competence of professionals who plan to practice in family and consumer sciences or one of the areas within family and consumer sciences. Three examinations are currently offered. They are:

- Family & Consumer Sciences (FCS) – Composite Examination
- FCS – Human Development & Family Studies (HD&FS) Concentration Examination
- FCS – Hospitality, Nutrition, & Food Science (HN&FS) Concentration Examination

These examinations serve multiple purposes. Colleges and universities can use them to test the subject matter competence of their graduates; credentialing agencies can use them to test subject matter competence of candidates, employers can use them to determine subject matter competence of potential employees and professional development needs of employees. Achieving a passing score on one of the exams is a way of assuring others that a family and consumer sciences professional has attained a threshold level of knowledge about the field.

Passing one of these examinations is a requirement for national certification in family and consumer sciences, known as Certified in Family and Consumer Sciences (CFCS). Becoming a CFCS, CFCS-HDFS, or CFCS-HNFS provides an important statement to others of your commitment to professionalism. Earning the right to use the credential designations after your name affirms your competence in family and consumer sciences and your commitment to continuing professional development. It assures others that you have current knowledge, skills, and abilities that enable you to improve the quality and standards of individual and family life through education, research, cooperative programs, and public information. See www.aafcs.org

for more information about achieving CFCS certification status after passing the examination.

4. Goals of the Examination and the CFCS Credential

The AAFCS examinations are designed to:

- assure the public that family and consumer sciences professionals have attained a threshold level of knowledge and competence in family and consumer sciences subject matter that enables them to perform services as defined by the profession;
- foster excellence in the family and consumer sciences profession and to develop criteria for assessing such excellence; and
- promote the professional growth of individuals in family and consumer sciences by encouraging a systematic program of certification, professional development and continuing education.

Examination and Certification Eligibility

To be eligible to take the national examinations for FCS, FCS - HDFS, or FCS – HNFS, the candidate must have graduated from an accredited educational institution with a baccalaureate degree, or plan to graduate within the year. Some institutions use the national examination system as a pre-test; these candidates take the exam on the schedule established by their school.

Obtain the national CFCS certification, the candidate must:

1. Pass the examination for the certificate he or she is pursuing;
2. Subscribe to the AAFCS Code of Ethics;
3. Provide an official college transcript;
4. Submit a CFCS application and fee based on your status as a member of AAFCS, non-member, or graduating senior.

Examination Availability

FCS, FCS - HDFS, or FCS – HNFS examinations **may only be taken during the authorized examination periods or windows**. Please note the following examination schedule and associated deadlines:

Examination Window Applications must be received at AAFCS by:

January 1 – January 31 December 20

March 1 – March 31 February 20

May 1 – May 30 April 20

July 1 – July 31 June 20

September 1 – September 31 August 20

November 1 – November 30 October 20

Examination Registration

There are two alternative ways in which the AAFCS certification examinations (FCS, FCS - HDF5, or FCS – HNFS) are offered to candidates:

1. Candidates may take the examination at Schroeder Measurement Technologies, Inc. computer-based testing center - at the location most convenient to the candidate's geographical area. (Fee \$150)

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2. AAFCS also allows academic institutions to conduct special administrations of the examinations to its candidates (students) in paper-and-pencil format at their school locations. This option is available if an academic institution has made prior arrangements with AAFCS. Availability of this option can be determined by checking with the family and consumer sciences unit administrator at an institution or by contacting the Director of Certification at AAFCS headquarters. (Fee \$105)

INSTRUCTIONS AND PROCEDURE REQUIRED FOR TAKING THE EXAMINATION AT A SCHROEDER MEASUREMENT TECHNOLOGIES (SMT) COMPUTER-BASED TESTING CENTER:

- *Step I. Application Form.* Complete the Examination Application Form following page 12 of this candidate information. Incomplete applications or applications that have not been signed will not be processed, but will be returned to the candidate. During a month-long testing window, a candidate may take only one of the three examinations and may take it only once.

- *STEP II. Submit Form.* Submit application form either by mail or FAX to:

American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences

Attn: Certification Department
400 North Columbus Street, Suite 202
Alexandria, VA 22314

(800) 424-8080 (toll-free phone)

(703) 706-4663 (facsimile)

IMPORTANT NOTE: Do NOT attach the \$150.00 examination fee to the application form. Candidates taking the examination at a SMT Computer Based Testing Center will pay the examination fee directly to SMT when registering for their exam date.

- *Step III. Authorization Letter.* The application form will be reviewed by the AAFCS Certification Department to verify completeness and the candidate's eligibility to take the examination. Then, the candidate will receive, via email, a non-transferable authorization email from SMT to take the exam during the specified month long testing window.

- *Step IV. Appointment to Take the Exam.* The authorization email from SMT will contain information and instructions on scheduling a test date at one of their Computer Based Testing Centers. A **User ID** and **Password** will be given to each candidate to register online for a testing location and test date. Using the candidate's zip code, the five closest testing centers will be available to choose from. The candidate will be required to pay the **\$150.00** (U.S.D) examination fee at this time. Payments are made by credit card (Visa, Master Card, or American Express). If the candidate chooses to not charge the examination fee to a credit card, special arrangements must be made with SMT for payment by cashier's check, certified check or money order. The appointment will not be finalized until SMT receives payment of the examination fee. Please contact the SMT representative, who sent the authorization email, if there are further questions regarding testing times and locations. To look up testing locations prior to the exam registration process please go to www.smttest.com.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

The examination fee is non-refundable. If a candidate finds it necessary to reschedule a SMT appointment, he or she must call the SMT representative **at least 48 weekday hours prior to the appointment time**. Failure to do so will forfeit the examination fee.

If a candidate fails to attend the examination (in other words, a "no show") or cannot be admitted for any reason, the examination fee will be forfeited. A new appointment and examination fee of \$150.00 will be required.

Retaking the Examination

If the candidate does not achieve a passing score on the examination, he or she may sit for the examination again. To take the examination again, the candidate must submit a new application and examination fee, following the complete 4-step procedure outlined above. During a month-long testing window, a candidate may take only one of the three examinations and may take it only once.

The report issued to a candidate who has not passed the test provides (a) an overall scale score,

and (b) a diagnostic breakdown of the candidate's strong and weak areas. This information is provided in order to enable the candidate to use this information to focus study efforts on weak areas in preparation for taking the examination again.

Examination Administration

The candidate is to arrive at the test center at the time noted on the authorization admission documents. In order to be admitted, the **Admission Letter** and a **photo identification** is required. **A candidate will not be admitted without proper identification.** The only acceptable forms of identification are: driver's license, government-issued identification card, or a passport. No other forms of identification will be accepted. If the candidate's name has changed since receiving the admission letter, the candidate must bring legal documentation showing the previous name and current name (for example, divorce decree, court order, marriage license, or notarized affidavit).

No candidate will be admitted without the required documents. This policy is applicable for both original candidates and those who take the examination again. No walk-in candidates will be admitted.

Administration of the Examination at a SMT Computer Based Testing Center:

After establishing positive identification, the candidate will be escorted to a computer station to begin. Before beginning the test, the candidate will fill out a series of screens that will gather

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basic identifying information (name, address, Social Security number, etc.). The system then compares this information to the registration record as a second quality assurance measure. Following the identifying information screens, a practice test is presented to train the candidate on how to use the computer mouse or keyboard to take the test. Additionally, the proctor is trained to assist candidates if they have any questions about how to use the system. The system is extremely user-friendly and can be completely operated with a few keys or a computer mouse. After the demonstration test, which is un-timed, the candidate will be asked if he or she wishes to begin the test. If yes, the clock begins and the first question appears and the screen will continuously show how much time has elapsed. Each test question is an independent item. The best answer should always be selected. The candidate will have the option to "tag" questions for review later. At any time, candidates can ask the computer to display a list of the questions that have been tagged, review them, change the answers, etc. The test ends when 3 hours have elapsed (after a 10 minute and 5 minute warning), or when the candidate asks the computer to end the test. Warnings will be given at 10 minutes and 5 minutes before the 3 hours elapse. The system will then ask the candidate to fill out a short questionnaire about the experience at the test center (the proctor's behavior, level of service, ease of use, etc.). After completion of the examination, the candidate will receive an immediate grade report. If the candidate has passed the examination and is eligible for certification, AAFCS will contact the candidate via U.S. First Class Mail within 2-3 weeks following your examination.

Examination Rules

1. Dress is “business casual” (neat...but certainly comfortable).

2. Failure to follow test center instructions will result in the candidate’s application being voided and forfeiture of the application fee. Conduct that results in a violation of security or disrupts the administration of the examination could result in dismissal from the examination. In addition, the examination will be considered void and will not be scored.

Examples of misconduct include, but are not limited to,

- Writing on any material other than the answer sheet, exam booklet or comment sheet
- Talking to a person other than a Exam Supervisor or a Proctor during the examination
- Looking at another candidate’s exam materials
- Allowing someone to look at or copy from your exam materials
- Writing after time is called
- Removing, or attempting to remove, any secure material or information from the examination room.

3. Candidates must not discuss or possess reference materials or any other examination information at any time during the **entire** examination period. Candidates are articularly cautioned not to do so after having completed the exam and checked out of the test room, as other candidates in the area could be taking a break and might not have completed the examination. Candidates may not attend the examination only to review or audit test materials. Candidates may not copy any portion of the examination for any reason. No unauthorized persons will be admitted into the testing area. Please be further advised that

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all examination content is strictly confidential. **At no other time, before, during, or after the examination, may candidates communicate orally, electronically or in writing with any person or entity about the content of the examination or individual examination questions.**

4. Candidates writing on anything other than an answer sheet will be in violation of the security policies above. Reference materials are not allowed in the testing room. Candidates are asked to bring as few personal and other items as possible to the testing area.

5. While the site climate is controlled to the extent possible, candidates should be prepared for either warm or cool temperatures at the testing center to reduce the likelihood of becoming uncomfortable. Cellular phones and beepers are prohibited in the testing area. Electrical outlets will not be available for any reason. The use of headphones inside the testing area is prohibited. Earplugs for sound suppression are allowed. No smoking or use of tobacco will be allowed inside the testing area. Food and drinks are not allowed in

the testing room. Candidates must vacate the testing area after completing the examination. Due to limited parking facilities at some sites, candidates should allow ample time to park and reach the testing area.

Examination Scoring

The examination consists of 150 multiple choice questions with four (4) choices for each question. Thirty of these questions are included for research purposes only. The research questions are not identified; therefore, all questions are to be answered to the best ability of the candidate. Examination results will be based only on the 120 scored questions on the examination. There are multiple versions of the examination. It is important that each candidate have an equal opportunity to pass the examination, no matter which version is administered. Expert FCS practitioners have provided input regarding the difficulty level of every question used in the examinations. That information is used to develop examination forms that have comparable difficulty levels. When there are differences in difficulty in different versions of an examination, a mathematical procedure is used to equalize the difficulty scores. Because the number of questions required to pass the examination may vary for different test versions, the scores are converted to a reporting scale to ensure a common standard. The passing grade required is a scale score of 240 out of a possible 300 points on the scoring scale.

Should a candidate who fails the exam request that their examination be re-scored, the request and reason must be made in writing and submitted to the Certification Department at AAFCS with a \$25.00 rescoring fee. If the examination is rescored and an error is found in the scoring, the \$25.00 rescoring fee will be refunded and the corrected score will be reported. If the original score is found to be accurate, the \$25.00 rescoring fee will not be refunded.

Examination Results

Examination results will be provided immediately following the examination if the candidate sits for it at a SMT computer-based testing center. Consistent with testing industry standard

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practices, passing candidates will be given pass-status information only, not numeric scores. Failing candidates will be provided with an overall numeric scale score and diagnostic information of strong and weak areas.

Should a candidate need a duplicate of the results provided at the test center, a written request must be submitted to the Certification Department at AAFCS. The request must include the candidate's current mailing address. Results will be mailed to the candidate. Results WILL NOT be released over the phone because positive identification cannot be established.

Passing candidates will receive a packet of information and application form for national certification from AAFCS approximately 2-3 weeks following the successful completion of the examination.

Special Accommodations and Language Policies

AAFCS provides special accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991 (ADA). If a disability prevents a candidate from taking the examination under normal conditions, he or she may request special accommodations. The request must be in writing, accompany the application form, explain the name of the disability (i.e. the diagnosis), the type of accommodation the candidate is requesting, and must include attached supporting documentation of the diagnosis from a qualified healthcare professional. After receiving the request and appropriate documentation, the candidate will be contacted to make arrangements for special accommodation.

Please note that for reasons related to examination standardization, security, and cost, the AAFCS examinations are offered only in English at this time. If English is not the primary language, AAFCS recommends (but does not require) that candidates consider sitting for the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) examination before sitting for the AAFCS examination. Candidate scores on the TOEFL® will provide a useful gauge for understanding if reading and comprehending English will provide difficulty for the candidate on the AAFCS examination. The TOEFL® examination is offered at multiple locations both domestically and internationally throughout the year at Sylvan Learning Centers®. More information is available on the Sylvan web site.

Examination Preparation

This Candidate Information Brochure was developed to outline the administrative policies, procedures, and other information relevant to taking one of the AAFCS/CFC national examinations. It is intended to be used in concert with the companion document, the *AAFCS Examination Study Guide*, which is available in downloadable format on the AAFCS website (<http://www.aafcs.org/certification/achievement.html>). This manual provides comprehensive information important for preparing for the AAFCS/CFC national examinations, including examination specifications, sample test items, suggested reference sources, etc.

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**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES
AAFCS/CFC National Examination
Examination Application Form**

Identification and Contact Information (please print or type):

Examination Application, Page 2

Examination Administration Mode:

Check the administration mode:

- I wish to take the Examination at a SMT® Computer Based Testing Center
- I wish to investigate taking the Examination via **Special Administration** at my educational institution. Please send me information about how to proceed. The family and consumer sciences administrator or instructor at my institution is:

Name: _____

Educational Institution name: _____

Phone: _____ E mail: _____

Affidavit and Examination Agreement (*Read the statement carefully and sign in ink*):

I hereby affirm that:

- I am eligible to sit for the AAFCS examination based upon the requirements that are described in this bulletin.
- I will treat all information related to the examination as confidential, whether provided to me by AAFCS or received from other sources.
- All information provided by me in this application is true to the best of my knowledge. AAFCS may, in its sole discretion, make inquiry of individuals and organizations directly or indirectly referenced in any part of this document to verify the accuracy and completeness of the information I have provided.

I have fully read the contents of the Candidate Information Bulletin and agree with all examination and other policies contained therein.

- I understand that my successful performance on one of the exams in the AAFCS examination system will satisfy one of the requirements for the CFCS national professional certification. Subsequently, obtaining the CFCS credential would be optional and would require submitting a CFCS certification application and fee, agreeing to abide by the following Code of Ethics, and meeting ongoing professional development requirements.
- I understand that my test score will be reported to me. Additionally, I understand that if I have taken the exam as part of a program requirement, the entity in whose program I am participating may prearrange for a report of my test score.
- If I am taking an AAFCS examination to satisfy requirements for a university program or credential from an entity other than AAFCS, I understand that it is my responsibility to make formal notification/application for credit from that program.
- I understand that the cost of the electronically administered examination is \$150 to be paid directly to SMT®, Inc. when the examination date and time is scheduled.

Applicant Signature (must be in ink)

Date

Mail or FAX completed examination application but no payment to:

American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences

Attn: Certification Department

400 North Columbus Street, Suite 202

Alexandria, VA 22314

(703) 706-4663 (facsimile) (800) 424-8080 (toll-free phone)

Code of Ethics

Preamble

These principles are intended to aid members of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences individually and collectively in maintaining a high level of ethical conduct. They are guidelines by which a member may determine the propriety of conduct in relationships with clients, with colleagues, with members of allied professions and with various publics. A member of the family and consumer sciences profession and of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences shall:

- Maintain the highest responsible standard of professional performance, upholding confidentiality and acting with intelligence, commitment, and enthusiasm.
- Fulfill the obligation to continually upgrade and broaden personal professional competence.
- Share professional competence with colleagues and clients, to enlarge and continue development of the profession.
- Support the objectives of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences and contribute to its development through informed, active participation in its programs.
- Advance public awareness and understanding of the profession.
- Maintain a dedication of enhancing individual and family potential as a focus for professional efforts.

Principles of Professional Conduct

The following Statement of Principles are intended to aid members of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences individually and collectively.

Statement of Principles for Professional Practice

Preamble

The mission of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences is to affect the optimal well being of families and individuals by:

- empowering members to act on continuing and emerging concerns;
- focusing the expertise of members for action on critical issues;

- assuming leadership among organizations with mutual purposes.

These Principles of Professional Practice guide American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences members in all categories; those Certified in Family and Consumer Sciences; applicants for membership in the Association; and applicants for the Certified in Family and Consumer

Sciences designation. The Principles also provide members of the Association with guidelines and with descriptions of the actions required for ethical professional practice.

Professional Competence

AAFCS members base their competence on educational degrees earned from regionally accredited institutions and from training, experience, and certification programs recognized by AAFCS.

AAFCS members seek continuing education reflecting new expectations, procedures, and values.

AAFCS members assure accurate presentation of their work by organizations with whom they are affiliated.

AAFCS members identify themselves as Certified in Family and Consumer Sciences in cases in which this designation is consistent with the procedures and guidelines of the AAFCS Council for Certification. They may use the CFCS acronym in this identification and designation.

AAFCS members claim competence only in an area or areas for which they have education, training, and experience.

AAFCS members accurately present competencies of students, supervisors, colleagues, and others with whom they work.

AAFCS members practice within the law and within the recognized boundaries of their education, training, and experience.

AAFCS members verify the credentials of their employees and supervisors.

AAFCS members refrain from professional practice when impairment due to mental or physical causes, including chemical and alcohol abuse, affects professional competence. Members seek appropriate professional help for such impairments.

Respect for Diversity

AAFCS members respect differences in the abilities and needs of the people with whom they work.

AAFCS members recognize that differences exist among individuals and families and do not discriminate against or patronize others.

AAFCS members obtain education, training, and experience to provide competent services to persons of diverse backgrounds or persuasions.

AAFCS members conduct research relating to the uniqueness of individuals and families.

AAFCS members utilize and present subject matter in such a way as to recognize and develop appreciation of diversity.

Scholarship and Research

AAFCS members conduct, utilize, and report research using recognized research procedures and facilitate professional standards for the respective research foci.

AAFCS members secure review and approval of research designs by knowledgeable professionals consistent with standards used by institutional review boards.

AAFCS members, as part of research efforts, secure review of research designs by knowledgeable professionals not directly involved in the investigation.

AAFCS members secure the informed consent of research participants based on disclosure of the research design and potentially harmful effects of participation. Investigators are especially sensitive to consent among at-risk and protected populations.

AAFCS members honor individuals' choice to decline participation or withdraw at any time from research studies.

AAFCS members acknowledge through publication credit and other avenues the efforts and contributions of others to research activities.

AAFCS members are obliged to take steps to ensure that their research findings are accurately and clearly understood by consumers.

Confidentiality

AAFCS members maintain and guard the confidentiality of persons with whom they have professional relationships.

Conflict of Interest

AAFCS members avoid conflicting roles and take active steps to prevent and avoid exploitation of the individuals with whom they work.

AAFCS members assume responsibility for fair treatment of consumers, other professionals, and individuals and/or families.

AAFCS members make financial arrangements with clients, third-party payers, and supervisors that conform to commonly accepted professional practices and that are easily understood by all populations served.

AAFCS members report truthfully all professional services rendered.

Responsibility to the Profession

AAFCS members support the objectives of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences and contribute to Association roles and development through active, informed participation.

AAFCS members advance public awareness and understanding of the Association and its mission.

AAFCS members respect the rights and responsibilities of peers.

AAFCS members devote time and energy to public policy issues and to the public good.

AAFCS members speak on behalf of the Association in ways consistent with the directives and policies of the Association Board of Directors.

AAFCS members utilize the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences logo only in ways approved by the Association Board of Directors.

APPENDIX B: List of Useful Websites

The International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE): www.ifhe.org

IFHE-US: <http://www.ifhe-us.org>

IFHE-UK: <http://www.ifhe-uk.org>

American Association for Family & Consumer Sciences (AAFCS): www.aafcs.org

*Cornell University's Home Economics Archive: Research, Tradition & History project:
<http://hearth.library.cornell.edu>*