

Kathryn E. Walker

February 9, 1917 — November 18, 2002

Dr. Kathryn E. Walker, Professor Emerita of the College of Human Ecology, died November 18, 2002 at her residence in Kendal at Ithaca. Born to Roy M. Walker and Helen Klinger Walker of Lemont, Pennsylvania, in 1917, Katy earned both Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Home Economics from Pennsylvania State University in 1938 and 1945 respectively. During the intervening years, she taught high school home economics in Alexandria and Damascus, Pennsylvania. Upon completing her Master's degree, she taught at the Laboratory High School at Slippery Rock State College, Pennsylvania. While at Slippery Rock State College, Katy took summer courses at both Pennsylvania State University and Cornell for several years. She commenced Ph.D. studies in the Department of Economics of the Household and Household Management, Cornell University, in 1953. Upon completing her Ph.D. degree in Home Economics in 1955, Katy joined the faculty of the Department of Household Economics and Home Management as an Assistant Professor and spent the rest of her career teaching and doing research here at Cornell. She retired in 1978.

Katy will be remembered as a pioneer in the collection and analysis of the way people use time when not employed for pay. While time diaries have been used since the 1920s, Katy perfected the use of the 24 hour diary as the most accurate means of recording what people do with their time during the day, when they do it, for how long, with whom, and what else they might be doing at the same time. Her initial and abiding interest was not with time use per se, but with the efficiency with which people performed the welter of housework activities. Absent good measures of household output, a deficiency that continues to plague the field, she used the time spent on housework as a proxy and worked tirelessly to improve its measurement. She hoped that through her research, housework would be recognized as important as work in the labor market and that the work could be made more efficient, relieving some of the burden shouldered by housewives and others who do it.

In addition to the many M.S. theses and Ph.D. dissertations she directed on time use and home management topics, three of her research contributions stand out as most important: the 1967 time use study of families in Onondaga County, New York, published in 1976 by the Center for the Family, American Home Economics Association as a book co-authored by Margaret Woods entitled, *Time Use: A Measure of Household Production of Family Goods and Services*; a 1980 monograph co-authored by William Gauger entitled, *The Dollar Value of Household Work*, as College of Human Ecology Information Bulletin No. 60; and her leadership in organizing and directing the

NE-113, *The 11-State Time Use Study*, a time use study conducted by Agricultural Experiment Station researchers in 11 states.

The publication of *Time Use: A Measure of Household Production of Family Goods and Services* in 1976, along with several journal articles published earlier, established Katy as a leader and innovator in the field of time use research. She consulted with researchers at the Survey Research Center, University of Michigan, as they devised the 1975 Time Use in Economic and Social Accounts Survey and the subsequent re-interview survey as well as with a wide array of international time use researchers. As a result, Cornell became the place where international researchers from Scandinavia, Germany, The Netherlands, Japan, Korea all came to become more familiar with diary survey techniques she pioneered.

The Gauger and Walker monograph, *The Dollar Value of Household Work*, surveyed and analyzed the techniques by which unpaid housework might be valued. As such, it became the standard used and cited by lawyers and expert witnesses in arguing wrongful death and injury and divorce cases in every state of the union.

Through her organizing skills, her tenacity, and her vision, NE-113, *The 11-State Time Use Survey* was financed by regional research funds from the USDA and conducted in 11 states in 1977-78. More than anything else, this endeavor trained a generation of home economics researchers in the time use diary survey technique and provided them with the data to answer a host of questions about the variability and determinants of the time married women and men spend doing housework. Without Katy Walker's leadership and tenacity, this would not have happened.

Throughout Katy Walker's career, only sporadic, piecemeal, and very infrequent national surveys of time use were conducted and not all of those employed the kind of detailed time diary techniques Katy developed and promoted. Only on the eve of her death has the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Bureau of the Census developed a national survey of time use that will be conducted at regular intervals. While Katy did not live to see a continuing national time use survey, her work influenced its design. Such a national survey would not have come to pass without Katy's influence and that of a host of other time-use researchers.

While Katy's research interests were always clearly focused on time use research, she played an important role as an educator, especially at the graduate level. Scholars who completed their M.S. and Ph.D. degrees under Katy include people from university faculties across the country and in many foreign countries. Their own accomplishments in teaching, research and extension have reflected back on Cornell and have helped make it the premier College

of Human Ecology in the world. Her accomplishments were recognized in a symposium organized by the College of Human Ecology in 1992, which honored both Katy and her major professor, Jean Warren. Scholars from the United States and Canada came to celebrate their work on time use.

One of Katy's contributions is shared by her great good friends, Gwen Bymers and Mary Woods, both faculty in the department. Jointly they owned "Walk-By-Wood," a cottage on Cayuga Lake. There they entertained several generations of faculty, graduate students, international visitors, and friends. Through the gatherings at the cottage, scholarly relationships were established and fostered that extended throughout the United States and around the world and continue on into the present. "Walk-By-Wood" continues its work even though its owners have all passed away because Gwen Bymers, Katy Walker and Mary Woods donated the land and cottage to the College of Human Ecology in 1990. Sold, it funds a graduate assistantship that each year is awarded to a graduate student in the department.

Pioneering researcher, staunch supporter of her department, college and of Cornell, the final word, perhaps, should be from a former Ph.D. student who, upon learning of her death, said: "Katy will be fondly remembered for the moral and material support she offered. She was small in stature but the influence on her students' lives was large."

W. Keith Bryant, Jean Robinson, E. Scott Maynes