

*A Social Profile of*

# DETROIT

*1955*



*A Report of the  
Detroit Area Study  
of the  
University of Michigan*

## UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Detroit Area Study, Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research

### *Faculty Executive Committee*

Ronald Freedman (Chairman), Associate Professor of Sociology  
Angus Campbell, Director of the Survey Research Center and Professor of Sociology and Psychology  
Ferrel Heady, Assistant Director of the Institute of Public Administration and Associate Professor of Political Science  
Daniel Katz, Professor of Psychology  
Daniel B. Suits, Associate Professor of Economics

### *Detroit Area Study Staff*

Harry Sharp, Director  
Norma Lee McCarus, Secretary  
David Goldberg, Research Assistant (1954-56)  
Ruth Searles, Research Assistant (1954-55)  
John Takeshita, Research Assistant (1953-55)  
David Varley, Research Associate (1954-55)

### *Students Who Assisted in the 1954-55 Study*

Mickey Aiken	Beryl Hutchison
Ann Blalock	Toshio Kumabe
Robert Barnes	John Kunkel
Albert Boswell	Donald Nagler
Richard Burlingame	Robert Richardson
Donna Buse	Victor Schneider
Russell Chappell	Eileen Schulak
Remi Clignet	John Scott
Eleanor Cochran	David Sirota
Theodore Curtis	Carol Slater
Donald Dorfman	Charles Smith
David F. Feuerfile	Dietrick Snoek
Martin Gold	Donald Wolfe
Mae Guyer	Howard Wolowitz
Ellen Heyman	William Zeller

### *Faculty Participants in the 1954-55 Study*

Morris Axelrod, Assistant Head of the Field Section of the Survey Research Center  
Robert Blood, Assistant Professor of Sociology

**A SOCIAL PROFILE OF DETROIT: 1955**



**A Report of the  
Detroit Area Study  
of  
The University of Michigan**

**Detroit Area Study, Survey Research Center  
Institute for Social Research  
1956**

Copyright by the  
University of Michigan  
February 1956

PHOTOLITHOPRINTED BY CUSHING-MALLOY, INC.  
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
1956

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to express appreciation for assistance from a number of sources in the conduct of this study.

The Detroit area residents who were in the sample were extremely cooperative with our interviewers. This *Profile* is sent to them as one way of saying "Thank you."

The staff of the Survey Research Center provided extensive assistance, especially Dr. Angus Campbell, Director of the Center; Dr. Charles Cannell and Dr. Morris Axelrod of the Field Section; Mrs. Evelyn Stewart, Editor; and Dr. Leslie Kish and Miss Jane Williams of the Sampling Section.

Members of the Detroit Area Study's Citizens Advisory Council helped us in many ways at different stages of the research. A complete listing of the Council is found in Appendix A.

Miss Irene Kauska and her staff at the Rackham Building in Detroit were very helpful during the interviewing period. Also, Mrs. Gilchrist Coppin of the Wayne Student Center kindly allowed many of our interviewers to live in the Student Center when the survey was in the field.

Professor Robert Blood of the Sociology Department and Dr. Axelrod of the Survey Research Center were actively involved in all aspects of the 1954-55 study.

The research reported here is truly a group effort. The entire Detroit Area Study staff and associated students were instrumental in the production of this *Profile*. While it is impossible to mention every person individually, David Goldberg, Norma Lee McCarus, Ruth Searles, and John Takeshita deserve special acknowledgment. The Director of the Detroit Area Study collaborated with Morris Axelrod on Chapter 4 and with Ruth Searles on Chapters 5 and 6. John Takeshita wrote Appendix C. The Director, of course, must assume all responsibility for errors which may be found in these pages.

## CONTENTS

	Page
Acknowledgments . . . . .	iii
1 Introduction . . . . .	1
2 Making a Living in the Detroit Area . . . . .	5
3 Television Set Ownership in Detroit Area Households . . . . .	11
4 Helping and Being Helped by Relatives . . . . .	16
5 The Urban Kin Group . . . . .	21
6 The Urban Housewife . . . . .	27
Appendix A. The Citizens Advisory Council for the Detroit Area Study . . . . .	34
Appendix B. A Comparison of Results from the 1955 Detroit Area Study's Survey with Information from the 1950 United States Census . . . . .	37
Appendix C. Measures of Sampling Error . . . . .	39
Appendix D. Relevant Questions from the Interview Schedule . . . . .	43

## INTRODUCTION

During the months of February and March, 1955, trained interviewers talked with a carefully selected cross-section of wives and mothers in greater Detroit. The general objective of the research was to gain a better understanding of the behavior of the family in a large metropolitan community. The following pages sketch some preliminary results of this study of the urban family. We simply outline here a few basic findings; much more complete analyses of the survey data are in preparation.

Many observers would agree that the family is the most important social group which exists in human society. The acknowledged primacy of the family in the life of the individual and the community has resulted in a great deal of research in the area of family living. A major contribution of the present investigation is that the findings apply to the adult population of an urban community of more than two and one-half million persons. Although its very size presents many obstacles to social research, the large metropolis is perhaps more "typical" of modern industrialized society and thus more worthy of study than any other type of community.

### *The Detroit Area Study*

The data reported here were collected through the facilities of the University of Michigan's Detroit Area Study.<sup>1</sup> The Detroit Area Study is a research and graduate training program whose main activity is an annual interview survey of the Detroit area population. This booklet is the fourth general report of our survey operations. While different aspects of life in the metropolis are investigated each year, every survey collects information on basic social and economic characteristics of the population such as family income, age, migration background, and religious preference.

The Detroit Area Study is currently financed through two sources: the Ford Foundation and the University of Michigan. An administrative relationship with the Survey Research Center of the Institute for Social Research, moreover, provides the Study with considerable professional assistance. For example, although most of our interviewing is done by graduate students, Center interviewers also take a substantial number of interviews each year.

<sup>1</sup> *The Detroit Area Study*, a pamphlet available upon request, describes in detail the operations of this organization.

The Detroit Area Study has a Citizens Advisory Council of prominent citizens representing a large range of groups and interests in the community. The members of our Council support the general purposes of the Study, but they are not responsible for the questions or reports of a particular survey. The Council's membership as of July, 1955, is listed in Appendix A.

### *The Sample Survey*

Interviews were taken in 958 Detroit area dwellings in the 1954-55 study. Of these, about 750 were "family" interviews with the wife in homes which contained a husband and wife. Socio-economic information was obtained about all adults in every dwelling unit. Figure 1 shows the geographic area included in our definition of the metropolitan Detroit community. About two-thirds of the interviews were taken in the City of Detroit and one-third in suburban areas.

Since the survey was restricted to private households, persons living in hospitals, religious and educational institutions, transient hotels, and large rooming houses were excluded from the sample. These groups comprise less than 5 per cent of the adult population of the area.

The findings of this report may be considered as representative of the adult population of metropolitan Detroit. We are justified in drawing conclusions about the whole area from our data, although we obtained information in only a very small proportion of all the households in greater Detroit. In our research it is not the number of households but the way in which they were selected that is significant.

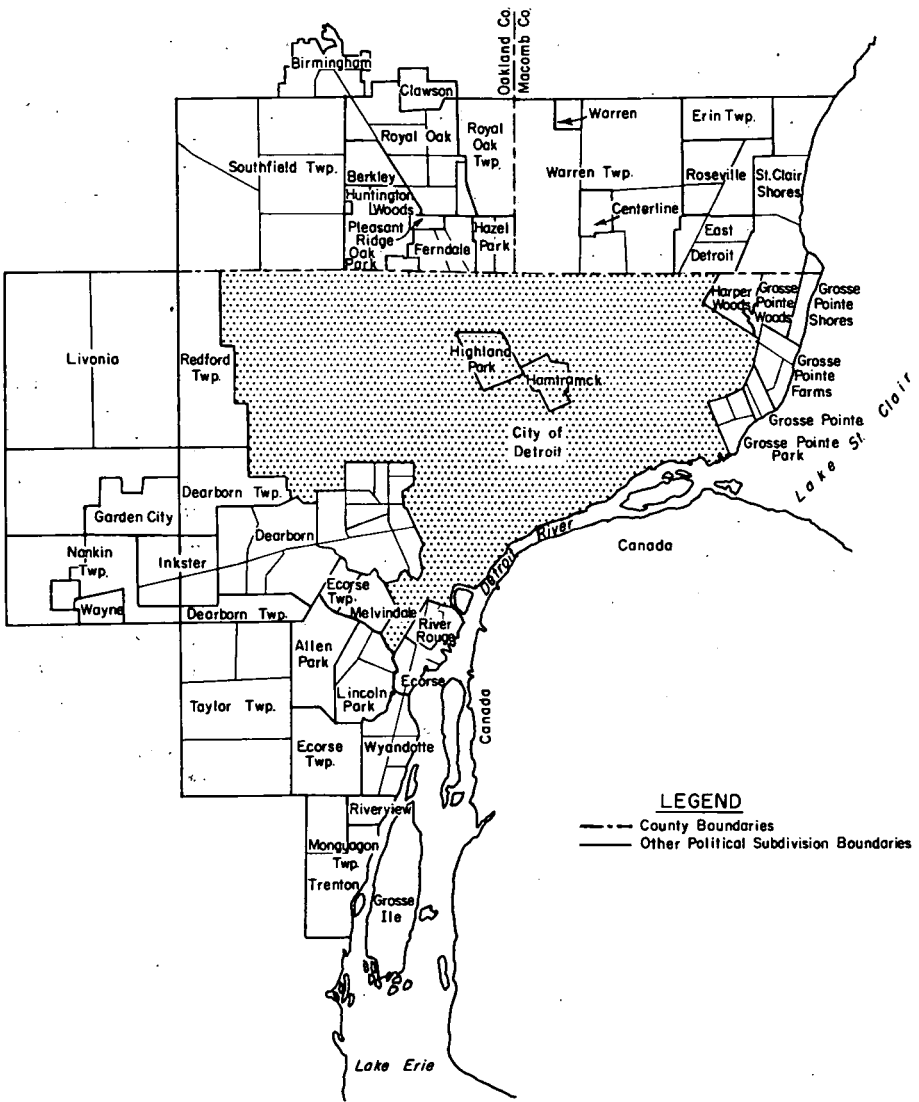
The basis of this selection, a highly scientific method of "area-probability" sampling, is that every dwelling in the community has an equal *chance* of being chosen. When the interviewer is assigned a list of addresses, he or she must interview at those addresses and no others. The lady next door or the man across the street will not do; the respondent can only live at the address which was originally selected. If this means four or five trips to find the designated resident at home or to complete the interview, our interviewer makes the necessary trips.

We obtained interviews in a high proportion of instances. In fact, only one-tenth of the original addresses in our sample failed to yield an interview, either because the respondent could never be found at home or refused to be interviewed. This demonstrates the fine cooperation which the people of Detroit give to the Detroit Area Study.

### *The Accuracy of Sample Results*

The great care that goes into the selection of the sample is absolutely necessary if we can claim with confidence that our findings approximate those we would have gained had we interviewed every Detroit area family. The United States Census does interview in every household; the closeness of Detroit Area Study figures to those of the Census





**LEGEND**

- County Boundaries
- Other Political Subdivision Boundaries

Figure 1. The "Detroit area" as defined by the Detroit Area Study.

(see Appendix B) presents evidence which supports the representativeness of our sample.

Nonetheless, because our survey is based on a sample rather than interviews with the entire population, there is always the possibility that by chance the sample will contain too many young people and too few older people, or too many people who are salesmen and too few who are foremen. The likelihood that this will happen is greater the smaller the number of cases in the sample.

In interpreting the data presented here the reader should remember that they are subject to a possible "sampling" error. Throughout this *Profile*, however, we have attempted to emphasize only those relationships which could *not* reasonably be the result of chance variations caused by a small number of sample cases. A more detailed discussion of non-sampling and sampling error and the probable range of sampling errors for the Detroit Area Study's data are found in Appendix C.

## 2

### MAKING A LIVING IN THE DETROIT AREA

The way in which the members of a community make their living affords a good basis for describing the population. In this chapter we discuss some aspects of the occupational structure of the Detroit area. We also investigate changes in the earning power of greater Detroit households. As used here, the term "households" refers to all dwelling units in the community; a given household may consist of *one or more* related adults. Information on "family" units was obtained only from those dwellings which contain both a husband and a wife. The "head of the family," in every case, is defined as the husband.

#### *Occupational Characteristics of Family Heads*

The industrial character of the Detroit area is clearly seen in the kinds of jobs held by the husbands of this community. Well over half of the husbands in the labor force are skilled or semi-skilled factory employees (Table 1). These blue-collar workers form a considerably

Table 1  
OCCUPATIONS OF HUSBANDS AND OF WIVES  
WHO ARE LABOR FORCE MEMBERS

Occupation	Per Cent of Husbands	Per Cent of Wives
Professionals	12%	7%
Proprietors, managers, officials	12	7
Clerical workers	6	30
Sales workers	6	9
Foremen and craftsmen	26	2
Operatives and laborers	32	23
Private household and service workers	6	22
Total	100%	100%
Proportion of husbands and wives in labor force	96%	22%
Number of cases	738	169

larger group than do all white-collar workers combined. It is interesting to note, with respect to the white-collar workers, that there are twice as many professionals, businessmen, and officials among the family heads as there are sales persons and clerks.

Large scale industry dominates the economic structure of greater

Detroit in many ways. Only a small proportion of the husbands (9 per cent) are self-employed, as pointed out in Table 2; on the other hand, seven out of every ten husbands who live here work for corporations employing one hundred or more persons.

Table 2

EMPLOYMENT STATUS FOR ALL HUSBANDS IN THE LABOR FORCE  
AND NUMBER OF FELLOW EMPLOYEES FOR HUSBANDS  
WHO ARE NOT SELF-EMPLOYED

Employment Status and Number of Fellow Employees	Per Cent of Husbands
Husband self-employed	9%
Husband not self-employed:	91
1-49 fellow employees	17
50-99 fellow employees	4
100 or more fellow employees	70
Total	100%
Number of husbands	700

Table 3

NUMBER OF HOURS WORKED PER WEEK  
BY HUSBANDS AND WIVES WHO ARE EMPLOYED

Number of Hours Worked Per Week	Per Cent of Husbands	Per Cent of Wives
Less than 40 hours	3%	21%
Forty Hours	53	59
More than 40 hours	44	20
Total	100%	100%
Number of cases	700	159

Nearly all employed husbands in the area work forty or more hours a week (Table 3). In fact, the men who work longer than the "normal" workweek requires (44 per cent) are only slightly fewer than those who work an even forty hours every week (53 per cent). Nonetheless, no more than three out of every ten employed husbands are *not* working during the regular day shift (Table 4). This type of occupational environment for Detroit family heads has interesting implications for family life which deserve more extended analysis.

### *Working Wives*

The effect on the family of wives working outside the home is also an important topic for research. Usually, where the head's income is supplemented by that of another person in the household, the second wage earner is the wife. While most of the married women in the Detroit community (78 per cent) currently are not working, only three out of every ten wives have never been employed since they were married.

Our data indicate that slightly more than two-fifths of those wives not now employed want to join the labor force at some later date (e.g., "When the children start school."). Changes in the proportion of working women in the metropolis are always of primary importance as regards the size of the labor force and the structure of the urban family.

Working wives in Detroit are most often employed in clerical jobs, as domestics in private households, or as semi-skilled factory machine operatives (Table 1). While in every community wives who work are probably clustered in the clerical and domestic occupations, Detroit area women are no doubt more likely to hold factory jobs than are wives in less industrial regions.

The working wives of greater Detroit do not view their jobs as something to occupy leisure evening hours. The great majority of wives who are employed are putting in a full workweek or more; only one out of every five working wives spends less than forty hours a week on the job (Table 3). Also, as seen in Table 4, a large majority of the employed women are working during the daylight hours.

As would be expected, the lower the income of the husband, the greater the chances that his wife will be working outside the home (Table 5). Thus, more than one-third of the wives whose husbands earned less than \$3,000 in 1954 are working; only about one-tenth of those wives with husbands who made more than \$7,000 are employed. The remaining sections of this chapter are directly concerned with an analysis of household and family income in the Detroit area.

#### *Earning Power in Greater Detroit: 1951-1954*

Detroit traditionally has been a community of relatively high income. In 1954 one-half of the Detroit area households earned more than \$5,500 and one-half earned less than this amount. This figure, defined as the "median" income, represents income from any source for one or more persons related by blood or marriage who live in the same household.<sup>1</sup>

While a 1954 median income of \$5,500 is substantial for any large community, it represents a slight decline from the comparable income figure of 1953 (\$5,700). This is seen in Table 6. The failure of 1954 incomes in Detroit to maintain the consistent increase shown during the past several years is due, in large part, to the temporary cut-back in

<sup>1</sup>For purposes of consistency in definitions, we are restricting the use of the term "family" to include only those households which contain at least a husband and a wife.

Table 4  
TYPE OF SHIFT WORKED BY HUSBANDS AND WIVES  
WHO ARE EMPLOYED

Type of Shift	Per Cent of Husbands	Per Cent of Wives
Days	72%	80%
Afternoons	10	6
Nights	5	3
No one shift	13	11
Total	100%	100%
Number of cases	706	162

Table 5  
INCOME OF THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY IN 1954  
BY LABOR FORCE STATUS OF THE WIFE

Labor Force Status of Wife	Income of the Head of the Family in 1954				
	Below \$3,000	\$3,000- 4,999	\$5,000- 6,999	\$7,000- 9,999	\$10,000 and over
In the labor force	36%	27%	20%	15%	5%
Not in the labor force	64	73	80	85	95
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of families	122	247	217	89	60

Table 6  
HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN THE DETROIT AREA: 1951-1954

Household Income	Year			
	1954	1953	1952	1951
Below \$3,000	15%	13%	15%	15%
\$3,000 - 4,999	25	23	32	40
\$5,000 - 6,999	28	25	27	24
\$7,000 - 7,999	7	10	7	5
\$8,000 and over	20	23	14	10
Not ascertained	5	6	5	6
Total.	100%	100%	100%	100%
Median household income	\$5,500	\$5,700	\$5,000	\$4,600
Percentage increase over 1951	20%	24%	9%	-
Number of households	958	821	1253	749

manufacturing which occurred in this community early in 1954. Nonetheless, greater Detroit's 1954 median household income of \$5,500 was probably equaled by few other metropolitan communities anywhere in the world.

Median household income in 1954 was about 20 per cent greater than the 1951 figure. Over the last four years, however, the proportion of households earning less than \$3,000 has remained approximately constant (Table 6). While some low income households moved into the middle income brackets and were replaced by low income newcomers to Detroit, this movement is probably not as great as that of middle income households into higher levels and high income households moving even higher. Thus, the proportion of households in Detroit earning \$3,000-4,999 has declined by almost 50 per cent and the proportion earning over \$8,000 has doubled since 1951.

### *Education and Income*

Differences in earning power are highly associated with educational differences among Detroit area residents (Table 7). While households with heads who had no more than six years of school had a median income of \$4,600 in 1954, the income level rises consistently as the educational level of the head of the household increases. Thus, median income for households with heads who had some college training was about \$2,700 higher than that for households with heads who did not complete the seventh grade.

Table 7

**MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY EDUCATION, RACE, AND AGE  
OF THE HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD**

Education, Race, and Age of the Head of the Household	Median Household Income	Number of Households
<u>Education</u>		
6 years or less	\$4,600	137
7-8 years	4,700	187
9-11 years	5,100	205
12 years	6,200	276
Some college	7,300	137
<u>Race</u>		
Negro	\$3,800	154
White	5,700	799
<u>Age</u>		
21-29 years old	\$4,800	154
30-39 years old	5,800	254
40-49 years old	5,800	211
50-59 years old	5,700	201
60 years old or older	4,000	137

### *Race and Income*

Income data for 1954, as in previous survey years, continue to show marked variation between the earning power of Negroes and whites in greater Detroit (Table 7). In 1954 median income for Negro households (\$3,800) was \$1,900 lower than the comparable figure for whites. Relatively twice as many Negro households in Detroit (73 per cent) earned less than \$5,000 in 1954 as was the case with white households (37 per cent). A median income of \$3,800, however, represents one of the highest Negro income figures that may be found in a large American city.

### *Age and Income*

The age of the head of the household is also related to the size of income (Table 7). Very young households earned considerably less in 1954 than did those in which the head was between the ages of thirty-one and fifty-nine. After age sixty there was a sharp decline in median income. This is related to a higher proportion of retired and part-time workers in the older ages. It is probable that if only those persons in the labor force were considered, median income would not decline with advancing years.

### *Number of Workers per Household and Income*

In 1954 about three out of every ten greater Detroit households had more than one adult member in the labor force. These "extra" wage earners (usually wives, as we noted above) contribute a good deal to the household income. Thus, the median income of the total household was about \$900 above that of the head of the household. As with total household income, the 1954 median income of the head declined somewhat from the comparable figure of 1953.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Detroit area family must adapt itself to a highly industrial-urban environment. This is apparent from the description of the occupational characteristics of husbands and wives and the large number of wives who either are working outside the home now or intend to do so in the future. Also, there is little doubt that Detroit is maintaining its position as a community of relatively high family income.



### 3

#### TELEVISION SET OWNERSHIP IN DETROIT AREA HOUSEHOLDS

Few inventions have struck the family with the force of television. Understandably, a considerable amount of research is presently concerned with the effect which television may have on family life. In this chapter we describe some trends in television set ownership in Detroit since 1950 and discuss some of the household characteristics that are associated with owning television.

##### *Growth in Set Ownership*

Approximately one-quarter of the homes in metropolitan Detroit had television sets in 1950, according to the United States Census. At the time this was considered as a comparatively high figure. It was generally expected that during the next decade the rate of ownership in Detroit would grow gradually and consistently as the television industry expanded and sets became less expensive.

As may be seen in Figure 2, however, a tremendous increase in the number of homes with television has occurred since 1950. In 1952 two surveys reported that set ownership had increased to 60 per cent. And in 1953 our own Detroit Area Study's survey found that eight out of every ten homes in greater Detroit had television. A possible saturation point had not yet been reached, for one year later, in 1954, our annual *Profile* reported that the ownership figure had jumped to 87 per cent. Thus, in a relatively short period of four years the proportion of households which brought television into their homes had far more than tripled. This is probably one of the most rapid rates of adoption of a major invention ever experienced in the modern community.

There is some evidence that the rate of increase in television ownership in greater Detroit has now reached a leveling-off point. In the 1955 survey it was found again that, as one year previously, slightly less than nine out of every ten dwellings in the community have television sets. This may indicate that very little change in the proportion of homes with television should be expected in the future. In fact, when such a great majority of the population already have television, little further increase in ownership is possible. In a large and varied urban population about a tenth of the families, for personal or economic reasons, probably never will own television sets.

##### *Socio-Economic Status and Set Ownership*

The high rate of set ownership for the total Detroit area does not

Per Cent of  
Households with  
Television

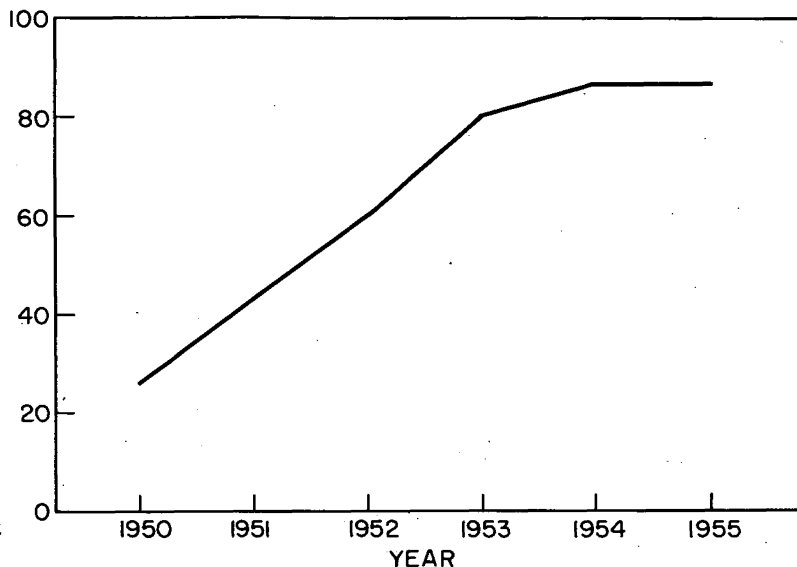


Figure 2. The growth of television set ownership in Detroit area households: 1950-1955. Source for 1950 data: U.S. Bureau of the Census. *U.S. Census of Housing: 1950*. Vol. II, *Nonfarm Housing Characteristics*, Part 3: Detroit-Memphis Standard Metropolitan Areas. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1953. Source for 1951-52 data: Arthur Kornhauser, *Detroit As the People See It*. Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1952, p. 209; *The Fourth Quinquennial Survey*. The Detroit News, April, 1952, p. 41.

allow wide variation between major socio-economic segments of the population in the likelihood of having television. There are some relationships, however, which are worth noting.

As expected, the economic position of a household and its chances of having television are directly related. Thus, the higher the income level of the head of the household, the greater the likelihood of set ownership (Table 8). But the differences in this regard are not great. For example, about three-quarters of those households with an income of less than \$3,000 in 1954 have television sets. The proportion of owners increases with income so that approximately 98 per cent of the households earning over \$7,000 a year have television at home. This general relationship is also present when educational level and occupational status of the head of the household are considered.

In 1953 the income differential in set ownership was much greater than in 1955. Thus, while the number of owners increased for all income groups over the last few years, the rate of increase has been higher at the lower income levels than among the more wealthy segments of the population. Since as early as 1953 many of the higher income households evidenced ownership rates of 85 to 90 per cent, there

was little room for a substantial relative increase in set owners in this group.

*Children in the Home and Set Ownership*

The "baby-sitting" function of television does not appear to be of primary importance in determining whether or not a family owns a set. Households which contain minor children are only slightly more likely to have sets than those without children. The figures, shown in Table 8, are 91 and 81 per cent, respectively.

Table 8

TELEVISION SET OWNERSHIP BY INCOME,  
PRESENCE OF MINOR CHILDREN, AGE, AND NUMBER OF YEARS  
IN THE DETROIT AREA FOR THE HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD

Income, Presence of Minor Children, Age, and Number of Years in the Detroit Area for the Head of the Household	Television Set Ownership	
	Per Cent of Set Owners	Number of Households
<u>Total Population</u>	87	948
<u>Income</u>		
Below \$3,000	75	224
\$3,000 - 4,999	85	289
\$5,000 - 6,999	94	230
\$7,000 and over	98	163
<u>Presence of Minor Children</u>		
Children in the home	91	561
No children in the home	81	384
<u>Age</u>		
21-24 years old	70	50
25-29 years old	86	105
30-39 years old	90	252
40-49 years old	92	209
50-59 years old	87	196
60 years old or older	82	136
<u>Number of Years in the Detroit Area</u>		
Detroit Area natives	94	249
Detroit area migrants:		
0-4 years in area	69	103
5-9 years in area	83	77
10-19 years in area	92	144
20-29 years in area	88	130
30 or more years in area	85	239

*Age and Set Ownership*

There is a noticeable tendency for television ownership to be associated with age of the head of the household, as the data in Table 8 indicate. Ownership is relatively low (70 per cent) for household heads who are less than twenty-five years old and increases (to about 90 per cent) for those heads twenty-six to fifty-nine years old. There is a small decline in ownership for persons sixty years old or older. These

trends are consistent with the tendency for household income to be lower for younger and older families than for persons in the middle age range.

### *Migration Status and Set Ownership*

Our Detroit Area Study data point out (in Table 8) that recent migrants to the Detroit community are comparatively less likely to own television sets than are native Detroiters or persons who have lived here five years or more. The figures range from 69 per cent owners among heads of households in the area less than five years to 94 per cent owners among persons who were born and have lived all their lives in greater Detroit.

This finding ties in with the income and age relationships discussed above. A relatively high proportion of recent migrants to metropolitan Detroit are young persons with lower incomes. Apparently, many newcomers do not bring a television set with them and do not acquire one until they have had time to become familiar with their new home and to increase their earning power.

### *Two-Set Ownership*

As we said, the adoption of television by Detroit households previously without sets has probably slowed to a near halt. As the advertising emphasis of the television industry swings to a "set in every room" theme, it will be interesting to watch trends in the ownership of two sets. In early spring, 1955, approximately one out of every twelve greater Detroit households had two or more television sets (Table 9). This number of two-set owners is amazing, considering the comparatively few years television has been available to the general public.

Table 9  
MULTIPLE TELEVISION SET OWNERSHIP  
BY INCOME OF THE HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD

Income of the Head of the Household	Multiple Set Ownership	
	Per Cent of Two Set Owners	Number of Households
<u>Total Population</u>	9	927
<u>Income</u>		
Below \$3,000	3	218
\$3,000 - 4,999	9	282
\$5,000 - 6,999	10	228
\$7,000 - 9,999	9	94
\$10,000 and over	25	64

The tendency to own two television sets varies among different population groups much as was described for owners as compared with non-owners, although the variation in two-set ownership is usually less

than that found for owners and non-owners. It is interesting to note (see Table 9) that about one out of every four Detroit households with an annual income in excess of \$10,000 owns two or more television sets.

*Television Viewing as a Leisure Time Activity*

Television viewing is an important part of the life of the average Detroit area housewife. When asked about leisure time activities, almost two-thirds of the wives state that watching television is one of the two most common ways in which they spend their spare time. As is shown in Chapter 6, no other single activity approaches television as a consumer of leisure hours.

It has been claimed that television, by bringing family members together, tends to strengthen the family as a unit. There is evidence that all members of the urban family spend a considerable amount of time in front of the television set. The degree to which this activity materially contributes to a more cohesive family structure, however, is not yet well established.

\* \* \* \* \*

Television reaches the homes of an overwhelming majority of the Detroit area population. In a few years it has grown from an interesting novelty to one of the great means of communication. Television is now in a position to work alongside the radio and newspaper in maintaining the tremendously high levels of communication which our society demands.

## 4

### HELPING AND BEING HELPED BY RELATIVES

For relatives to help one another is basic to family life everywhere. But this form of mutual aid may appear to be so widespread among rural families that the frequency with which urban relatives exchange help suffers by comparison. There has been a tremendous growth of agencies outside the family which perform many services for the individual urbanite. Nonetheless, there probably remains a range of needs which only relatives may readily meet, even in the city. While we do not have the data to compare the help patterns of farm families with those of the metropolis, this chapter does show that in greater Detroit a rather strong network of exchange exists among relatives.

As used here, the terms "extended family" and "kin group" refer to all persons related by blood or marriage. The "immediate family" is defined as the husband, his wife, and any unmarried children who live in their parents' household.

#### *Patterns of Help*

Seven out of every ten couples in the Detroit area exchange some kind of help with relatives outside their immediate family. Only 7 per cent of the total married population, moreover, are without such ties. About equally small proportions of couples (10-14 per cent) either receive help only or give help only. These patterns, shown in Figure 3, indicate that a comparatively high degree of interdependence exists among members of the extended family in the Detroit community.

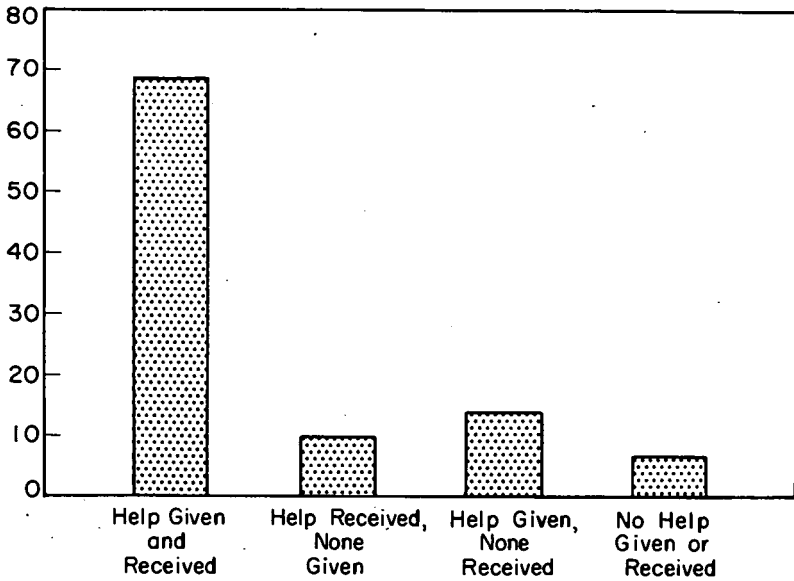
#### *Types of Help*

Baby-sitting and care during illness are two of the most frequent ways which relatives exchange help in the city. As may be seen in Tables 10 and 11, approximately one-half of the families in greater Detroit receive or give these types of help. Financial aid and help with the housework rank next in importance as means by which relatives assist each other; around three out of every ten couples receive or give financial assistance or help with the housework. Other types of aid, such as business advice, valuable gifts, and help in finding a job, are exchanged considerably less often than the above four.

#### *Age and Types of Help*

The young wife, understandably, is the person who gets baby-sitting

Per Cent of Families  
Who Exchange Help  
with Relatives



EXCHANGE OF HELP WITH RELATIVES

Figure 3. Per cent of Detroit area families who exchange help with relatives.

Table 10  
MAJOR TYPES OF HELP RECEIVED BY AGE OF WIFE

Major Types of Help Received	Age of Wife				Total
	29 yrs. old or less	30-44 yrs. old	45-59 yrs. old	60 yrs. old or older	
Baby-sitting	67%	54%	20%	10%	46%
Help during illness	60	54	41	24	50
Financial aid	53	36	18	20	34
Help with housework	32	25	24	15	26
Business advice	17	12	7	8	12
Help in finding a job	12	8	4	-	8
Valuable gifts	10	8	11	30	11
Total	*	*	*	*	*
Number of families	178	318	166	61	723

\*Totals do not equal 100 per cent as a family may have received more than one type of help.

Table 11  
 MAJOR TYPES OF HELP GIVEN BY AGE OF WIFE

Major Types of Help Given	Age of Wife				Total
	29 yrs. old or less	30-44 yrs. old	45-59 yrs. old	60 yrs. old or older	
Baby sitting	51%	45%	46%	51%	47%
Help during illness	47	60	53	43	54
Financial aid	29	30	32	31	30
Help with housework	32	28	24	15	27
Business advice	8	9	13	13	10
Help in finding a job	10	15	12	8	12
Valuable gifts	6	8	11	8	8
Total	*	*	*	*	*
Number of families	178	318	166	61	723

\*Totals do not equal 100 per cent as a family may have given more than one type of help.

services, and the younger she is the more she needs and gets help with her children (Table 10). But for other types of assistance as well, it is the younger wives who usually receive the most help from relatives. Young couples who have just begun their families probably are more in need of economic and other types of help from relatives than are older and more settled couples.

Only in the exchange of valuable gifts are older persons more likely to receive help than families in which the wife is less than sixty years old. No doubt, a non-financial gift is a favorite way for young couples to repay the economic aid, child care, or other services they receive from older relatives.

Except for help with housework, it appears that age is not associated with the frequency of assisting relatives (Table 11). Younger wives more often help with housework than do older women. But older relatives can and do baby-sit, aid in times of illness, and lend money just as well as, if not better than, their younger kin.

#### *Income and Types of Help*

There is no indication in our data that differences in family income are associated with the frequency with which relatives exchange help. Low income families, for almost all types of help, are about as likely to give and receive as are the wealthy. Even in helping to find a job, or in giving valuable gifts, business advice, or financial aid, relatives in low income families help out about as often as do those in the higher brackets. The absolute amount of such help, of course, probably increases with income.



Table 12

**MAJOR TYPES OF HELP EXCHANGED BETWEEN PARENTS AND CHILDREN, HELP RECEIVED FROM SIBLINGS, AND HELP RECEIVED FROM OTHER RELATIVES**

Major Types of Help	Direction of Help and Type of Relative Involved			
	Help Received from Parents	Help Given to Parents	Help Received from Siblings	Help Received from Other Relatives
Help of any major type	65%	46%	54%	17%
Baby-sitting	35	4	28	4
Help during illness	33	30	29	5
Financial aid	30	15	15	4
Help with housework	14	15	15	2
Business advice	7	2	5	1
Help in finding a job	2	1	5	2
Valuable gifts	7	4	5	2
Total	*	*	*	*
Number of families	513	513	513	513

\*Totals do not equal 100 per cent as a family may have given or received more than one type of help. This table includes only those couples who have living parents and siblings.

*Kinship Ties Among Relatives Who Give and Receive Help*

Parents, children, and brothers and sisters are more involved in mutual aid than aunts, uncles, cousins, or other relatives. As may be seen in Table 12,<sup>1</sup> baby-sitting and help with the housework or during illness are about as often given by brothers and sisters as by parents. Brothers and sisters are not so apt to give financial aid, however; when funds are needed, mother and dad are twice as likely to help. This is not surprising, since the resources of parents are probably greater.

Almost two out of every three couples in metropolitan Detroit with living parents and siblings receive some major type of help from their parents. A somewhat smaller proportion are helped by brothers or sisters. But only a comparatively few couples (17 per cent) receive help from more distant relatives. Thus, while the patterns of mutual aid found in the Detroit community include the extended family through parents, children, and siblings, such patterns do not reach out to the same extent to include aunts, uncles, cousins, and other relatives. In fact, for any of the types of help reported here, only about one out of every twenty Detroit area couples receives assistance from these persons.

Children are somewhat less likely to help their parents than to re-

<sup>1</sup>To simplify the discussion, Table 12 includes only those couples in our population who have parents, siblings, and other relatives living in separate dwellings.

ceive help from parents. This finding is consistent with the proposition reported by others that the direction of help usually goes from older to younger couples. The difference in giving and receiving is not great, however, as almost one-half of the adult children living outside the parental home give at least some kind of assistance to their parents.

Understandably, parents are much more likely to supply baby-sitting services and financial aid to their children than are children to do these things for parents. On the other hand, parents and children help each other with the housework and during times of illness to about the same degree.

\* \* \* \* \*

Even in metropolitan Detroit the exchange of help between relatives is a common occurrence. Relatives are especially likely to help each other as baby-sitters or nurses. Although aunts, uncles, cousins, and other more distant members of the kin group are involved in patterns of mutual aid to a comparatively limited extent, parents, children, and brothers and sisters are all of considerable importance in the exchange of help among members of the urban kin group.

## 5

### THE URBAN KIN GROUP

The past several decades have brought such vast changes to family life in the city that some observers now see the kin group as of almost no consequence to the average city dweller. The tasks of educating the young and caring for the aged family members have been largely taken from the family and assigned to the schools and government. Also, improved transportation methods and expanding employment opportunities have turned many a large kin group into several small and isolated families.

These and other changes associated with urbanization probably have diminished the influence of the kin group, but it is an overstatement to say that the extended family has little importance in the city. We have shown in Chapter 4 that relatives remain important sources of help to the urbanite. Moreover, one of the most interesting findings of our first Detroit Area Study survey was that even in the Detroit community most adults visit with relatives more frequently than with neighbors, co-workers, or other friends.

In this chapter we discuss several aspects of the extended family which were reported to us by the adult residents of the Detroit area. As previously defined, the "kin group," or "extended family," consists of all related persons; the two spouses and their children who reside in a single dwelling form the "immediate family."

#### *Number of Relatives in the Detroit Area*

Only a very small minority of Detroit area couples (11 per cent) have no relatives living in the metropolis. This urban community, therefore, is certainly not a collection of completely unrelated husband-wife units. In fact, over half of the wives in greater Detroit state that they and at least one of their relatives live in the same "neighborhood."

It would seem that the urban resident who is isolated from contact with relatives in his own community is the definite exception. There is little indication from our data, moreover, that the extended family in the city consists primarily of but two or three households. In fact, about one-half of the married couples in greater Detroit are related to six or more other Detroit area families.

#### *Degree of Relationship Among Detroit Area Relatives*

We asked the wives of our community to tell us which of their relatives live in the area. Figure 4 shows that brothers and sisters, on

Per Cent of Families  
Who Have Certain  
Types of Relatives  
in the Detroit Area

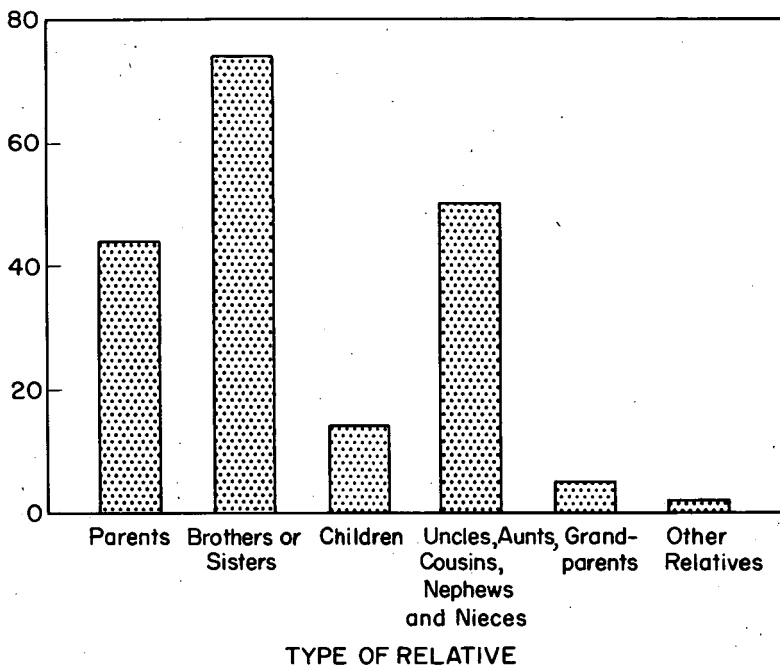


Figure 4. Per cent of families who have certain types of relatives living in the Detroit area.

either the husband's or wife's side, are by far the most commonly mentioned. Three-quarters of the wives have siblings or siblings-in-law in the Detroit area. About one-half have uncles, aunts, cousins, nephews, or nieces who are fellow Detroiters, and only slightly fewer wives have parents or parents-in-law living here. On the other hand, children, grandparents, and other relatives are listed as living in the community by a comparatively small proportion of wives.

It is quite probable, of course, that our respondents did not mention all their relatives but only those who seemed to them to be "really" a part of the extended family. Thus, while the kin group no doubt is of decided importance in the life of the city, its boundaries, as seen by urbanites, may exclude more distant relatives than is the case in other types of communities.

*Frequency of Visiting Detroit Area Relatives*

As the data in Table 13 point out, two-thirds of the wives see Detroit area relatives other than members of their immediate family at least once or twice every week. In fact, 28 per cent visit with some relative almost every day. On the other hand, only a comparatively few

Table 13  
**FREQUENCY OF CONTACT WITH RELATIVES  
 WHO LIVE IN THE DETROIT AREA**

<u>Frequency of Contact with Relatives</u>	<u>Per Cent of Families</u>
Every day or almost every day	28%
Once or twice a week	38
Once to a few times a month	17
A few times a year or less	6
No relatives in the Detroit area	<u>11</u>
Total	100%
Number of families	728

wives (17 per cent) report that they and their husbands see greater Detroit relatives less than once a month. And more than half of these women do not have other relatives in the community to see.

*"Dropping-In" on Relatives*

The high frequency of contact with members of the extended family in the metropolis is noteworthy. It is understandable, when visiting is such a common occurrence, that in the majority of instances (60 per cent) no formal planning or forewarning is involved; rather, family members usually "just drop in" on one another. We may add that, according to our data, in 75 per cent of the visits among relatives in Detroit the whole immediate family joins in visiting or receiving kin, not just the wife or the husband alone. These findings offer convincing evidence of the vitality of the kinship group in an urban setting.

*Large Kin Group Gatherings*

At this point it may be interesting to consider those occasions when Detroiters attend rather formally organized family parties or reunions. Such contacts among kin group members occur frequently in Detroit. Only one out of every four immediate families in our metropolis never attends large family gatherings, and the majority go to such meetings at least a few times a year (Table 14).

Table 14  
**FREQUENCY OF ATTENDING LARGE EXTENDED FAMILY GATHERINGS**

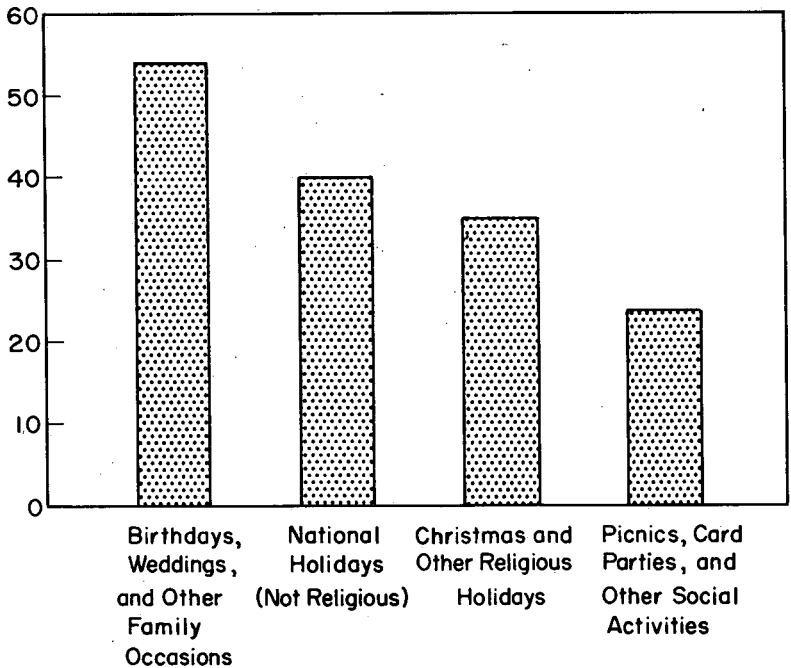
<u>Frequency of Attendance</u>	<u>Per Cent of Families</u>
At least once a month	9%
A few times a year	44
Less than a few times a year	23
Never	<u>24</u>
Total	100%
Number of families	727

The most popular occasions for extended family get-togethers are, appropriately, family ceremonial events such as birthdays, weddings, christenings, and confirmations. Over half of the Detroit area couples meet with their kin for these purposes, as Figure 5 points out. National holidays, such as the Fourth of July and Labor Day, and religious holidays like Christmas and Easter, serve as occasions for extended family gatherings for somewhat fewer couples than do family ceremonial events. Only one out of every four couples in greater Detroit meets with relatives for picnics, card parties, and other social activities.

*The Comparative "Importance" of Relatives and Non-Relatives*

Some of the occasions for gatherings of the extended family mentioned above are usually considered as "family days," but others could be shared just as easily with friends as with relatives. It is possible, in this connection, that those couples who attend no large family gatherings and those who primarily attend only family ceremonial occasions might constitute a sizeable group who do not feel that their relatives are especially close or important to them. Perhaps these persons feel closer to friends.

Per Cent of Families  
Who Attend Certain  
Types of Gatherings



**OCCASIONS FOR LARGE EXTENDED FAMILY GATHERINGS**

Figure 5. Per cent of families who attend certain types of large extended family gatherings.

Table 15

THE COMPARATIVE "IMPORTANCE" OF RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

<u>"Importance" of Relatives and Friends</u>	<u>Per Cent of Wives</u>
Relatives most important	79%
Friends most important	17
Relatives and friends equally important	4
Total	100%
Number of wives	725

There is little indication, however, that many wives in the Detroit area may be so classified. Asked, "Considering friends as compared with relatives who don't live here, which would you say is the most important to you?", the great majority of wives choose their relatives (Table 15). Only 17 per cent believe that friends are more important than relatives, and even fewer wives feel that friends and relatives are equally important.

Per Cent of Families Who Visit Relatives, Co-Workers, Neighbors, or Other Friends at Least Once a Week

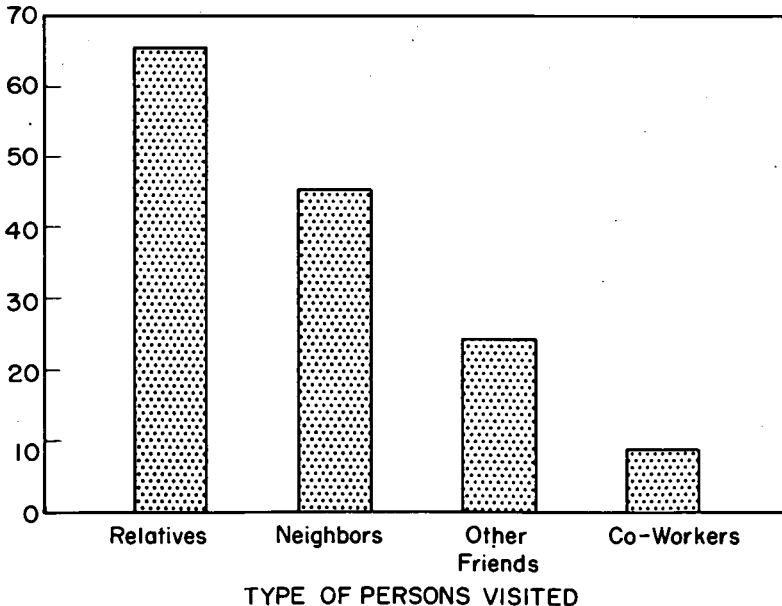


Figure 6. Per cent of families who visit relatives, co-workers, neighbors, or other friends at least once a week.

Table 16  
 FREQUENCY OF CONTACT WITH RELATIVES, CO-WORKERS,  
 NEIGHBORS, OR OTHER FRIENDS

Frequency of Contact	Group Contacted			
	Relatives	Co-Workers	Neighbors	Other Friends
At least once a week	67%	9%	45%	24%
Once to a few times a month	20	20	17	44
A few times a year or less	13	30	14	24
Never	--	41	24	8
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of families	728	723	723	726

*Contact with Relatives and Non-Relatives*

Another indication of the comparative importance of friends and relatives to Detroit area couples is seen in the frequency with which relatives and non-related persons are visited. As we found in an earlier survey, relatives are seen much more frequently than neighbors, co-workers, or other friends. This is apparent from the data shown in Figure 6 and Table 16. Although not contacted as often as relatives, it should be noted that neighbors are visited frequently by considerably more Detroit couples than are other friends who are not neighbors or, especially, persons the husband or wife works with.

Considering the possible importance to the family of the husband's job and work associations, it is interesting that so few couples (29 per cent) see the husband's co-workers off the job more than a few times a year. Of course, some wives may classify friends who work with their husbands as "friends" rather than as co-workers; but it is doubtful that this could account completely for the infrequent contact with work associates. Again, the preference for relatives over non-relatives is borne out by the data.

\* \* \* \* \*

The "typical" Detroiter is very much a member of an extended family group. Most married couples in the community have relatives near by and are in frequent contact with them. There is little doubt that the kin group is continuing to play an important part in the life of the metropolitan family.



## 6

### THE URBAN HOUSEWIFE

Up to this point in our description of the urban family we have not been primarily concerned with an analysis of the roles of individual members of the household. This chapter, however, discusses some aspects of the current role of the wife and mother in metropolitan family life. While most persons believe that few modern wives do things the way their grandmothers did, there is less agreement as to just how and what things are done in the present day family by the wife.

#### *Dividing the Household Chores*

Every family must have some system for getting necessary jobs done around the home. Historically, there has been a division of family tasks between husband and wife according to whether the chores are considered "men's work" or "women's work." The growing employment of women outside the home, the invention of many labor saving household appliances, and an increasing involvement of women in community activities have changed the pattern to some extent; but either by habit or intention, a great many families in the Detroit area still hold to this arrangement for getting things done.

#### *"Woman's Work"*

Such tasks as washing dishes, straightening a room for company, and getting breakfast, traditionally jobs for the woman of the house, are still performed predominantly by the wife (Table 17). There is some evidence, however, that doing the dishes and straightening up for company are jobs that a few husbands (14 to 16 per cent) are willing to share with their wives. Also, at least one out of every five Detroit area husbands either prepares his own breakfast, or eats out, or does not eat breakfast. In many of these families, probably, both wife and husband are employed.

#### *"That's a Man's Job"*

The husbands of our community continue to be primarily responsible for mowing the lawn in summer, shoveling snow in winter, and repairing things around the house in all seasons (Table 17). But even for these jobs there are some wives (7-15 per cent) who usually do the tasks themselves.

### *Sharing of Tasks*

We found two household chores which do not belong to one or the other spouse to the same extent as do most jobs. They are grocery shopping and keeping track of the family's money and bills (Table 17). Both of these tasks, though more generally done by wives, are quite frequently shared with husbands. Shopping is a less specialized chore than most others, probably because it often depends on access to the family car.

In about one-quarter of the Detroit area homes it is the husband who usually handles the finances. Our data indicate that this is especially likely to occur in the families of white-collar workers; in blue-collar families, on the other hand, the wife more often shares this task with her husband or does it herself. More women in blue-collar households are employed outside the home; it may be that since they share directly in earning the money, working wives also are more likely to share in spending it than are non-working wives.

### *Home Production in the Metropolis*

Not very long ago many families were both producers and consumers of most of their basic necessities. A large part of the direct producing activity of the family, however, has now been transferred to other institutions. The modern wife, unlike her great-grandmother, does not usually keep a large garden, store a great deal of food for later use, and make all the clothing her family requires.

In fact, as is indicated in Figure 7, in a decided majority of Detroit area homes these forms of family production are *never* found. Only in a minority of households do these types of production occur, at least to some extent. About a third of the community's wives still raise some of the vegetables and fruit their families eat. Similar proportions prepare some canned or frozen food or make some of their own or their daughters' clothing.

Contrary to the above three forms of home production, almost all wives, even in the metropolis, do some pastry baking. The preparation of cakes, cookies, and pies requires little time and expense, as compared to raising a garden or home canning, for example. Furthermore, many wives probably enjoy baking more than other tasks.

It is interesting to note that there is little relationship between the amount of production done at home and the occupation of the husband. When the above four forms of home production are combined into a single index, as in Table 18, families at all occupational levels appear to be quite similar in the likelihood that they do these things at home or have them done outside the home.

The production of goods in the home was once an economy measure. It is still possible to economize by producing some things at home, but mass manufacturing and marketing have reduced the amount of money which can be saved in this way. Also, many wives have probably

Table 17  
 THE DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD CHORES  
 BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE

Types of Household Chores	Person Who Usually Does the Chore				Number of Families
	Husband	Husband and Wife	Wife	Total	
Evening dishes	3%	14	83	100%	721
Straightening a room for company	2%	16	82	100%	727
Getting the husband's breakfast	21%	4	75	100%	713
Mowing the lawn	79%	7	14	100%	694
Shoveling the snow	77%	8	15	100%	701
Repairing things	87%	6	7	100%	712
Shopping for groceries	14%	29	57	100%	723
Handling the money and bills	26%	34	40	100%	727

Per Cent of Families Who Do None of These Things at Home

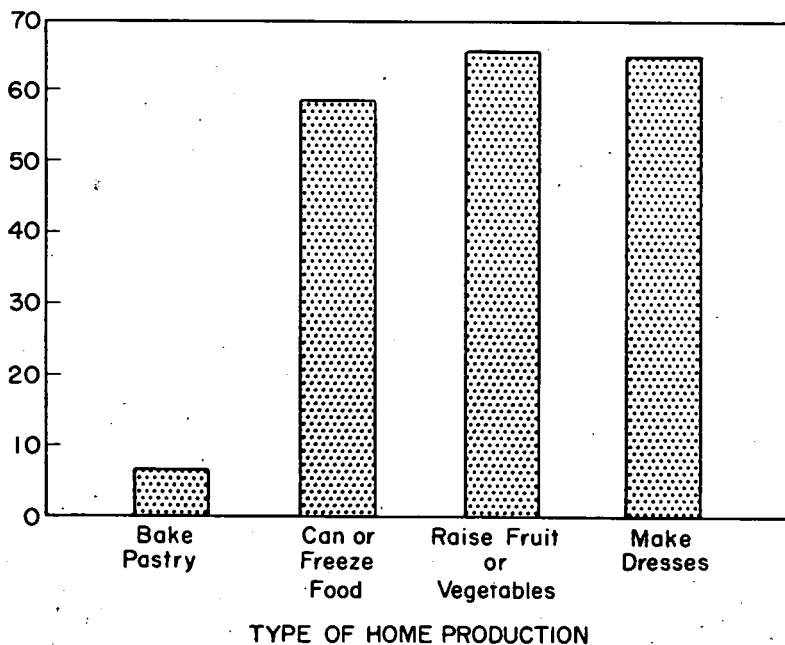


Figure 7. Per cent of families who do no pastry baking, do not can or freeze food, do not raise fruits or vegetables, or do not make dresses at home.

Table 18  
OCCUPATION OF THE HUSBAND  
BY AN INDEX OF HOME PRODUCTION

Index of Home Production	Occupation of Husband			
	Professionals, Managers, Officials, and Proprietors	Clerical and Sales Workers	Craftsmen and Foremen	Operatives, Service Workers, Laborers
High	11%	10%	16%	10%
Moderately high	27	31	31	30
Moderately low	49	44	42	51
Low	13	15	11	9
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of husbands	171	89	197	265

decided that the time which is required in home production might better be invested in other activities, some of which are described below. In the future we may find that producing food and clothing in the family will become more of a hobby than a necessary household task.

#### *Leisure Time Activities of the Wife*

The movement of some forms of home production out of the family and the existence of many labor-saving devices in the home give the modern wife much more time free from household chores than her great-grandmother would have thought possible. Associated with this, as we pointed out in Chapter 2, is the comparatively large number of women who are currently working outside the home. Even with an increased opportunity for gainful employment, however, it is probably safe to assume that most women have more leisure time today than was formerly the case.

Aside from visiting with relatives and friends (which was discussed earlier), how do wives spend their leisure time? The major leisure time activities of the modern housewife are shown in Figure 8.

Watching television, as we indicated in Chapter 3, is an extremely popular past-time for a large majority of greater Detroit wives. Almost two out of every three wives rank television viewing among their two most important consumers of spare time. There is no indication in our Detroit Area Study data that the frequency of watching television varies by the economic status of the wife's family. That is, wives from all economic levels appear to agree that television is their most popular spare time pursuit.

Other activities which are mentioned by wives as being of some importance are: sewing or knitting, reading, church and club work, going to movies, and shopping. None of these things, however, is listed by as many as one-quarter of the women among their two most important leisure time activities. Again, wives from all economic levels are

Per Cent of  
Wives Who Spend  
Leisure Time in  
a Certain Activity

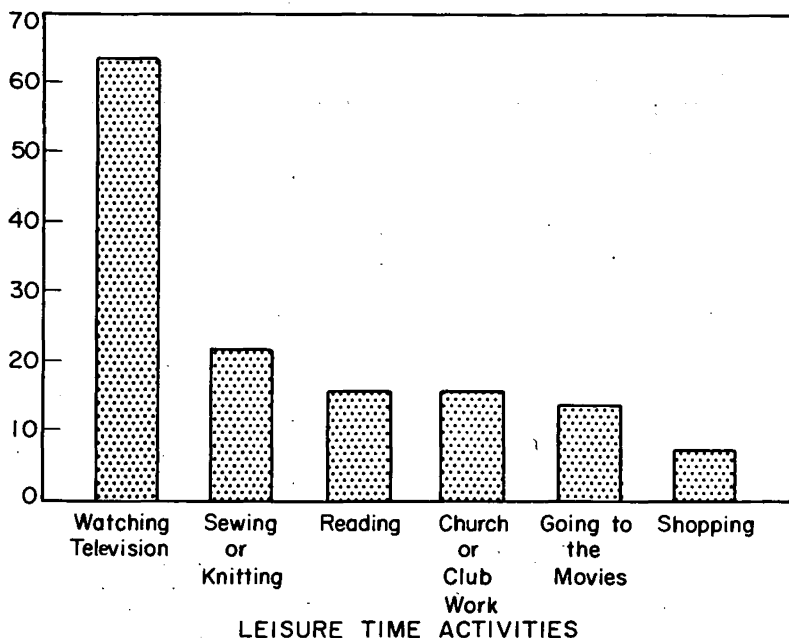


Figure 8. Per cent of wives who list certain activities among their two most important consumers of leisure time.

quite similar in the frequency with which specific activities are reported.

*The Wife's Church and Club Activity*

Only a relatively small number of Detroit wives (16 per cent) state that church and club work is a major spare time activity. Women for whom work in these "voluntary organizations" is an important part of a busy schedule, however, may not consider it a leisure time pursuit. In any event, about six out of every ten wives do belong to at least one voluntary group other than a church, and about the same proportion belong to a church (Table 19). Church and club membership appears to be a comparatively common fixture in the life of the urban housewife.

Unlike other leisure time activities, not all Detroit wives are equally likely to join a voluntary non-church association. There is a very marked relationship between the wife's economic status and club membership. That is, the higher the economic bracket, the higher the membership rate. This is shown in Table 20, where the husband's occupation is used as a measure of the wife's economic status.

Table 19

## CHURCH AND CLUB MEMBERSHIP OF WIVES

Church and Club Membership	Per Cent of Wives
<u>Church Membership</u>	
Member	64%
Non-member	36
Total	100%
<u>Club Membership</u>	
Member	59%
Non-member	41
Total	100%
Number of wives	728

Table 20

NUMBER OF CLUB MEMBERSHIPS OF THE WIFE  
BY THE HUSBAND'S OCCUPATION

Number of Memberships of the Wife	Husband's Occupation				
	Profes- sionals	Proprietors, Managers, Officials	Clerical and Sales Workers	Foremen and Craftsmen	Operatives, Service Workers, Laborers
No memberships	22%	38%	34%	42%	54%
Club members: all	<u>78</u>	<u>62</u>	<u>66</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>46</u>
One membership	25	24	32	30	28
Two memberships	14	18	24	19	12
Three or more memberships	<u>39</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>6</u>
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of wives	86	87	89	199	266

Table 21

## MAJOR TYPES OF CLUBS TO WHICH WIVES BELONG

Types of Clubs	Membership Status		
	Members	Non-Members	Total
PTA, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, etc.	22%	78	100%
Church-connected clubs	22%	78	100%
Lodge groups (e.g., the Eastern Star)	9%	91	100%
Women's social clubs	11%	89	100%
Neighborhood improvement groups	6%	94	100%
Charitable associations	5%	95	100%

In addition to the fact of membership, our data indicate that wives in the upper economic levels are not only more likely to join voluntary groups than are other wives, but they also join more groups and attend meetings of these groups more frequently than do wives in lower brackets. Among other reasons for this, it is probable that many wives in the lower status levels simply do not have as much time for voluntary group activity as do wives in more wealthy families.

Greater Detroit housewives who do join are most likely to be members of voluntary organizations which are directly related to the interests of their families and their religions (Table 21). Thus, such groups as the Parent-Teachers Association and the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, and groups which are connected with a church, claim the most members (22 per cent of the wives are members in each type of organization). A considerably smaller proportion of Detroit area wives are members of a lodge group or auxiliary or a women's social club.

\* \* \* \* \*

In a few respects the role of the modern urban housewife is perhaps not too different from that played by her great-grandmother. For example, the division of household tasks between husband and wife still seems to be quite similar to the division which tradition would require. In other ways, however, the modern wife's role has probably changed considerably during the last few decades. This is reflected in a comparatively low level of home production and in the amount of effort many women can now devote to church and club work.

## APPENDIX A

### THE CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR THE DETROIT AREA STUDY

The following persons are members of the Detroit Area Study's Citizens Advisory Council. The members of the Council support the general purposes of the Detroit Area Study, but they are not responsible for the questions or reports of a particular survey year. The membership of the Council is listed as of July, 1955.

Mr. Edward Baker  
Postmaster  
United States Post Office

Mr. Stanley J. Baldwin  
Republican Chairman  
14th Congressional District

Judge Theodore R. Bohn  
Wayne County Circuit Court

Mr. William M. Brown  
General Manager  
Detroit Shopping News

Mr. Benjamin D. Burdick  
Republican Chairman  
15th Congressional District

Mrs. C. H. Cable, President  
League of Women Voters

Miss F. G. Cassidy, Secretary  
Nationality Department of the  
United Community Services of  
Metropolitan Detroit

Mr. Edward Connor  
Executive Director  
Future Detroit, Inc.

Father John E. Coogan, Chairman  
Commission on Community  
Relations

Mr. Allen B. Crow, President  
The Economic Club of Detroit

Mr. Edgar Currie  
Democratic Chairman  
13th Congressional District

Mr. Bert F. Donlin  
Democratic Chairman  
14th Congressional District

Bishop John A. Donovan  
Chancellor of the Archdiocese of  
Detroit

Judge George Edwards  
Wayne County Circuit Court

Mr. Henry Fink, President  
American Natural Gas Service  
Company

Mrs. Elsie Gilmore, Chairman  
Wayne County Democratic  
Committee

Mr. Paise Gitcho  
Republican Chairman  
First Congressional District

Mrs. Martha W. Griffiths  
Member of Congress  
Michigan 17th District

Mr. E. N. Hartwick, President  
Wayne County Republican  
Precinct Organization

Assistant Dean Donald S. Hecock  
Wayne University



Mr. Lee Hills  
Vice President and Executive Editor  
Detroit Free Press

Mrs. H. B. Ihnken, Past-President  
The Detroit Federation of  
Women's Clubs

Mr. Boris M. Joffe  
Executive Director  
The Jewish Community Council of  
Metropolitan Detroit

Mr. Fred W. Kaess  
United States Attorney

Professor Arthur Kornhauser  
Wayne University

Mr. Ernest J. Lacey  
Democratic National Committeeman  
State of Michigan

Mr. William S. Lampe  
Managing Editor  
The Detroit Times

Dr. G. Merrill Lenox  
Executive Director  
Detroit and Michigan  
Councils of Churches

Mr. Robert J. McBride, Jr.  
Director of Research  
Detroit Free Press

Dr. C. A. McPheeters  
Metropolitan Methodist Church

Mr. Hugh H. MacMillan  
Research Department  
Campbell-Ewald Company

Mr. Anthony P. Marchese  
Legal Aid Bureau of Detroit

Mr. James T. Maunders  
Director of Public Relations  
Bohn Aluminum and Brass  
Corporation

Mr. Alfred V. Meyers  
Democratic Chairman  
17th Congressional District

Mr. Loren B. Miller  
Executive Director  
Citizens Research Council

Dr. Albert Moellmann  
Market Analyst  
The Detroit News

Mr. James H. Norton  
Director of Research  
United Community Services of  
Metropolitan Detroit

Mr. Mike Novak, President  
Greater Detroit and Wayne County  
CIO Industrial Union Council

Mr. H. Lynn Pierson  
Chairman of the Board  
Detroit Harvester Company

Dean Victor A. Rapport  
College of Liberal Arts  
Wayne University

Mr. Paul M. Reid, Planning Analyst  
Detroit Metropolitan Area Regional  
Planning Commission

Dr. Remus G. Robinson, President  
The Detroit Urban League

Mr. August Scholle, President  
Michigan CIO Council

Professor Edgar A. Schuler  
Wayne University

Mr. Eldred H. Scott  
Vice President and Controller  
Detroit Edison Company

Mr. George A. Shaffer  
Commissioner  
Detroit Water Board

Mr. Nate S. Shapero, President  
Cunningham Drug Stores

Mr. Joseph W. Skutecki  
Past-President  
Polish-American Congress  
Division of Michigan

Professor Carl O. Smith  
Wayne University

Mr. John R. Stewart  
Statistician  
Detroit Board of Commerce

Mrs. Florence M. Sweeney  
Executive Board  
Detroit and Wayne County  
Federation of Labor

Miss Clara Swieczkowska  
Executive Director  
Polish Activities League

Mr. Edward M. Turner, President  
National Association for the  
Advancement of Colored People  
(Detroit Branch)

Mr. Robert L. Ward, President  
Wayne County Progressive  
Republican Club

Mr. Michael Wichorek  
Executive Secretary  
Ukrainian Youth's League of  
North America, Inc.

## APPENDIX B

### A COMPARISON OF RESULTS FROM THE 1955 DETROIT AREA STUDY'S SURVEY WITH INFOR- MATION FROM THE 1950 UNITED STATES CENSUS

One way of checking the general adequacy of the Detroit Area Study's sample selection and interviewing is to compare our findings with those obtained from other sources.

Although our 1955 survey was made several years after the 1950 United States Census, it is possible to compare some of our findings with those of the Census. It should be noted that where comparisons are made between census data and Detroit Area Study data, the "Detroit Standard Metropolitan Area," as defined by the Census Bureau, covers a somewhat larger region and population than the "Detroit area" as defined by the Detroit Area Study.

Table B-1

NUMBER OF PERSONS PER DWELLING UNIT FOR THE  
DETROIT AREA: COMPARISONS OF FINDINGS OF U.S.  
CENSUS (1950) AND DETROIT AREA STUDY (1953, 1954, 1955)

Persons Per Dwelling Unit	1950	Detroit Area Study		
	U. S. Census	1953	1954	1955
1 person	6%	7%	6%	8%
2 persons	28	28	28	26
3 persons	24	24	21	21
4 persons	20	22	21	21
5 persons	12	9	13	14
6 persons	6	5	7	5
7 or more persons	5	5	4	5
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table B-1 shows that the Detroit Area Study data on number of persons per dwelling unit correspond very closely to those of the Census.

Table B-2

TENURE STATUS FOR OCCUPIED DWELLING UNITS IN THE  
DETROIT AREA: COMPARISON OF FINDINGS OF U.S. CENSUS  
(1950) AND DETROIT AREA STUDY (1953, 1954, 1955)

Tenure Status	1950	Detroit Area Study		
	U. S. Census	1953	1954	1955
Owner occupied	65%	65%	68%	64%
Renter occupied	35	35	32	36
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table B-2 indicates a close correspondence between our findings and the U. S. Census report on the proportion of dwelling units in greater Detroit which are owner-occupied and the proportion renter-occupied.

Table B-3 shows a close correspondence of occupational distributions for the Census and the Detroit Area Study.

Table B-3

MAJOR OCCUPATIONAL GROUP FOR WORKERS<sup>a</sup> IN THE DETROIT AREA: COMPARISON OF FINDINGS OF THE U.S. CENSUS (1950) AND THE DETROIT AREA STUDY (1953, 1954, 1955)

Major Occupational Group	1950	Detroit Area Study		
	U. S. Census	1953	1954	1955
Professional, technical, and kindred workers	9%	9%	9%	10%
Managers, officials, and proprietors	9	10	11	9
Clerical, sales, and kindred workers	22	18	19	19
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers	19	20	23	19
Operatives and kindred workers	27	29	23	27
Service workers, including private household	9	9	10	11
Laborers	5	4	4	4
Not reported	1	1	1	1
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

<sup>a</sup>The data from the U. S. Census are for employed persons 14 years of age or older. The data from the Detroit Area Study are for persons in the labor force, 21 years of age or older.

The preceding tables indicate that the sample results of the 1955 Detroit Area Study correspond closely with findings from the U.S. Census on a variety of characteristics. The comparisons shown are not selected because they are the only ones which could prove this point. They are similar to those made with other sources and using other variables.

## APPENDIX C

### MEASURES OF SAMPLING ERROR

The sample of people interviewed for the Detroit Area Study yields estimated values of the proportion of the whole population of the Detroit area who have the characteristics or attitudes measured in the survey. These sample proportions or values are only estimates because: (1) there are errors which enter into the collection of the data, and (2) the individuals chosen for the sample may differ by chance from the total population.

#### *Non-Sampling Error*

The errors involved in collecting the data are called "reporting errors" and "non-response errors." Reporting errors are kept at a minimum by careful training of interviewers, by attempting to get the confidence of the respondent so that he will answer the questions to the best of his ability, and by checking the interviews for inconsistencies.

There is no way to determine exactly the extent of reporting errors, but repeated samples of the Detroit area population will give some indication of their size. A comparison between this year's findings and the results of past surveys shows that the fluctuation between sample years is small for those variables, such as occupational composition, which may be expected to change slowly (see Appendix B). Since such comparisons could be made only with demographic and socio-economic data, however, the effect of reporting errors on attitudinal and behavioral data cannot be checked specifically. Nonetheless, there is little reason to expect that these data are affected significantly.

Non-response errors arise because some persons selected for the sample refused to be interviewed or were not at home after repeated call-backs. A limited analysis of some of the characteristics of persons in these non-response categories gives no indication that their exclusion had a significant effect on the final results.

#### *Sampling Error*

Those errors that arise because information was secured from a sample rather than the total population are called "sampling errors." These can usually be determined if it is known exactly how and with what probability the sample was selected from the total population. The size of the sampling error varies depending upon how large a sample was selected and how much the values for any given characteristic or attitude vary.

If both the non-sampling and sampling errors were known, the true population values could be obtained. However, only the sampling errors are calculable, so that the central, rather than the true, population value is estimated. By central population value is meant the value that would be obtained if the whole population had been interviewed. The non-sampling errors would remain, but the error caused by surveying only a sample of the population would be eliminated.

Table C-1  
 APPROXIMATE SAMPLING ERRORS FOR THE  
 DETROIT AREA STUDY: 1954-55

Chances are 95 in 100 that the central value lies within the reported value, plus or minus the number of percentage points shown in this table.

Sample Size	Sampling Errors for Reported Percentage Around			
	5 or 95%	10 or 90%	20 or 80%	50%
50	-	-	12	16
75	-	7	10	13
100	-	7	9	11
150	4	5	7	9
175	4	5	7	8
200	3	5	6	8
250	3	4	6	7
300	3	4	5	6
400	2	3	4	6
500	2	3	4	5
731	2	3	4	5
1000	2	3	4	5

Sampling errors have been calculated for the sample interviewed in the 1954-55 Detroit Area Study and may be used to determine how far on either side of the sample values the central population values can be expected to lie 95 times out of 100. Since the sampling error varies, in general, with the size of the sample and the variation in the characteristic measured, Table C-1, which is a generalized table of sampling errors, takes both these factors into account. Thus, if it is found that 87 per cent of the full sample of 948 households interviewed in 1955 own TV sets, the sampling error is 3 percentage points. This means that there are 95 chances in 100 that the central population value lies within the limits of 87 per cent plus or minus 3. That is, there are only 5 chances in 100 that fewer than 84 per cent or more than 90 per cent of the Detroit area population own a TV set. The table shows that with a smaller percentage reported in the sample, the sampling error is smaller, and with a smaller sized sub-group, the sampling error is larger.

Table C-2  
**SAMPLING ERRORS OF DIFFERENCES**  
 95% Probability

Differences required for significance in comparisons of percentages  
 from two different sub-groups.

Size of Sample or Group	75	100	200	350	500	750	1000	1500
For Proportions from About 30% to 70%								
75	15	14	13	12	12	11	11	11
100		13	12	11	10	10	10	10
200			10	9	8	8	7	7
350				7	7	6	6	6
500					6	6	5	5
750						5	5	4
1000							4	4
For Proportions Around 20% or 80%								
75	13	13	11	10	10	10	10	10
100		11	10	9	9	9	9	9
200			8	7	7	7	7	6
350				6	6	6	5	5
500					5	5	5	5
750						5	4	4
1000							4	4
For Proportions Around 10% or 90%								
75	10	10	8	8	8	8	8	7
100		9	8	7	7	7	7	7
200			6	6	6	5	5	5
350				5	5	4	4	4
500					4	4	4	3
750						3	3	3
1000							3	3
For Proportions Around 5% or 95%								
75	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
100		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
200			5	4	4	4	4	4
350				4	3	3	3	3
500					3	3	3	3
750						3	2	2
1000							2	2

The sampling error varies somewhat for the different findings of the survey. Despite these differences, Table C-1 can be used to give a general picture of the degree of variability that should be attached to the specific percentages reported in the text. This is so because it was constructed on the basis of estimates made of the average sampling errors of a number of characteristics from the study that had varying sample sizes and proportions.

It is also important to know whether or not a difference between two values obtained in the sample is "statistically significant." That is, would the difference still exist if other samples of the population were interviewed or if the whole population had been surveyed? Both the size of the groups which are being compared and the obtained percentages are needed to use Table C-2 where sampling errors of differences are shown. Thus, if 36 per cent of the 122 families in the sample in which the head earns less than \$3,000 have working wives, and if only 20 per cent of the 217 families in which the head earns \$5,000-6,999 have working wives, there are 95 chances in 100 that the difference is not due to chance (the table shows that a difference of 10 percentage points would be significant with groups of this size and with these percentages). This means that a difference this large (36 minus 20, or 16) would arise less than 5 times in 100 because of chance fluctuations or because this particular sample was selected.



## APPENDIX D

### RELEVANT QUESTIONS FROM THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Appendix D presents those questions from the interview schedule which are relevant to the analyses contained in this *Profile*. The questions are listed by chapter in the order of their discussion in the text. They were not asked of our respondents in this order. A copy of the complete interview schedule is available upon request from the Detroit Area Study.

#### *Chapter 2*

1. What is your occupation? (IF NEEDED) That is, what sort of work do you do?
2. Do you work for yourself or someone else?  
(IF WORKS FOR SOMEONE ELSE) 3. About how many people are employed where you work?
4. Do you usually work days or nights?  
(ASK OF WIFE) 5. Have you ever worked outside the home since marriage?  
(IF WIFE NOT EMPLOYED) 6. Do you think you might take a job sometime in the future?
- (IF "YES" TO Q. 6) 7. When would that be?
8. What was your total family income in 1954, considering all sources such as rents, profits, wages, interest and so on?
9. How much of that was the income of the head of the family?
10. What was the highest grade of school you completed?

#### *Chapter 3*

1. Do you own a television set?  
(IF "YES" TO Q. 1) 2. Is there more than one TV set in your home?
3. How long have you lived in the Detroit area? (IF NEEDED) The "Detroit area" is any place in Wayne, Macomb or Oakland Counties.

4. Aside from visiting, what kinds of things do you do in your spare time, like going to movies, watching TV, window shopping and so forth?
5. Which two of these things do you spend most of your spare time doing?

#### *Chapter 4*

1. There are many different ways in which relatives help each other. Some people get financial help or large money gifts from their relatives. Have you gotten such gifts?

(IF "YES" TO Q. 1) 2. From which of your relatives?

3. Do any of your relatives sometimes help you out in other ways by doing things for you?

(IF "YES" TO Q. 3) 4. Which relatives help you and what sorts of things do they do?

5. Here is a list of ways in which relatives help each other. In which of the ways shown here have you gotten help that we haven't already talked about?

Caring for children, baby sitting and so forth

Help when someone is ill

Taking care of the house

Advice on business or money matters

Help in getting a job

Valuable gifts

Financial help or large money gifts

6. Which relatives gave you this help?
7. In which of these ways have you ever given any help to relatives?
8. To which relatives did you give this help?

#### *Chapter 5*

1. We would like to know how close to you your relatives and your husband's relatives live. Do any of them live here in the Detroit area?
2. Which ones live in the Detroit area?
3. Does your (EACH RELATIVE MENTIONED) live here in the neighborhood?
4. How often do you see your (EACH RELATIVE MENTIONED)?

Every day

Almost every day

Once or twice a week

A few times a month

Once a month  
A few times a year  
Less often  
Never

5. Are these visits usually planned in advance or do you just sort of drop in on one another?
  6. Who is it that usually sees your (EACH RELATIVE MENTIONED) – just you, or you and your husband, or all of you including the children?
  7. Do your family and relatives, either yours or your husband's, ever have any large family gatherings, when a lot of you get together at one time?
- (IF "YES" TO Q. 7)
8. For what kinds of things do you get together?
  9. Considering all of them, about how often do you have such large family gatherings?
  10. Considering friends as compared to relatives who don't live here with you, which would you say is the most important to you?
  11. About how often do you folks see any of your neighbors?
  12. About how often do you folks get together outside of work with any of the people you or your husband works with?
  13. And about how often do you get together with other friends?

### Chapter 6

1. We would like to know how you and your husband divide up some of the family jobs. Here is a list of different ways of dividing up jobs. – Now, who does the grocery shopping?  
husband   husband more   husband and wife   wife more   wife  
always   than wife   exactly the same   than husband   always
2. Who gets your husband's breakfast on work days?
3. Who does the evening dishes?
4. Who straightens up the living room when company is coming?
5. Who mows the lawn?
6. Who shovels the sidewalk?
7. Who repairs things around the house?
8. Who keeps track of the money and the bills?

9. Some families buy most things ready made, while others make things for themselves. How many of the cakes, cookies, and pies you eat are baked at home?

All            Most            About half            Some            None

10. How many of the canned and frozen foods you eat are put up at home?
11. How many of the vegetables you eat in the summer are raised by your family?
12. How many of the dresses you (and your daughters) have were made at home?

(“LEISURE TIME” QUESTIONS ARE LISTED UNDER CHAPTER 3)

13. One way in which some wives spend their time is in clubs and organizations. Please look at this list and tell me which of these kinds of organizations you belong to, if any.

Labor Unions

A Church

Church-Connected Groups

Fraternal Organizations or Lodges

Veteran's Organizations

Business or Civic Groups

Parent-Teachers Associations

Neighborhood Clubs or Community Centers

Organizations of People of the Same Nationality Background

Sport Teams

Professional Groups

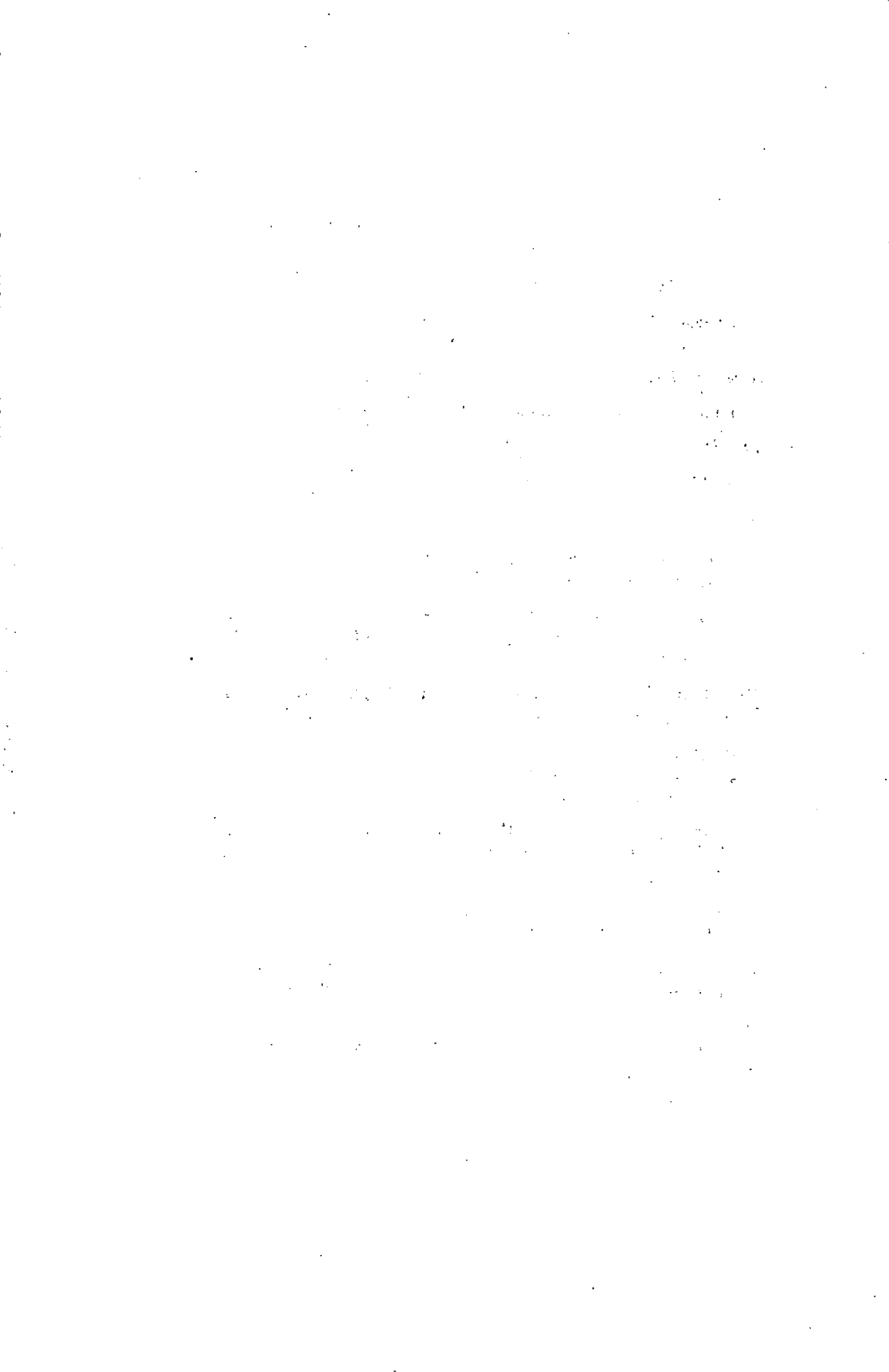
Political Clubs or Organizations

Neighborhood Improvement Associations

Women's Clubs

Charitable and Welfare Organizations

- (IF WIFE BELONGS) 14. Apart from the church, about how often have you attended meetings of any of these groups in the last three months?



### SOME CURRENT PUBLICATIONS

<i>A Social Profile of Detroit: 1952.</i> ix + 42 pp.	\$1.00
<i>Some Social and Economic Characteristics of the Detroit Area Population: 1952.</i> 92 pp. (Mimeographed)	\$1.25
<i>A Social Profile of Detroit: 1953.</i> vii + 35 pp.	\$1.00
<i>A Social Profile of Detroit: 1954.</i> vii + 29 pp.	\$1.00
<i>The Detroit Area Study.</i> 16 pp.	- - -
<i>A Social Profile of Detroit: 1955.</i> vi + 46 pp.	\$1.25

\* \* \*

- Axelrod, M. "Urban Structure and Social Participation." To be published in the *American Sociological Review*.
- Freedman, R. "The Detroit Area Study: A Training and Research Laboratory in the Community," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 59 (July, 1953), 30-33.
- Freedman, R. and Axelrod, M. "Who Belongs to What in a Great Metropolis?" *Adult Leadership*, 1 (November, 1952), 6-9.
- Freedman, R., Goldberg, D. and Sharp, H. "Ideals About Family Size in the Detroit Metropolitan Area," *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, 33 (April, 1955), 187-197.
- Freedman, R. and Sharp, H. "Correlates of Values About Ideal Family Size in the Detroit Metropolitan Area," *Population Studies*, 8 (July, 1954), 33-41.
- Lenski, G. E. "Status Crystallization," *American Sociological Review*, 19 (August, 1954), 405-413.
- Searles, R. and Sharp, H. "Detroiters Look at Public Employment," *The Municipal Employee*, (December, 1954), 5 ff.
- Sharp, H. "Migration and Voting Behavior in a Metropolitan Community." To be published in the *Public Opinion Quarterly*.