

Refrigerators and Freezers

Perhaps the acquisition of a refrigerator or a freezer is easier to justify economically than a television set, for its benefits are easier to see and measure. The purchase of a fairly modern and capacious refrigerator or freezer could allow an isolated family to buy perishable foods in town at lower prices and less frequent intervals, and thus save on food expenditures and transportation, if sufficiently large purchases were made. It would also allow for the easy and tasty preservation of home produced foods. An upper limit of \$200 was established for both refrigerators and freezers.

All of the participants reported owning a refrigerator while 10 of the applicants did not. Several, 15, of the participants had purchased a refrigerator in the past year, while only two of the applicants had. The participants paid an average price of \$126 and the applicants \$45. These low averages represent the purchase of used refrigerators: both of the applicants and nine of the participants purchased used refrigerators. Four of the participants exceeded the \$200 upper limit.

Not many applicants or participants had freezers; only one applicant and four participants reported owning freezers. Three of the participants had purchased freezers in the past year, and one of the freezers exceeded the \$200 upper limit.

Washing Machines

A washing machine could facilitate the maintenance of a neat and clean appearance, and would probably not wear out clothing as readily as hand washing. Thus expenditures on washing machines were regarded as developmentally significant up to \$200, the upper limit placed upon such purchases.

Twenty applicants and 29 participants reported owning washing machines. None of the applicants had purchased a washing machine in the past year while seven of the participants had; one of these was in excess of the \$200 developmentally significant upper limit.

Cooking and Heating Stoves

Expenditures for heating stoves were considered developmentally significant for even if the expenditures were for coal stoves, the participant's home would at least have been more comfortable. Even more significant in terms of the future effect upon health would have been the replacement of a coal stove with an automatically regulated system of heating. Similarly with cooking stoves, a new wood burning stove would have been more efficient than an older one, but a gas or electric cooking stove would have been even more efficient. Thus, any kind of expenditure for heating stoves was considered as developmentally significant, for the variety of alternative purchases was so great. However, \$180 was estimated as the developmentally significant upper limit for cooking stoves.

Sewing Machines

The purchase of a sewing machine was regarded as a developmentally significant expenditure, for the potential savings attainable by sewing clothing for a family were judged to be considerable. No upper limit was placed on sewing machines, for the variety of available models was too great.

Six applicants, and 10 participants reported owning sewing machines. None of the applicants and two of the participants had purchased them in the previous twelve months.

Radios and Phonographs

Almost everybody reported owning a table or console radio; only two applicants and two participants did not. Two participant families had purchased radios in the past twelve months. Conversely, not many people reported having a phonograph; one of the applicants and only four of the participants. Two of these four phonographs had been purchased in the past twelve months.

Radios and phonographs were judged to be quite similar to television sets in terms of bringing contemporary American culture to impoverished Appalachian families. There was no upper limit placed on such purchases.

Furniture and Home Furnishings

Cyrus Johnson found that among families with a median size of six, the median number of dining room or kitchen chairs was four, and he further states, "The median number of beds per family is three, which presents a possibly even more