

THE WOMAN PUBLICS

BY MABEL G. FLANLEY
Partner, Flanley & Woodward

■XVI

IN ADVERTISING AND SELL-
ing, the women's market has long been recognized as a separate entity,
when it comes to moving consumer goods. Sales and advertising experts
have developed special techniques for merchandising and selling prod-
ucts to women. Psychological researchers have analyzed the different
reactions of women to various appeals. Market analysts have studied the
effectiveness of media for various groups at all income levels. Business
has long recognized that women comprise a special market requiring
special attention for selling consumer goods.

Today good public relations practice demands this same recognition
of the importance of the woman publics and the need for an effective
woman's program with special techniques. A public relations program
is engaged in merchandising, and selling, too—but merchandising and
selling ideas. Thoughtful management executives realize this is a job
for experts, too—for experts who know as much about merchandising

ideas to women as sales executives know about selling *products to women*.

A public relations message must be geared to the interests of women and must reach *all* the important "markets". Therefore, a study of the woman publics and what to do about them is an essential part of any well-rounded public relations planning today.

Who Are the Woman Publics?

The 71,296,000 women in the United States are divided into every area of public relations which is dealt with in this handbook. Women are stockholders, employees, employees' wives, customers, consumers and producers of goods. They are more than half the population of any normal community.

The woman publics divide themselves into many different segments with different interests. These same women are homemakers, educators, business and professional women, government leaders, farm women, club women, veterans, labor union and union auxiliary members and in addition, citizens active in their own communities.

A public relations program which will really move women to action must take into consideration special characteristics of all these different segments of the woman publics. It must take cognizance of the variety of their interests and motivations. It must be based on what each segment is thinking and seeking and must be geared to the respective interests of each.

Dominant and Growing Influence of Women

The importance of the woman publics in any effective public relations program can be summed up in one simple statement. *Women have the balance of power in the United States today.* According to the United States Bureau of the Census, there are 1,709,000 more women than men over fourteen years of age in this country. This is in contrast to 1910, when, with a total population of 91,972,266, there were 2,800,000 more men than women.

In the control of the wealth of the nation, women are an increasing factor. Women are the owners of:

1. Over 70 percent of private wealth
2. Over 55 percent of savings accounts
3. Over 50 percent of the stock of industrial corporations
4. Over 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ percent of all industry
5. Over 44 percent of public utilities
6. Over 40 percent of real estate

Women inherit 68 percent of all estates and are the beneficiaries of more than 80 percent of life insurance policies. They disburse over 80 percent of the family income and buy over 80 percent of the nation's consumer goods.

Women in the Labor Market

In the labor market women are an important factor. In this area, again, there is evidence of the *increasing* importance of women. In 1940, women constituted 12,574,078 of the 52,020,023 employed persons. World War II altered the situation completely. On V-J Day, there were 51,660,000 employed civilians (and 12,000,000 in the armed services), the women employed were estimated at 19,000,000. Even after the postwar exodus of women from the labor force in war industries, the best figures indicated 16,002,000 women employed in agriculture, commerce, and in industry.

Consideration of women in the labor market is incomplete without giving attention to an often neglected angle—women as a factor in the professional groups and in the higher income brackets. Too often, the public concept is limited to thinking of professional or semi-professional women as being primarily school teachers. Teachers are an important and influential segment—but not to the exclusion of the rest who excluded them numerically. For instance, according to the U. S. Bureau of the Census, in 1940, there were 3,558,428 professional and semi-professional workers in the United States, of which 43.8 percent were women. Of these only 41.7 percent or 645,488 were school teachers; 900,353 were engaged in other professions.

In a sound public relations program consideration should be given to women in the higher earning bracket of the labor force—they are important opinion leaders. But this consideration should not be limited to school teachers. There are 900,353 doctors, lawyers, dentists, nurses, veterinarians, home economists, architects, and engineers. Run the gamut of the professions and you find women who are an important "market" for public relations ideas.

Women hold the power to swing elections in the United States today. On Nov. 5, 1946, there were 1,171,948 more potential women voters than men. On the night of the presidential election in 1944, a well-known opinion researcher publicly stated that it was virtually the women's vote that elected the president of the United States.

There can be only one obvious conclusion from a careful analysis of the situation existing today. If the opinion of the American public is to be molded today, it is not only desirable, but *essential*, to consider

women as an important public. They are not only powerful in their own right, but have an influence which is wide spread and reaches into many other areas important to effective public relations.

Women's Influence Is Wide-spread

This is a new era in public relations. New problems have called for new patterns. Modern practices call for added effort in certain specialized fields where the employment of specific knowledge can be of important supplemental value in achieving good public relations measured by tomorrow's opinion.

Modern techniques require concentrated attention on important segments of the public. Breaking down the broad front of the public into influence groups, and reaching those influence groups with specific information designed to appeal to their interests, is a proven effective approach. Among such influence groups are organized labor, racial groups, youth—and, importantly, women.

But women should not be viewed just as a separate group, but in relation to their influence in other special groups.

Constituting twenty percent of the total union members, the three million women trade-unionists are a segment to be reckoned with in union labor. In addition, there are several million wives, daughters and mothers of trade-union members, who belong to auxiliaries. (There are two and a half million in A. F. of L. auxiliaries and an unannounced number in C. I. O.)

Even in those phases of a public relations program directed specifically to racial groups, women's influence is a strong factor. The women in the racial groups themselves have the same power of influence in their homes and communities as do all other women, and therefore must be reached as women, too. But, in addition, women in these groups are not only interested in racial problems, but are talking and stirring people to action. Any program designed to reach racial groups will be less effective unless women are intelligently informed and their influence directed constructively.

Women's influence on youth is indisputable. The molding of youth and shaping of their opinions has long been acknowledged as a major job of women. The mother in the home and the teachers (largely women) in the schools, are the major influences on youth, their actions and opinions.

With the current emphasis on community relations as a part of public relations programs, special thought should be given to the influence of women at the community level. Women with their individual

ts and through their organizations have always been the most acting group in any community project. All the evidence points to sure conclusion that there must be no "forgotten women" in a public relations program today if it is to be effective.

Which Appeals Will Motivate Women to Action?

Women have certain fundamental interests and characteristics. By their nature, they are particularly concerned with the welfare of their families, their communities and their nation. Health, welfare and security are all-important to women. An appeal to them must give them confidence that these objectives are a part of any program, system or social order.

Women often act on emotional appeal. You think that is dangerous? Predictable? No, not if you understand the emotional drive behind their action and harness their emotions to your objectives.

Women, too, have a strong practical streak in them. Be careful of them, if you are tempted to skim along the surface in your explanations and not give them the meat of the subject.

Women are loyal—tenaciously so—to the things in which they believe.

Women love causes. They have a great will-to-do ready to be harnessed into action for any cause which they consider a worthy one.

Women are particularly impressed with the company which exhibits a sincere interest in women, recognizes their importance and demonstrates that recognition through a program directed to them.

A program can be made to appeal to women's fundamental interests. When it does, it will be effective in developing their loyalty—to the products of the companies they know and trust. But equally important

is the effectiveness of such a program to women as citizens. It is well to remember that women may be satisfied purchasers of your products, returning even for repeat sales, but may vote you out of business if they do not understand what you are doing and why you are doing it.

Satisfied and informed citizens as well as satisfied and informed customers must be the objective of a sound public relations program. Harness the power of women to your cause by appealing to the fundamental interests which motivate them and you have made a great step towards your goal.

PRELIMINARY STEPS IN PLANNING A PROGRAM

Remember, first of all, that a "clean house" with good policies which you can justify as operating in the public interest, is the first essential of good public relations.

Analyze your own public relations problems and the story you want the public to know and understand. At this stage, don't let your own thinking about the limitation of the areas of women's interest color your analysis. This is a day when most public relations problems have to do with hard economic facts. Labor-management relations, pricing and government regulations, profits and fair trade practices, reserves and ability-to-pay clauses constitute major public relations issues in many quarters. If public understanding of these and many other equally complex problems are your public relations challenges, list them. They face squarely the fact that understanding on these scores by women is essential to the attainment of good public relations.

Know the public misconceptions in the areas of your interest. Know the points of agreement and conflict which exist between you and the public. Research studies are an effective means of accurately determining public attitudes. And, if you really are serious about wooing and winning women, know, by actual research, wherein women's opinions differ from the combined male and female reactions of general public opinion polls.

Determine the best organizational plan for *you* to assure proper handling of a woman's public relations program. Whether you turn to outside counsel, give the responsibility to a present member of your public relations staff, or select a new person to direct this phase of public relations, be sure the person you select is well qualified for the job by background and experience.

In general, one can say of a public relations program directed to women that it is a woman's province. Into the mouth of Don Quixote Cervantes put these words centuries ago, "What man has assurance enough to pretend to know thoroughly the riddle of a woman's mind? It would seem wise to employ the feminine mind both to fathom the depths and to meet the demands of women—as citizens and molders of public opinion today.

But, the feminine mind is not enough. In fact, business in the past has made the mistake of feeling that employment of a woman to carry on programs for women's clubs or similar groups constituted adequate handling of their women's public relations situation. Often she had no public relations training or experience.

The woman to direct a sound public relations program addressed to women must be a person of broad vision, with whom you will discuss all activities, all policies of the company or organization. She should have an earnest interest and capacity to delve deeply to learn the answers.

The person to direct your woman's program should have full access to the information and the thinking of all executives and department heads and should be a person whose judgment you can trust, who can present you well to the public and who has the respect, and can talk the language, of the woman publics you are preparing to reach.

Determine *who and where* the women are whom you should reach and make a careful analysis of the relative importance of various woman publics to your company or organization. It is fundamental in winning the loyalty and understanding of women to direct your program to the *particular women* who are of *first importance* to each phase of that program as it is developed.

Women are not a single public which can be reached by a so-called "feminine approach." Women, like men, have special interests, and a successful public relations program geared to women must take advantage of the knowledge of the special interests of each of the woman publics. It must include projects and use techniques devised to meet the various segments at their points of interest.

Personalized Approach Is Best

The background of knowledge so essential to planning the right approach in developing an effective woman's program may well result in a first reaction of discouragement because the field of action is so vast. In public relations today, personalization of our business to the public is stressed. To the woman publics the personalized approach is particularly important.

Certainly management should meet the public on all possible important occasions. Certainly your public relations personnel should be in a position both to convey and gather information through some personal contacts. Selected representatives should appear on programs and be present at meetings of important groups. But how far can this personal approach go? How far is it effective? How far is it economical? To a degree, it is indispensable—but to depend on personal contacts of representatives of an organization to do a comprehensive job over a large area is impractical. Too often, in the past, companies employed a man or women to make personal appearances before hundreds of small gatherings—usually of club women—and considered they had a "woman's program." That sort of effort cannot produce effective results on any broad scale nor be considered the complete answer to the problem.

Personal contact cannot, and should not, be abandoned—but it should be made on a highly selective basis. You cannot know what women are

thinking and doing by sitting at your desk. But you can pick groups which you will use as a sounding board of women's opinion; you can budget the time you allot to personalizing the story in individual contacts, and you can adopt the technique of working through key women leaders to disseminate your information to the masses.

It is largely the leaders who mold women's opinions; it is they who can and will tell your story for you, if you devise a method of disseminating information through them.

Can you acquire acquaintanceship with key leaders of women's opinions by buying lists? No. Canned lists which can be purchased through regular channels do not constitute a means to a personalized approach. If your counsel or director of your woman's program does not have a wide acquaintanceship of leaders in all the groups of influence, take time to build your own acquaintances, and create your own lists. Start with the leaders who are close to you in your own community; impress them with your sincerity and your message. They will respond with a request to you to share that information with others. A slow course? Yes, if you put it that way—but an ever-widening circle of influence which becomes your own—an effective medium for a truly personalized approach.

Two Major Patterns for Action

No public relations program directed to women is complete unless that program encompasses every activity in the company as it relates to the woman publics. The person in charge should direct an active program to create understanding by women of the company's policies and practices; should direct or supervise informational and education programs on products, and in addition should advise the other department heads on activities relating to the woman publics. Therefore a comprehensive public relations program directed to women falls into *two major* action programs:

(1) Dissemination of information about policies and practices of company to women opinion leaders, as citizens, and (2) Providing product information and education.

(1) Reaching Opinion Leaders

Some business leaders are beginning to take cognizance of the importance of women and to have some appreciation of their influence. As they study the appeals that motivate women they realize that the woman publics can be interested in industry's problems and can be moved to action in industry's behalf. These leaders are beginning to plan so

grams. One of those recently inaugurated will provide proof of soundness of this approach.

A leading trade association, having excellent relationships with member companies, business press and government, was faced with the problem of misconceptions in the attitudes of women. A few of these were:

1. Profits are too high
2. Distribution costs are too high
3. Bigness in industry is bad
4. Manufacturers' concern for employee welfare is negligible.

A program was established to correct these errors in public opinion and to create an understanding of the economics of the industry. This might be considered a dull subject to most women. However, with a knowledge of women's interests, of their current thinking and activities, and the way to reach them, the program was planned and presented in terms women not only could understand but which so aroused their interest that they would want to pass it on to others. Booklets and bulletins providing basic information, questionnaires to tap leadership thinking, personalized letters to selected opinion leaders on major political issues, and special material geared to the specific interests of particularly important groups were some of the tools used.

Some of the results: National women leaders, recognizing the importance of the information, passed it on in speeches and written articles to other women leaders throughout the country. Leaders of study groups, provided with background material, used it in original programs and sought additional assistance. The press adopted phases of the program to promote.

Editors of women's pages of newspapers, syndicates, magazines, as well as women radio broadcasters cooperated voluntarily in providing information to women. For some it meant a change from former editorial patterns to include messages to women as citizens—not just as cooks and homemakers.

The trade association became a headquarters for information about the industry—became recognized as such by women opinion leaders throughout the nation. Women leaders who had been indoctrinated with information antagonistic to industry and actually contrary to consumer interests, became as enthusiastic about industry's cause as they had previously been biased.

(2) Product Information and Education

Background material about a company's products, as well as care and use of the products, should be provided. Information should be specially

prepared so as to be most useful to the particular segment of the woman publics to be reached.

Effective and efficient distribution of the material can be planned only with a thorough knowledge of the woman publics and how to reach them. The person in charge should not only know the women leaders, but understand how each works with her groups so that sufficient quantities of materials can be distributed without waste, or smaller quantities made to perform with greater effectiveness through expert selectivity.

Some manufacturers plan an information program that actually serves as a promotion program for their customers and proves to have excellent public relations value for themselves. As illustration, two examples are mentioned here:

A container manufacturer maintains a comprehensive educational and informational program. While this program features in good measure the uses and values of the consumer products (the contents of the containers), it also effectively builds respect for the processors and the container manufacturer. The importance of the processing methods, the convenience and sanitary value of the containers, and the intrinsic worth of the variety of products packed in them—all are emphasized in the well-coordinated program.

Excellent films for school and group use with accompanying study kits, booklets, exhibits and extensive personal contacts and correspondence servicing inquiries are major tools used. But the information disseminated is derived from basic company research and development. A detailed plan of distribution of both films and other materials and careful follow-up are contributing factors to the effectiveness of the program.

This company establishes good public relations with the general public as well as with its customers and profits when the packers order more containers to meet the resultant increased consumer demand.

A manufacturer of machinery used in making a building material saw the need of creating greater public respect for the end product in home building. Recognizing the influence of women's decisions on home building, a public relations program was developed and directed to women as the main "target." Information concerning the program and tools used was provided to the product manufacturers, the building industry and building press, in addition to the usual channels in a woman's program.

The fundamental soundness of the program was demonstrated by the

immediate response of all segments of the building industry—manufacturers of the end product, architects, builders and contractors. The program was then expanded to provide additional information to these areas of direct influence on home building, so that they in turn, could take full advantage of women's influence with direct benefit to them.

Unusually dramatic proof that good public relations is not the intangible it is too often said to be, was provided by this program. Not only was good public relations established with the customers, the ultimate consumers and all intermediaries in the industry, but increased orders for the machinery brought immediate tangible returns to the manufacturer himself.

Development of Procedures and Materials

Certain points deserve full consideration in developing the specifics of your program, whether they be on the product information angle or the broader public relations responsibility concerned with public understanding of policy and practices. It is important to think not only in terms of talking to women in the language they understand and gearing material to their specific interests, but constantly to adjust such a program to meet any change in the pulse of women's thinking. An important advantage, too, in the leadership approach, can be the cooperation of leaders of all the various groups in all sections of the country (if the program is to be of national scope) in planning the program. As a result they become enthusiastic and take pride in sponsoring it. To this end is indicated the employment of such techniques as conferences with national women leaders; correspondence and personal meetings with women who reflect the pulse of important women's groups so that all approaches may be timed to meet the current tempo.

With the major objective to influence women who hold the balance of power in public opinion, procedures must be developed to this end. You cannot achieve the objective by one little project to reach women's clubs; perhaps another to education; nor is it achieved by merely gearing your publicity to women. You must have a comprehensive plan—well coordinated—not bits of programs shot here and there. You must implant the right kind of information carefully; and, you must know women and *all* their groups and activities and the interest and motivations of each group. You use that knowledge to time your program and direct it to all the segments of the woman publics and to make its impact strong and effective. Just as you do not depend on one small piece of a promotional program to sell your product, neither do you depend

on any single-shot approach, such as reaching 30,000 women's clubs, to sell your public relations ideas—the objectives, policies and practices of your business.

No ready-made series of projects and procedures can be set forth to constitute a proper pattern for a good public relations program directed to women. Patterns differ with companies and situations. However, here are listed some methods of procedure which can be put to work:

1. *Selection of company literature* now available, that would be of interest to women, and channeling it to selected groups with a suitable accompanying letter.
2. *Preparation and planned distribution* of new materials geared specifically to the interest of the woman publics, such as:
 - a. Booklets
 - b. Program kits
 - c. Follow-up bulletins
 - d. Material for women to use in their own speeches
 - e. Films.
3. *Supplying kits of reference material* to libraries. These should be promoted and presented in such form that they will be circulated to women who are seeking program material and information, and not used only as technical references.
4. *Taking full advantage of new opportunities* with the women's press.
 - a. Women editors of newspapers have a special approach for presenting their information to the public. Sometimes regular news releases can be adapted for good feature articles on the woman's page.

There is a beginning interest among a few leading newspaper women to talk to their readers about the importance and problems of industry and their significance to women. These women editors want information and inspiration from industry itself; they need copy so interpreted in women's interest that it is right for their use.

- b. With a personal acquaintance among editors of women's magazines and national women radio directors and commentators, and a knowledge of their interests, many opportunities can be created for feature stories and broadcasts of importance to your company, geared to women's interests.
5. *Personalization of your company* through meetings, national and local.
 - a. While other techniques such as the program and source

material suggested are the most economical and effective ways to reach thousands of women in their organizations, there are a few important national meetings to be addressed which are worthy of the time of top executives.

b. If there is a strong community interest it would be particularly effective to personalize your company to the women in these communities through some meetings with key women leaders.

6. *Reach the women in your official family*—your stockholders, employees, and wives of employees. This does not necessarily mean that special programs or special materials are required. It does mean thinking of women in those groups, as you are preparing your regular material, and including in it some appeal that interests the women in those groups and makes the material more effective in their hands.

For instance, mailing a copy of your company publication to the home does not necessarily insure winning the wife of your employee, unless you direct part of that publication to *her* specific interests. But the women in your "family publics" will take pride in your woman's program. Making the information about that program available to them, and keeping them informed of its progress, will further their interest and loyalty and in some instances move them to action in support of the program.

These are only a few of the techniques and projects which may be adopted. The tools to be used in your woman's program are not new. They are the same tools which are used effectively in every area of public relations. The way in which they should be used may differ, but it is the *approach* which can make them most effective.

Editors' Note

The revival of the consumer movement is by itself ample reason for business to make a scientific study of the importance of women as the objective of its public relations messages and the highest possible development of the tools suitable for reaching them.

This revival of the consumer movement began in the early days of the depression. Public interest in it waned in wartime but behind the scenes the urge acquired tremendous impetus during World War II and

particularly during the postwar adjustment period. Some of the most effective leaders in the movement were to be found in government departments and agencies, not only in Washington but throughout the country. Women spearheaded that movement and found their most responsive followers in organized women's groups.

The basic importance of women in the creation of public attitudes was discovered and first exploited by big business. In this the automobile industry established early leadership and has since maintained it. An early pioneer in this movement was "Buck" Weaver of the General Motors Corporation whose blue-printing of woman's influence on purchasing habits set a pattern first for the sales promotion of the industry and then for its public relations procedures. A solution of the basic public relations problems of many important industries has been found almost exclusively in an appeal to women.

Women Important to Most Programs Today

For generations the life insurance industry concentrated its attention on men who could sign an application blank. Today the Institute of Life Insurance, recognizing that most insurance is bought as a protection and service to women, has established a full-fledged women's division in its public relations operation and gives major attention to woman publics.

The liquor industry has belatedly recognized that practically all of the impetus for the prohibition movement comes from women, and particularly from women in rural and small town areas. Consequently a substantial part of the \$4,000,000 to \$5,000,000 the industry spends annually on public relations is addressed primarily to the women in those areas.

Long ago the motion-picture industry realized that practically all of the urge for local and national censorship came from organized women's groups. It hired a former president of the General Federation of Women's Clubs to direct a special bureau, operating a nationwide program at the community level. Since that program was organized and put in full swing, there has been practically no expansion of motion picture censorship and little threat that an effective campaign in that direction may develop.

Loyalty of Women to Their Magazines

In planning any national program directed to women, don't overlook the basic fact that women's magazines exercise a more direct and effective influence on the thoughts and habits of their readers than

EDITORS' NOTE

most any other medium. Personal service through the printed page is the keynote to the success of these magazines. A majority of their readers have developed an implicit faith in the editorial integrity of their favorite publication. A persuasive feature story in such a magazine can do more to implement the thinking of women than almost any other channel of communication. In this connection it is well to remember that there are several established and well-recognized counseling firms who know and serve the needs and enjoy the complete confidence of the editors of women's magazines.

This is not a market to be served with a shotgun. All general releases which might be of interest to women should of course be sent to the editors of women's magazines. But important editorial projects should be tailored for a particular magazine and worked out in consultation with its editors.

Reaching Women Through Their Editors

Many important corporations and trade associations have discovered the potentiality of this medium. Lees-Cochrane Carpet Company took a trainload of editors from the leading women's magazines on a tour of mills, offices and showrooms and got over the basic story of carpet manufacture in this country as it had never been told before. Dozens of important feature stories reaching millions of American women were just one of the dividends of that brief and relatively inexpensive campaign.

When Theodore R. Sills & Company (Chicago) were retained to direct a campaign for the pottery manufacturers of the country, they made a quick survey and discovered that the average woman editor had only the vaguest idea as to how chinaware is made or as to the virtues of American pottery. They took the leading woman editors of the country through two of the largest potteries where they met the principal executives and studied what they should have known long ago about American pottery. That experience stood the industry in good stead when government officials proposed that American money and technicians be exported to Japan to revive an industry which once dominated the American chinaware market.

It is important to observe here that each of these programs went far beyond the mere exploitation of a particular brand or type of product. In every case the whole economy of the industry was explained and dramatized. The editors and their readers acquired a broader understanding of the basic principles all business is trying to develop. This contributes directly to the solution of a basic problem recently dis-

covered by most industries. This problem is that the consumer frequently is as much interested in the integrity of a corporation and the craftsmanship which it puts into its products as she is in the precise specifications of those products.

This modern trend in public relations and merchandising is illustrated in a program recently inaugurated by the Aluminum Company of America. The company cooperates with a leading department store in a trading area. Every manufacturer using aluminum in the production of consumer goods in that region sets up an exhibit in the store showing not only his manufacturing processes but also dramatizing the policies of the company. In every case sales of aluminum goods have expanded immediately in those areas and it is a fair assumption that the public relations of the aluminum industry improved also. Through this device, thousands of women all over the country learned not only the merit of aluminum household wares, but formed mental pictures of the companies which produced them.

Women in Employee and Community Relations

Every day public relations programs are being pointed more at the community level. Every day new evidence accumulates to prove that women as individuals and in organized groups dominate community attitudes. No profession has been more skeptical in recognizing the function of public relations than the newspaper editor. Yet today not only are the leading newspapers setting up public relations departments and practicing public relations on an organized basis, but they are recognizing the leadership importance in their communities. For example, the *Minneapolis Star and Tribune* now sends its editors to each important Minnesota community to cooperate with women's clubs in staging forums for teaching club leaders how to discover women's news of general interest and how to prepare it so that it will get by the city editor's desk.

The outstanding development in the public relations of business with women is the more or less scientific survey appraisal of the influence of wives and mothers on employee attitudes and morale. Since that truth was convincingly documented, business every day is tying the home more closely into its employee and community relations. Company publications are pointing more directly at the home and a large and growing percentage of indoctrination messages are addressed to employees at their homes instead of being handed out at the plant as was the general custom until recently. Open house parties are concentrating on the wife and friends of the worker to acquaint them with com-

tions in the plant and with the mutual problems of employer and employee.

Exploitation of Opinion-Poll Findings

Use of one relatively new technique for influencing women is increasing rapidly. It starts with interesting a research organization or a national publication in taking opinion polls among women. The results of these polls are then broadcast through every available medium of communication, to the wives and mothers of employees and to the members of organized women's groups. Women are inherently skeptical of anything having the appearance of propaganda. They respect and accept the findings of professional groups using scientific methods to evaluate public opinion.

Implementing Club Programs

Many large corporations and trade associations maintain a speakers' bureau which sends lecturers to address women's clubs.

A relatively new adaptation of this method is proving effective. Typical is the program of the Bristol-Myers Company.

Program chairmen of more than 7,500 women's clubs were sent questionnaires as to the subjects they preferred to discuss at their meetings. The company learned that more than 65 percent of them listed good grooming. Public relations specialists for the company then prepared complete programs and kits for these clubs. They included outlines of talks by member-speakers, bibliographies and reference leaflets, wall charts, program quiz blanks and program report forms. There was no direct reference to Bristol-Myers products which contribute to good grooming, but every woman at all familiar with what is offered at a drug counter got the story which Bristol-Myers is spending millions to sell through radio and the printed word.

What makes this technique particularly effective is that the program chairman and the members prepare the programs themselves and look to Bristol-Myers only for working material. This removes the feeling that club members are being subjected to sales promotion.

Woman Publics Merit Special Attention

Executives who resist any program which makes a special and direct appeal to women usually base their decision on the assumption that men and women are people and what logically appeals to one is likely to influence the other. However one might be inclined to debate that assumption, the important thing to remember is that women are influ-

ential and vocal and that many channels of communication for reaching them directly and convincingly have no appeal whatever to men. The controlling factor in any decision on this question might well be that women have far more confidence in the special media of communication addressed to them than either men or the public as a whole has in general media. To overlook the woman publics is to pass up one of the most profitable opportunities for reaching a potential audience.

—G. C. and D. C.