

# Attitudes Abroad Tend To Reduce Teenage Pregnancy

By Charles Blackburn  
Duke Medical Center  
Special To The Post

Durham - More liberal attitudes about sex and the ready availability of contraceptives in European countries may be part of the reason why the teenage pregnancy rate there is roughly half what it is in the United States, according to a pediatrician at Duke University Medical Center.

"In European countries, there is a much greater willingness to talk openly about sexuality," Dr. Mary Vernon said in a recent talk at Duke. "In France, for example, the schools

close every Wednesday afternoon so students can go to family planning clinics."

She said teenagers in the U.S. are unlikely to go to such clinics, even after school hours, because they're afraid their parents will find out. American teenagers are also less likely to use contraceptives.

"There is fear about the side effects of the pill," she said, "when in fact, not one teenager has ever died from using the pill. Yet many teens do die in childbirth."

Statistics on teenage pregnancy have gotten worse in the last five years, Vernon said, especially

among teenagers below age 15.

"In the 10- to 14-year-old age group, the abortion rate in the U.S. is twice that of any other two developed countries combined," she added.

Almost one-sixth of all births in this country are to teenage women, or some 600,000 births each year, the majority of which are unplanned, she said. These births usually spell economic and social disaster for mother and child.

"Many single parents live in poverty most of their lives," Vernon said. "Eighty percent of teens who give birth before age 17 never complete high school."

The law protects teenage mothers from being expelled from school, she said, but many drop out because they can't afford to hire a babysitter.

Voluntary programs like one at Durham High School that give expectant mothers special instruction on prenatal and child care in addition to the usual high school subjects are helpful, but more attention should be focused on prevention, Vernon said.

Many teenage mothers choose not to marry the fathers of their children because they are apt to be an added economic burden. "The father is likely to be unemployed. He's a liability. The marriage rate is declining for both black and white teens."

The charge that some women become pregnant to collect maternity and welfare benefits is largely groundless, she said, since such benefits amount to only about \$300 a month.

Beyond the economic burden, teenage pregnancy carries potentially devastating health risks for the child as well as the mother.

"Children born to teenage mothers are more likely to be premature, low birth-weight babies with physical and mental handicaps, and are more likely to be underweight and neglected," Vernon said.

On a positive note, the Duke pediatrician said it is not too late to prepare 23 million American children between the ages of six and 12 years old for the transition to adolescence and adulthood.

"We have an opportunity to reach these children before it's too late," Vernon said. "Many of them will become sexually active at an early age. They need information on how to protect themselves from what can turn out to be a tragedy."

These are among the pamphlets she recommended.

"Growing Up—Specially for Preteen and Young Teens," "Teen Questions About Sex and Answers," "Sex Education at Home—A Guide for Parents," and "Sex Facts from Planned Parenthood Center, 1130 East Genesee St., Syracuse, N.Y. 13210."

"How To Talk to Your Teenagers About the Facts of Life," from Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc., 610 Seventh Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10019.

"Starting Early Education: A Parent's Guide to Early Childhood Sex Education," from Rocky Mountain Planned Parenthood, 1655 Vine St., Denver, Colo. 80202.



Mrs. Lester Hargrove Richardson Jr.  
.....The former Miss Gloria Dianne Blackwell

## Miss Gloria Blackwell Weds Lester Richardson

Vows of marriage were recently exchanged between Gloria Dianne Blackwell and Lester Hargrove Richardson Jr., uniting them as husband and wife.

The evening ceremony was officiated by Rev. Mayo Rich at Greater Bethel A.M.E. Church.

Given in marriage by her father the bride wore a gown and veil that her grandmother had designed in New York City. She carried a flower bouquet of orange and white roses, stephanotis and baby's breath.

Chosen as matron of honor was the bride's sister, Cynthia B. Cathey. The maid of honor was Myra Dudley of Washington, D.C. The bridesmaids were: Faye Brown of Concord, Doris Carrington-Ramsey of Atlanta, Ga., Patrice Richardson, the groom's sister of Washington, D.C., Roslyn Smith and Phyllis Steadman.

Little Miss Tia Cooper was the flower girl.

Acting as best man was Alvin Turner of Boston, Mass. Remaining ushers included Dennis Blackwell, the bride's brother, Jeff Keaton, Brian Long of Washington, D.C. and David Olivierre, also of D.C. Master Duveel Warner, the

groom's cousin was the ring bearer.

Organist Steven Cooper and soloist John Mobley provided the music for the ceremony. And adding a special touch to the ceremony the bridegroom sang to his bride.

The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Blackwell, the bride is a graduate of UNCC. She is employed by IBM.

Employed with Nationwide Insurance the groom is the son of Lester Hargrove Sr. He attended the University of Connecticut and graduated from UNCC.

Following the dinner reception which was held at the Marriott Hotel-Uptown, the couple took a cruise to the Bahamas.

## The Images Of Woman To Be Held

Rock Hill - A conference on "The Images of Woman" will be held from 10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Saturday, November 23, in room 204 of Kinard Hall at Winthrop College.

The conference is sponsored by the CYLUC-Wintrop Writing Project as part of the follow-up activities of the 1984 Humanities-Writing Conference.

Partial funding for the "Images of Woman" conference is provided by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

### Organization

Continued From Page 1A

ments are that Articles of Incorporation must be filed with the Secretary of State; a name must be chosen; the directors must hold an organizational meeting; bylaws must be adopted for governing the company; records of important corporate events must be kept; and a registered agent must be appointed. Other requirements apply in special circumstances.

Any business starting out, whether as a sole proprietorship, a partnership, or a corporation, must meet any licensing requirements for that type of business. Business and privilege licenses differ from one area to another within the state.

In addition, state board certification or licensing is required to do business in certain occupations.

As was advised in the first part of this series, starting a business is not something to enter upon lightly. If you're serious, obtain professional advice and assistance. The Small Business Division of the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce is a good place to start.

Next week: Financing your business.

The conference will include a talk by Dr. Mary de Grys, associate professor of anthropology, on "Women in Rites and Rituals." English instructor Dorothy McGavran will speak on "Archetypal Images of Women in Literature."

A discussion about the subjects will follow.

The conference will conclude with a 1 p.m. luncheon and poetry reading by Susan Ludvigson, associate professor of English. She is author of "The Summer, Northern Lights," "The Wisconsin Woman" and "Step Carefully in Night Grass."

The cost for the conference and luncheon is \$7. There is no charge for participants who do not wish to have lunch.

Reservations were due November 15. For more information, contact Dr. Joyce P. Berman, 863-323-2171.

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Jo Graham Foster  
.....State Representative

## Jo Graham Foster Appointed To Special Committee

Raleigh - Representative Jo Graham Foster of Mecklenburg County has been appointed by House Speaker Liston B. Ramsey to a special committee to evaluate sex education programs being offered in the public schools of North Carolina.

To be conducted under authority of the Legislative Research Commission, the study will seek ways to reduce unwanted teenage pregnancies and reduce the State's infant mortality rate. The committee will review what and how the State's youths are being taught about adolescent sexuality and look for ways to bring about improvements.

Mrs. Foster, of Charlotte, is chairman of the House Education Committee and a member of the North Carolina Advisory Budget Commission. She represents a portion of Mecklenburg County in the 56th House District.

### NOTICE

The office of The Charlotte Post will be closed for the Thanksgiving weekend from 1 p.m. Wednesday, November 27, until 9 a.m. Monday, December 2.

Because of the holiday schedule, the deadline for next week's paper is Friday, November 22.



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