

Self-identifying as a home economist: Typology of home economics styles
Kappa Omicron Nu Human Sciences Working Papers Series
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2004

Whether or not you consider yourself a *home economist*, we all have a home economics or a related degree if we are in this profession. What is of significance is that we do not all have the same passion and commitment to the field, or to professional associations and initiatives. Respecting this diversity is paramount if we want to appeal to the widening scope of emotions and compassion for a transformative future for the profession. The premise of this chapter is that your home economic style influences your outlook, predispositions to the field, and beliefs about the profession and your role within it. More importantly, this collection of beliefs has deep implications for anyone attempting to be a leader within the profession because it confirms that, while we all do not relate to the field in the same way, we all have something valuable to contribute. This chapter offers a discussion about a new typology of home economics styles. Using this new typology, home economists will be able to understand each other better and leaders will be better able to strive to be inclusive as they respect different preferences that home economists have for identifying as a home economist.

Typologies Explained and Justified

As a caveat, while I agree that typologies are much less important than leadership theories, there is still space in our dialogue for a discussion of types. The challenge is not to succumb to trying to get along with each other while forgetting to learn together (Dorothy Mitstifer, personal communication, February 8, 2004). Including both typologies and theories in our dialogue mitigates that possibility. Furthermore, there is a place for typologies in the social sciences because there are three types of social science data: attribute data, relational data and ideational data. The latter describes the meanings, motives, definitions and typification of things. Typological analysis (the analysis of data to create types and styles) is an intellectual strategy for developing theoretically significant, meaningful categories of observed phenomena. The result is a collection of types or styles which is useful because it simplifies and codifies distinctions between complex examples of a phenomena (Scott, 1991), in our case, it means different approaches to being a home economist.

Typology theorists examine individual differences in how people view, and relate to, the world. Typologies are not developmental, interactive or cognitive in nature, meaning, respectively, that: (a) they do not assume that you have to move through the types in sequenced stages, (b) they do not deal with how two types interact with each other, and, (c) they do not illuminate what people think about. But, they do capture innate individual differences in mental processing and perceptions; that is, how you see, and relate to, the world (Brown University, 2004).

This entire chapter, which presents a new typology of home economics types, is premised on the assumption that typologies are a useful tool to help home economists appreciate the challenges and opportunities inherent in relating to, and leading, a diverse group of practitioners. A typology is a classification system of items or people into “general types” according to shared attributes or dispositions. Creating typologies of separate categories flies in the face of seeing

things in relationship to each other. But, it can also be the first step to seeing relationships and patterns. Assuming that identifying distinct, unconnected categories can eventually lead to seeing the categories in context and relationships, the idea for home economics types is offered in this chapter. You are invited to read the postscript, at the end of the chapter, which further addresses this idea.

In order to benefit from the ideas shared in this chapter, I ask that you not approach it as if you were reading a *Cosmopolitan Magazine* survey, trying to *find* yourself. Instead, consider reading on with an open mind. Yes, you may, or may not, *feel like* you have found yourself in the typology, and that is what I first felt like too, as I was creating this idea. But, more importantly, I feel that this is a first step in getting to know each other better so that we can move into solid, respectful working relationships and so we can learn together as a community of practice.

Overview of Myers-Briggs Model of Personalities

What is relevant at this juncture of the discussion is that many typologies mirror the familiar way the Myers-Briggs (MB) typology provides a framework for understanding personality types. Since the typology of home economics types is going to be modelled on a similar approach, it is pertinent to share a brief overview of the MB typology. Applying the theory of personality types to other topics is a wide spread practice, so we should be on solid ground for the moment. Also, although the MB approach is elaborated to the extent that you can appreciate this approach, the MB types will not be part of the typology tendered in this chapter.

The Myers-Briggs model of personalities is based on four preferences people hold regarding how they direct their energy, process information, make decisions and organize their life. The assumption is that everyone's personality includes variations of all four, but that a specific collection of these will manifest itself over time, reflecting one's true preference or personality. Each person will tend to favor one style over the other, and one's preferences tend to come out when one is under stress or enjoying a situation (Team Technology, 2000b).

In a bit more detail, the first preference is whether one prefers to direct one's personal energy inward through thought and emotions or outward via activity and the spoken word. The former is referred to as introvert and the latter as extrovert. The second preference, one's favored approach to processing information, involves either: (a) using facts and familiar terms while focussing on the present reality (called sensing because the approach involves using one's senses); or, (b) finding patterns, relationships and using a larger viewpoint to imagine potentials and possibilities for the future (called Intuition). The third preference pertains to how one prefers to make decisions. This can involve either thinking things through logically and objectively or basing decisions on principles, values and personal feelings. Finally, is one's preferred way to organize one's life. One can prefer to be very structured, organized and in control (called judgement) or one can be flexible, spontaneous and open to discovering life and what it presents (called perception) (Team Technology, 2000b).

As a simple example, taking the MB test reveals that I am a combination of extrovert, intuition, thinking and perception (ENTP). This means that, respectively, I like to:

- (a) explore new ideas and challenge the status quo (e.g., the idea in this chapter);
- (b) spot new patterns and relationships between ideas that lead to a deeper understanding of a key issue (e.g., leadership in home economics);
- (c) present ideas that are contradictory to the accepted conventions and, using logic, analyze the

patterns I see so I can suggest underlying principles not evident to others (e.g., draw insights for home economics leadership from spirituality studies); and, (d) continue to find out more about something rather than make a final decision (e.g., I do not share the results of a study in this chapter; rather, I present an idea that is still evolving. I anticipate that people will self-identify and empirically examine this idea) (Team Technology, 2000a).

Drawing Insights from Other Typologies

The next section of this chapter will present an overview of two typologies of spiritual types as a segue to a new typology of home economics types. These two typologies were selected totally by chance. I was reading Posterski's (2002) paper while preparing a paper on home economics and spirituality (McGregor & Chesworth, in press). Ware's (1994) book was referred to by Posterski. After reading these two works, I saw the potential to bring insights from these two typologies to the field of home economics. I anticipate that this idea will contribute to the transformation of members of the profession.

Posterski's (2002) Four Spiritual Types

Drawing insights from the Myers-Briggs approach, Posterski (2002) used extensive factor and cluster analyses to analyze the results of a survey of Canadians who attended church weekly or monthly. He determined that there are four spiritual styles or types: charismatic, traditional, divergent, and tolerant. Like the Myers-Briggs model, these types differed on several factors: resistance or acceptance of various family forms, importance of faith in their day-to-day life, level of concern for spiritual well-being, plus several other factors. As with all typologies, Posterski illustrated the intent to categorize items or people according to common attributes or dispositions.

More insights into the nuances of the four types will follow soon, but a small example is useful. Posterski (2002) characterized charismatics as very resistant to non-nuclear family forms, totally convinced that religious faith is central to their day-to-day life, and very concerned about their spiritual well-being. On the other hand, divergents are very open to many family structures, least likely to say that faith plays an important role in their day-to-day life, and are not very concerned at all with their spiritual well-being. Yet, all attended church, at least weekly or monthly. What is very significant is Posterski's compelling case that spiritual leaders need to be aware of these four different styles because different styles imply different leadership initiatives. If a spiritual leader wants to "reach" everyone who is attending his or her church, then the leader simply cannot assume that one approach to spiritual leadership will work anymore.

Ware's (1996) Four Types of Spirituality

Ware (1994) also conducted research on spiritual types. She suggested that there are four other types of spirituality, created using different factors than those used by Posterski (2002). Ware suggested that each of four types, head, heart, mystic and kingdom, differ on their way of experiencing God (thought or feelings) and their way of imaging God (concretely or abstractly). She developed a four quadrant-circle Spirituality Wheel Selector as a tool to help people determine where their predominant spirituality lies, what spiritualities they are closely aligned with and those that are foreign to them. Succinctly, those who identify with the head style learn through Bible study groups, Sunday School and traditional worship and hymns, listening to sermons. The heart style seeks to experience God in any living moment and does this through

group fellowship, evangelistic preaching and promotion of God’s message, and contemporary worship that uses music and forms that reach today’s culture. Mystic spirituality involves listening to God through private meditation, spiritual retreats and renewal initiatives. They need quite and solitude to facilitate their “spiritual journey.” Finally, the Kingdom spirituality is a visionary (missionary even) expression through tireless actions that foster peace and social justice and the transformation of society, including community projects such as Habitat for Humanity and food banks.

Toward The Creation of a Home Economics Typology

The next section will begin to explore the possible insights that can be gained from bringing these two typologies to bear on transforming home economics practice.

Bringing Posterski’s (2002) Model to Home Economics

Table one portrays Posterski’s (2002) typology applied to home economics. Using the same labels, four home economics styles are suggested: Charismatic, Traditional, Tolerant and Divergent. Obviously, we should do our own factor analysis instead of co-opting another; but, the typology does lend another perspective to our journey into a transformative future. As is the convention with the MB model, these four types vary on several factors: (a) emotional attachment and commitment to the profession; (b) sense of inclusion and acceptance by others; (c) propensity to affiliate and identify with other types; (d) level of involvement and attendance at events; (e) likelihood to recruit people to, or promote, the profession; and, (f) length of time one has been a home economist. I can self-identify as charismatic and can place just about every home economist I know into one of these four categories. No style is any better, or worse, than another.

Table 1

Typology of home economics types with leadership challenges and opportunities with inspiration from Posterski’s (2002) approach

Home Economists Type	Leadership Opportunities	Leadership Challenges
<p>Charismatic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exuberant about home economics • are extreme in their actions • want to help others see the relevance of home economics • walk the walk • ancient and old ways sustain them but they are open to new experiences • zealot - jump in head first • anticipates working as a home economist all the time, regardless of the nature of employment, volunteer work, personal life, etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bring life to the profession • bring renewal • bring energy • are vital to the profession 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • too much effusive enthusiasm can sow seeds of division

<p>Traditional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong in their values • meet occasionally with other home economists • avoid charismatic types, oppose them and aren't afraid to say so • hold earnest and strong beliefs in home economics • remembers becoming a home economist • will talk about home economics if asked to • oldest group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • loyal • dependable • faithful • solid cornerstone of profession • give many years of life expecting little in return 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • because they are corner stone - they are hard to budge! • resist change • like the way things have been • feel there is no room for them in the future
<p>Tolerant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will not get pulled into a debate about home economics • feels it is up to each person to decide how to "be" a home economist • not interested in pressuring others to be home economics • middle aged • don't object to other home economic types • moderate/modest in expressing home economics values • fairly open-minded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they can build bridges • are even-handed • are open-minded while maintaining their conservative approach • can be advocates for divergents (for the quiet ones) • want to be inclusive and welcoming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • too much bridge building can lead to them being coopted away to other groups' agendas • their need to be inclusive can lead them to embrace non-home economists to our detriment (give away the purview of the field)
<p>Divergent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • youngest group • could take home economics or leave it do not get involved in home economic events often; but, if they do, it is a large event • wonders why she is in home economics BUT does find parts of it satisfying • can take or leave the charismatic practitioners • lowest rate of involvement and attendance at events • do not hold conventional beliefs of home economics (don't know what to believe) • nonplussed (perplexed and at a loss for what to say, do or believe - know what they don't want but do not know what they do want) • They are the future and the present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vocal and truthful when present • desire to be home economist is there but don't know what they want • can be home economists when it comes down to the crunch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • despair • frustrated • have given up and abandoned home economics • chronic complainers with no solutions • very hard to please because they do not know what they want

Table one also reflects Posterski's (2002) suggestions about attendant leadership challenges and opportunities, depending on which type is being considered. Columns two and

three reflect his ideas, but they also ring true for us. For example, if I were president of a home economics association, and I wanted to make sure I reached all of the members to ensure engagement and professional involvement, I would have to pay close attention to the pros and cons that emerge as I try to bring all four types into play. As a charismatic type myself, I would need to appreciate that too much untempered enthusiasm on my part can sow deep seeds of division among other types because I could suggest too many options, be too energetic. If I did not pay attention to the challenges of working with the more Traditional type, I could inadvertently run into a wall since they are so adverse to change and do not feel like there is any place for them in the future of the organization or profession.

Conversely, the Divergents may resist my ideas because they do not know what they want; hence, they are very hard to please and attract. It is hard to reach people who are frustrated and have given up on “the cause.” The Tolerants could spend so much time building bridges with other organizations to appease the tension that I created, that I could lose them all together because they might be drawn away to another cause related to family well-being.

From a more positive standpoint, I could work concurrently with all four different home economics types if I built on the opportunities for leadership that present themselves because of the factors shaping each type. As a Charismatic, I am eager to bring life to the profession. Counting on the Traditionals to remain loyal to the profession, regardless of what happens, I could counter their inherent resistance to my overzealous style by engaging someone who is a Tolerant to build bridges between me and the Traditionals. At the same time, the Tolerants can be an advocate for the hesitant and perplexed Divergents, who can be made to see themselves as home economists when it comes down to the crunch.

Making space for variations in home economics styles opens a door of opportunity for leaders in the field trying to capture and respect everyone and their needs and contributions. As with Myers-Briggs, while each of you have parts of all of these in your personality, one type is usually dominant and informed by the others.

Bringing Ware’s (1994) Model to Home Economics

This section will share a discussion of how Ware’s (1994) spirituality types can be applied to create four more home economics types. Again, I found it very easy to extrapolate her ideas to home economics. The labels have been reworked to reflect titles with less of a spiritual focus: thinking, feeling, reflective and visionary (corresponding, respectively, with head, heart, mystic and kingdom). Just as Ware’s types varied on two factors (ways of experiencing God and ways of imaging (forming mental images of) God), this model for home economics types varies on two similar factors: (a) your favoured mode of expressing yourself and developing professionally, and, (b) your favoured mode of imaging yourself as a home economist:

- **the thinking style** reflects those who find learning in written texts or by hearing something said that stirs them. Those who favour this style, like and need to read articles and books and attend inspirational speaking events. These people are intellectuals and receive nourishment from study and thought-provoking lectures. Content and the written word is very important to this style. People favouring this style love order and desire things to be logical and consistent. They also want an agreement between thoughts and beliefs, inner congruency.
- **the feeling style** sees people seeking personal transformation (learning) through art,

music, stories, songs, narratives and camaraderie so they can achieve personal renewal by being “in the moment with others.” Emotional expression and deep feelings are very important for this style. They appreciate the fellowship of small groups and they revel in what is happening around them in the present tense.

- **the reflective style** refers to people who are focussed on their inner self. They are said to be on a quest or a perpetual journey. They often do not feel that they fit into the busy, mainline movement since they tend to engage in another way of knowing - a deeper, quieter sense of knowing. They enjoy walking the labyrinth and are often meditative, contemplative, introspective, intuitive and focussed on “being” as well as “doing.” These people are concerned with enriching their life journey and are mindful and observant as they move forward on this journey, often turning to revitalization retreats.
- **the visionary style** is socially action-oriented and strives to work through groups characterized by solidarity so they can focus on justice and peace issues. They are active visionaries who are somewhat distanced from the mainstream as well and want nothing less than the transformation of society, a rectifying of the wrongs of the world. They support political action to establish justice and society and its institutions. They are very moralistic, tending to act on their moral reflection in a passionate way. They are crusaders, working tirelessly. As well, they have a courageous and sturdy idealism that propels their desire to transform society for the better.

Ware (1994) suggested that there is a temptation to value your own style more highly.

Indeed, she suggested that:

(a) those who favour thinking can be seen as too dry, cold, academic, dogmatic, and studious;

(b) those who favour feelings are often seen as being too artsy and anti-intellectual, too introverted and concerned with one’s own thoughts and feelings to the point that they are dissociated from reality;

(c) those who are reflective may be seen as too self-entered, too flaky, too removed from the real world, and even too eccentric (thus not credible); and,

(d) those who favour the visionary style are seen as too involved with the world, too single minded and focussed, too moralistic, and too idealistic.

Again, I can self-identify with categories in this typology, namely the thinking and visionary styles. I am an academic who loves reading deep, theoretical pieces and looking for patterns and relationships between disparate ideas. I am also concerned with transforming the profession (not the world, yet) by getting more people to embrace the visionary style. I can readily place people I know in each of these categories, especially when I attend a professional gathering and listen to what people enjoyed or disliked. As a simple example, I have noticed that people want many different things from a professional conference. These things range from expert invited speakers and conventional academic paper sessions, to group work and hands-on workshops, to small reflective groups where feelings and perceptions are shared, to down-time for personal regrouping, to field trips in the local area, and to political action sessions dealing with social injustice and human welfare issues. This simple list reflects the four home economist styles: thinking, feeling, reflective and visionary, respectively.

A New Typology of Home Economics Types

Using Posterski’s (2002) model, we can honour the old guard, the new guard, those who

are on the edge and those who are on the fence. Using Ward’s (1994) approach, we can honour those who want to think, those who want to feel the dance, those who want to be contemplative, and those who want to change the world! While each of these two new home economics typologies stand alone, I felt compelled to try to integrate them together so we have a richer conceptual starting point. To that end, the final section presents a marriage of sorts - the integration of the two home economics types developed so far into a new typology of home economics types.

Following both Posterski (2002) and Ware’s (1994) approach, this model employs a MB type of circle-quadrant format. There are four compass points, reminiscent of Posterski’s approach and a circle divided into four parts, suggestive of Ware’s typology (see Figure 1). Until data can be collected to empirically verify this typology, we move ahead on faith (pun intended) to assume that it can inform and transform our practice. As with all typologies, we can assume that all types are part of each of us. However, one type is usually evidenced most strongly. Figure Two illustrates the 16 possible types of home economists that are proposed using this model. The following text will elaborate on four of them, chosen because they were the ones that lined up with the first spin of the wheel in Figure One.

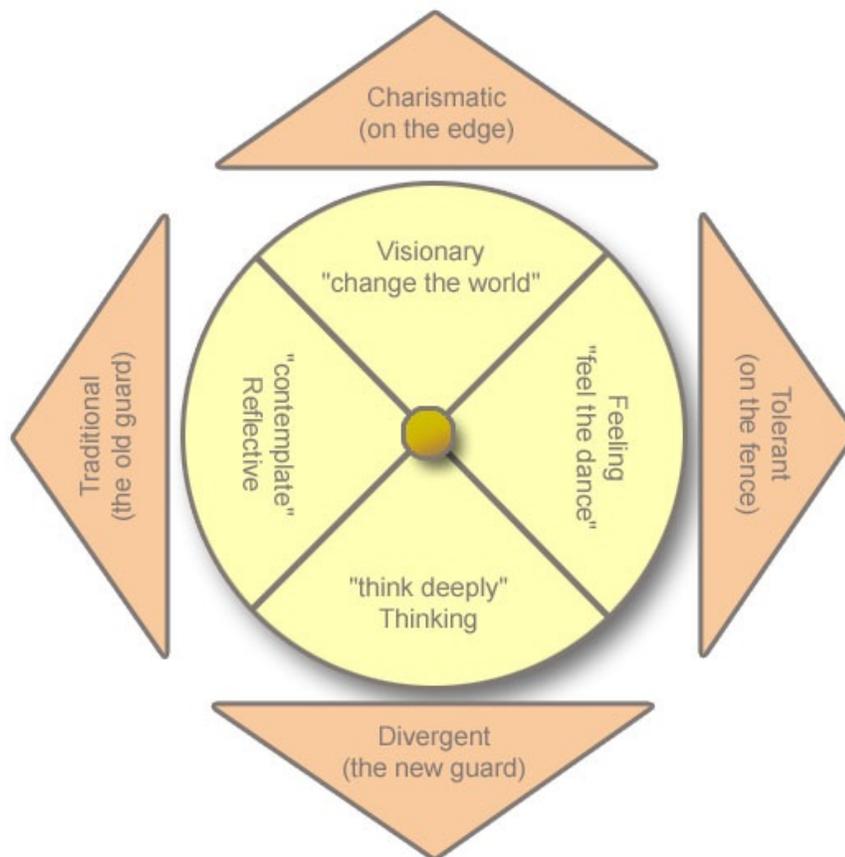


Figure 1

Figure Two

Identity of the 16 Home Economics Types (those highlighted are described in the paper)

Charismatic Visionary	Charismatic Thinking	Charismatic Feeling	Charismatic Reflective
Traditional Visionary	Traditional Thinking	Traditional Feeling	Traditional Reflective
Tolerant Visionary	Tolerant Thinking	Tolerant Feeling	Tolerant Reflective
Divergent Visionary	Divergent Thinking	Divergent Feeling	Divergent Reflective

Charismatic/Visionary home economist

The Charismatic/Visionary home economist would be someone who is a blend of being on the edge and wanting to change the world. These people bring life to the profession through their exuberance and their desire to help others see the relevancy of home economics. Their vital energy, and their ability to renew others’ energies, correlates with the stamina needed for social causes. They can perceive home economics as “a cause” and can vision into the future about what it could look like. They value solidarity, take moral standpoints and do things based on principle. They are prepared to work tirelessly for any cause they chose, and cannot see themselves as anything else but a home economist. They are sustained by the history of the profession and yet remain open to new experiences and transformative ideas within the profession. This helps them be a visionary for the future, because vision entails seeing links between the past, present and future. Sometimes their excessive enthusiasm can sow divisions in the field. But, their distance from the mainstream shields them from this division, allowing them to persevere and crusade for the profession. Their courage and idealism contribute to their penchant for extreme actions; but, all is for the cause.

Tolerant/Feeling Home Economist

This would be someone who is sitting on the professional fence while seeking personal transformation. These people feel it is up to each individual to determine how that person understands what it means to *be* a home economist. Emotional expression and deep feelings are very central to this type as is their penchant to build bridges between other types of home economists, and between other aligned groups. They appreciate the fellowship of small groups, where deep feelings can be expressed more freely. As a tolerant, they are open-minded, welcoming and inclusive and can be advocates for the divergent types who could take home economics or leave it. Camaraderie is very important to this type, meaning they are easily sociable and friendly. One of the pitfalls of the combination of inclusiveness and sitting on the fence is that there is a potential for them to be coopted away to related causes or, with best intentions, they are inclined to bring non-home economists into their embrace to the point that they contribute to giving away the purview of the field. These people tend to be modest when it comes to expressing home economics values. This modesty could very well be why they are perched on the fence in a vulnerable position vis-a-vis remaining within the home economics

circle. They could fall either way. That is what the metaphor of sitting on a fence implies.

Divergent/Thinking Home Economist

This would be people who are in the new guard of the profession seeking intellectual stimulation that will stir and inspire them to action. They need lectures and the written word and get this from attending large events, like conferences. They love things to be orderly and consistent and tend to complain when this is missing in their life. Ironically, they do not know why they are complaining. They are very hard to please because they do not know what they want. When they do find contentment from reading new material that stirs them, they are hard pressed to follow through and find that feeling again. The thinking part needs congruence between their thoughts and beliefs, but this tends to be absent because the divergent in them does not know what they believe. The result can be frustration and despair, which is very unfortunate because this type tends to be the current generation, the new guard. If this generation is lacking hope, a connection with the future, then the profession is in trouble. They seek order and inspiration yet turn away from the profession they have chosen, which can meet those needs.

Traditional/Reflective Home Economist

This would be people who are in the old guard of the profession and seeking personal transformation through reflection about their role in the mainline movement. At this stage of their professional career, this type holds earnest and strong beliefs about home economics. They tend to see themselves at a stage of their career when they are on a personal quest and journey. Their home economics values are strong. They do not need to meet regularly to reinforce these values, although they do enjoy meeting with other like-minded people. They are solid cornerstones of the profession, made stronger by turning inward. Ironically, even though they are seen as the cornerstone, they do not feel part of the mainstream. They have given many years of their life to the profession and now see it is time to take care of themselves. They resist change in the profession while seeking inner growth, another form of change. They can remember the day they *knew* they were a home economist and remain mindful of the impact of that day on their life. They are trying to find balance in their relationship with the profession and their relationship with themselves. Finding this balance is difficult because they tend to feel there is no room for them anymore in the future of the profession, and yet their identity is entangled with being a member of the profession; hence, the need for reflection.

Conclusion

Although mathematics tells us that there are 16 possible home economist types, just sharing these four serves to illustrate the power of this typology. It was assumed that we all do not have the same passion and commitment to the field or to professional associations and initiatives. Respecting this diversity is paramount if we want to appeal to the widening scope of emotions and compassion for the transformative future of the profession. I also assumed that we can begin to understand this aspect of our profession by borrowing from other typologies and that it is necessary that these ideas be quantified to provide more rigour to the typology. In the meantime, it appears that we are on the way to finding a way to honour the old guard, the new guard, those who are on the edge and those who are on the fence and those who want to think, those who want to feel the dance, those who want to be contemplative, and those who want to change the world! Professional transformation is possible and probable.

Postscript - Moving Beyond the Categories

This chapter, definitely grounded in modernist thinking, shares the creation of styles of home economists so we can visualize ourselves in practice. The styles are not intended to be timeless and are not intended to exist only in concept. The typology presented can be seen as a collection of archetypes which are the first formation of types or styles from which other varieties can arise. It is a systematic ordering of things. This creation of types was intentional, but is provided as *just one* way to think about us a group of transformative professionals. The categories are not absolute. I do not intend my ideas to be an expression of finality, implying no opportunities for change. The categories are put out there to influence our thinking about ourselves.

I was chastised by one reviewer for being complicit in creating *essentialist* categories of home economists. My philosophy encyclopaedia tells me that essentialism is the practice of categorizing a group of people by a few fixed characteristics while not allowing for change or variation in the group. This is also part of modernist thinking. When someone says *essential* in this context, they mean that it is essential that a person have all of the traits to fit into a style or type, and if they did not, they are apart from those who do - causing fragmentation and marginalization. Ironically, my intent was just the opposite, to create a sense of community amongst us by helping us appreciate that there can be unity in our diverse styles.

Another reviewer warned that these neat little slots could be interpreted in a negative way. People who have not thought deeply about what it means to be a home economist, may not be able to find themselves in the typology, hence feel excluded. My counterpoint to this caution is that if the idea shared in this chapter makes people start to think about how they see themselves “being” a home economist, instead of just “doing the work with no reflection,” then it moves us ahead as a profession.

I am not naive enough to ignore the possibility that imposing a modernist typology on home economists could cause some damage to our thinking. Modernist love to place everything in categories. One stream of postmodern thought (deconstructivism) holds that none of us has the same interpretation of the reality of being a home economist because each of us have different experiences, attitudes and values (McGregor, 2003). So, you ask, how can I say that we fit into these neat categories if none of us see our home economic reality the same way? My reply is that even though I asked myself the same question, I found that I *could* identify with the categories as I developed this typology. It resonated with me. However, this resonance, this comfort level of being able to read a description of how I see myself as a home economist, can also be a trap. It has the potential of closing our minds to diversity and to anyone who lives on the margin of home economics (they cannot find a category that works for them).

Furthermore, postmodern thinkers would argue that putting us all into different slots prevents us from being in relation to each other. But, as I noted at the beginning of this chapter, I feel that this typology can also be seen as a first step to seeing relationships and patterns between diverse members of the profession. I anticipate that, by identifying distinct, unconnected categories, we can eventually see the categories in context and in dynamic relationships and professional networks (communities of practice).

Despite all of my counterpoints, if this imposed ordering of home economists does not sit well with you yet, I am encouraged. It implies that you are on the way to embracing the tenets of

the new science of quantum physics that enable us to say that, in spite of its obvious partitions and boundaries, the world, in actuality, is a seamless and inseparable whole - *unbroken wholeness*. From this stance, we can feel more comfortable beginning with categories of home economists because quantum physics helps us know that the home economics profession can be seen as a seamless, inseparable whole that is unbreakable (see the chapter on the holovement principle). The quantum notion of wholeness is a fundamentally new kind of togetherness, a sense of working hand-in-hand in such a way that our wholeness is not diminished by being separated by space or time (Wheatley, 1999).

Quantum physics also lets us appreciate that everything is connected. As we each engage in relationships with other home economists, our transformative work is made easier now that we have a clearer idea of how we differ on our understandings of what it means to *be* a home economist. We can know that each single act of associating with another home economist is connected, invisibly, to another set of interacting home economists. “We work where we are, with the system we know, the one we can get our arms around” (Wheatley, 1999, p.44). We can say that we are all acting independently; *yet*, we are having a collective impact on the profession, individuals and families. From this transforming perspective, perceiving us as fitting into separate categories is not so daunting because, at the same time, we can also perceive ourselves as a part of an unbroken whole. Finally, we can seize on any moments of opposition or resistance to the development of categories of home economists to create productive spaces that allow for, and affirm, our differences (Stevens, 2002).

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