

Family Life When Dad Goes to School

STORY BY MARY ESSLINGER
PHOTOS BY
ROLAND FREEMAN
NC News Service

Sue and George Lavery, formerly of Geneseo, aren't much different from many young married couples.

They have a year-old son, Willy.

They live in a comfortably furnished two-bedroom apartment in the Washington suburbs.

They don't have much money, but they enjoy life.

But they are also different from many young couples.

George is a full-time student, earning a master's degree at the University of Maryland.

Student marriages are an increasingly common phenomenon. More than a fifth of American university students are married and their numbers are growing.

What makes Sue and George Lavery and other married students different from other young couples? In many things not very much.

They must deal with the same everyday problems and situations that confront most couples.

For Sue this means a daily routine typical of most housewives: laundry, cleaning, cooking and childcare. Like many a young mother her moments of leisure usually come while the baby is napping; Sue reads,



While George tends to school, meeting with an advisor or just plain studying...

watches TV, or enjoys a short rest.

Being in the final semester of his master's work, George's schedule is pretty flexible, allowing him to suit his hours to his family's convenience. Usually he leaves for the university at nine a.m., comes home at noon for lunch, and heads back to school at one. He returns at 5 p.m.

However their life style will soon change. Sue is going to work as a substitute teacher. With one semester left, they have to come face-to-face with



a hard fiscal fact—they are almost out of money.

And here the student couple's resemblance to other young marrieds ends, and the story of their special situation begins.

Probably Sue and George were better prepared financially than many couples when George first became a full-time student in the fall of 1968. They married three years before, at the start of Sue's senior year at the State University of New

York in Geneseo. George had graduated from Geneseo the previous spring and was teaching fifth grade.

When Sue graduated in June they moved to the Baltimore suburbs where they both found teaching positions. During their second year there, George qualified for Maryland resident tuition rates and began part-time studies at the University of Maryland. They began saving Sue's salary.

When George decided to be-

come a full-time student, he and Sue figured it would take him 18 months to gain his master's degree. They had \$3,000 saved.

Unexpectedly, George was chosen for a research assistantship in the university counseling center—a windfall and a liability. By working in the center, he received free tuition and a \$3,400 annual salary; it also added a semester to his work. Eighteen months became two years.

This year George has a fellowship which pays the same amount, but entails no work requirement. In effect, George is now paid to work full-time on his thesis.

This fact—and the probability that he would seldom see Sue and Willy—have kept George from taking a part-time job.

That's income. What about expenses?

In a typical month they spend \$96.50 for rent; \$100 for food; \$33 for car payment and \$16 for life insurance.

That's \$245 in fixed expenses against an income of \$283. Having the money from their savings has helped them meet the extraordinary expenses, like their baby, born in November 1968. But now the 18 months they planned for is over; their savings are depleted.

So Sue will soon start substituting twice a week. George, or perhaps the neighbor with

(Continued on Page 17A)

Family Life When Dad Goes to School



... the rest of the family hob-nobs with neighbors or takes care of housework...

(Continued from Page 16A)

whom they have a reciprocal babysitting arrangement, will care for Willy.

In the meantime, they have had to take a small but costly personal loan to pay some pressing, necessary debts and bridge the income gap until Sue's first paycheck arrives.

In June it will all be over. It's been hard at times, but the Laverys think it's been worth it.

"The first year was easier. It was sort of a big adventure. Now we are really ready to get on with it," Sue said.



"At first we missed things like money for entertainment. But, now we don't really mind," she said.

"Our budget has been pretty flexible—careful, but flexible. We like to eat and thought it important to have a good diet. We have a good pediatrician. We thought we could cut corners, by cutting down on trips to the dentist, but that just didn't work," said George.

"You just have to give up some things for others like clothes and dinners out. You miss them, but it's worth it, particularly when it's for the baby's sake," he concluded.

And after June? George will get a job, counseling at a small college, he hopes.

Sue is hoping for another baby.

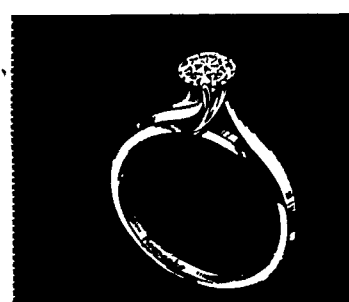
And the future? More education—a doctorate for George.



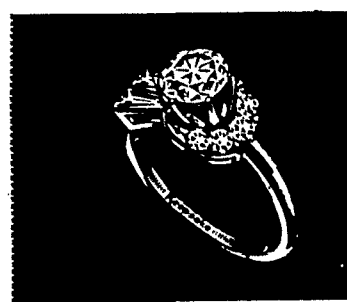
... so that togetherness is possible



FREE! A lovely Wedding Gown from Friedman's Bridal Shoppe when you purchase your engagement diamond at Harmin's!



VERONA 2350
ALSO \$190 TO 1650



NAPOLI 2650
ALSO TO 2250



VENTURA 2300
ALSO \$180 TO 1977
WEDDING RING 50



AURORA 2400
WEDDING RING 125



SPUNLACE 2350
ALSO TO 2100
WEDDING RING \$79.50



Every Keepsake ring has a

**Guaranteed Flawless
CENTER DIAMOND**

(or replacement assured by Keepsake)

PLUS all these other exclusive features!

- ✓ All Keepsake diamonds are protected against loss from setting for on full year.
- ✓ Each ring carries a lifetime trade-in privilege.
- ✓ Permanent registration . . . all at no extra cost.

**BUY ON EASY CREDIT
AT HARMIN'S JEWELERS**

Open Tuesdays & Thursdays 'til 9

**YES! the same
'Your True Love'
Wedding Gown
you've seen on TV
YOURS FREE
with the purchase of an
ENGAGEMENT
DIAMOND**



Dialogue: The First Requirement

By JIM & MARY FIEDLER
(NC News Service)

The familiar comic-strip, TV-series scenes of a cute, cunning wife plotting to manipulate her husband to buy her a new coat or to cover up the fact that she dented the car's fender are an insult to intelligent women—and to men.

Adults—certainly adults involved in such an intimate experience as marriage—should be able to speak to each other frankly about anything, from new coats to deep psychological problems. There must be a continual dialogue in marriage.

Dialogue is a willingness to talk and to listen in order to understand. It is speaking frankly, honestly and lovingly with one another.

Married couples must be able to do this, to tell each other their problems, their views, and their complaints and criticisms of each other.

There is a woman in a TV soap commercial who tells her husband that he had bad body odor. And when the husband becomes embarrassed and angry, the wife says something like: "But I'm your wife. If I can't tell you, who will?"

There must be such understanding, honesty and dialogue between husband and wife that the wife is able to tell her husband he doesn't change his socks often enough, he stirs his food, that he should learn how to add to their sexual enjoyment.

The type of dialogue we are

talking about obviously requires a certain amount of maturity. The husband and wife must be mature enough to be able to stand having their ideas, their suggestions and their views—as well as themselves—challenged and criticized.

Everyone should develop self-awareness—an honest appraisal of his own weaknesses, strengths, talents, habits, fears and his faults.

Dialogue between man and wife can—and must—develop this self-awareness because there is no room for phonies in the intimate relationship of marriage.

And neither should there be any room for prima donnas; the man, for example, shouldn't think he is something extra special simply because he is the one in the family who is "employed."

A man can possibly be a phony or a prima donna at his job, but he should never be in his family.

Honesty between husband and wife, between parents and children is essential for a healthy marriage and family life.

Dialogue between husband and wife should also, of course, embrace the children.

We'll admit that sometimes it's difficult to interrupt what we're doing to listen and talk to children—they always seem to interrupt—but it's always worthwhile when we do.

Too often parents assume that their children have the

same questions and problems that they had as youngsters.

But we ourselves were called to task recently after discussing the idea of dialogue with our children.

"What's dialogue?" seven-year-old Patrick asked.

We tried to explain it to him, that it means listening to us and his brother and two sisters and trying to understand what others are telling him.

Shortly afterwards, however, while the TV news was on and when the kids at the same time wanted to talk about something, Jim shouted: "Quiet, I want to hear the news!"

"But I thought you were all in favor of dialogue," Patrick replied.

Many obstacles are put in the path of dialogue.

Television is certainly one. When the kids' shows are over, then the so-called adult programs take over: dialogue is often lost in the shuffle.

Another villain is household chores—that busy-work that occupies so much free time. Weekends are often filled with so much house-cleaning, yard-work and running of errands that husband and wife hardly have a whole sentence to say to each other.

Children should not be hidden from the healthy arguments or debates between parents. They must develop an understanding that these nat-

urally follow when intelligent people with differing backgrounds and experiences discuss their ideas and opinions.

As we've said before, honesty is important in relations between people, and it is particularly important when parents discuss things with children.

We've tried to be honest with our kids in everything—from when they ask about race riots to when they ask about sex.

We think it's very important, for example, to use the proper terms for the parts of their anatomy, instead of making up some ridiculous words for them.

And through discussing racial problems our kids know that Whites are responsible for the burning and looting of the race riots.

That's what dialogue means: human beings begin to know themselves and honest with themselves and with each other.

Everyone has his own ideas, opinions, feelings and attitudes toward life. And a person should not be expected to hide or suppress those when he marries.

Marriage should be a relationship between two equals, and two equals should be able to speak honestly and candidly without coy subterfuges on the woman's part and childish pride on the man's. Marriage is not a game between two players trying to out-trick each other.

Difficulties of this kind do not correct themselves and procrastination often aggravates the situation.

Honeymooning In Quiet and Joy

The honeymoon has a special purpose. It was not designed to be an extravagant jaunt with a whirlwind agenda.

Its purpose is to provide the newlyweds with a care-free, tension-free, friends-and-relatives-free chance to get to know each other.

A short leisurely trip is probably the best itinerary for a honeymoon.

It is wise to go somewhere, where calm and beauty reign so that a young couple can give themselves to each other in surroundings that favor intimacy and quiet introspection.

Even the hotel or motel room should help create the proper atmosphere, especially on the wedding night. The room should be cozy and the scene from the window should be almost poetical. This means so much to the new bride.

The couple should try to keep themselves from becoming exhausted and physically strained from the activities of the wedding day.

If serious physical or psychological difficulties appear during the honeymoon the couple should consult a physician when they return from the trip.

The idea that "everything works out in time" isn't necessarily correct.

Difficulties of this kind do not correct themselves and procrastination often aggravates the situation.

March 6, 1970 Courier-Journal 17A