



# To Work Or Not To Work:

With home their lab, nine alumnae mothers offer their

Katheryn Levis McCormick '44

**M**Y children might have been just as happy as they are now (or even happier) if I had not worked; but believe me, I would not have been! Dotty, who is fifteen, never knew any other way of life. One day she said, "The next time that guidance teacher asks me what I plan to do, I'm not going to give him the answers he wants-like teach, be a secretary, be a nurse, I'm going to write: go to college, get married, and, when my youngest child is in school full day, get a full or part-time job."

Before Dick, who is seventeen and a half, went off to Amherst, I asked him to write his answer to your letter. As you can see, he and I do not interpret "work" to mean just work done for pay. The effect on the children and home is the same if the mother spends twenty hours a week on an activity outside the home, regardless of the payment or lack of it. Here is Dick's appraisal: "I would say that the 'experience' (and it is an experience!) of having a mother who works is a very varied and unpredictable one. It is often nerve racking (for example, when instead of having a nice normal dinner at 6:15 p.m. we get a dish of tunafish at 7:30 - for dessert, 'Why cookies, dear'). But it is also very inspiring to think that one's mother is doing something very worth-while, that she is making a unique and important contribution to society. (I am referring, of course, to the League of Women Voters, as well as her part-time teaching job.) My overall feeling is that I would not have it any other way."

So you can conclude both children have been successfully brainwashed by their mother.

As my children grew up, I had more time for outside work. Much of my "outside" work for the League of Women Voters was actually done within my home during the day. When I took my first paying job, I asked my husband what he thought of my taking it. He said he couldn't see what difference it made whether I worked twenty-five hours for pay for the Township or twenty-five hours for no

pay for the League of Women Voters. Now I work twenty to twenty-five hours for Douglass College and twenty to twenty-five hours for the League of Women Voters.

Dorothy Levis Munroe '44

**T**HE family's adjustment to my high school teaching career for the past four years has been on an individual basis. My younger son, twelve, has found a measure of security in having a mother who not only understands the "new math" but teaches it. Furthermore the opportunity to earn twenty-five cents a day for bed-making and breakfast dish-washing chores has made my teaching profitable for him. My older son, a college sophomore, has been in school away from home during my years of teaching so my activities have had for him little effect other than the indirect one of providing for him in the manner to which he has become accustomed. My daughter, a senior in high school, lives in a world of books and study and is undoubtedly grateful to those students and papers responsible for keeping me out of her hair for some precious hours each day.

There remain just two members of the family whose adjustments to my outside employment have been something less than happy. First - and least important - the family dog spends more hours on the chain in the backyard and less in the house than he would like. And last - but most important - my professor-husband daily regrets the loss of the heretofore unappreciated luxuries of phoning for assistance in locating misplaced glasses, papers, etc., and luncheon served for him, with or without guests, at any time between the hours of 12 and 2.

On reading the above my daughter said, "Oh, come now! Why don't you tell the truth and admit that aside from Dad missing you at lunch, the family could scarcely distinguish the transition from your working as an unpaid member of the local Board of Education to your employment as a teacher by another Board of Education?"