

# Home economist stresses need to prepare families for the future

By Carol Harrah

The future of the world is beyond our present technology, said a speaker in the home economics field during a convocation Wednesday morning in the Great Plains Room of the East Union.

Marilyn Horne, a professor of home economics and the past dean of the home economics department at the University of Nevada-Reno, spoke to a group of about 275 people from the Home Economics College at UNL. She was the guest speaker for the convocation and spoke on the topic, "Readying Ourselves and Our Students for the 21st Century."

Horne said that people need to look toward the future more often because it is too easy to look at the present and relate it to the past.

"You can look at tomorrow with hope and comfort. . . but let's say 1992 or 2002. . ." she said, "it's not as far off as you think."

"Those times are a little bit nebulous. . . but home economists are required to think ahead . . . we help people achieve a family life that will help them look ahead to the future," she said.

Horne said that thinking more about what lies ahead in our future is necessary and technology should be a part of it.

"Thinking. . . is not a waste of time. It is necessary," Horne said. "We are moving forward to thinking, rather than acting, globally."

Horne praised people who think about the future. She said that if some people in our past hadn't been worried about the future, we wouldn't be where we are.

"It's always easier to look back than to look ahead," she said. "Futurists are people that are professionals. . . they learn concepts that help us deal with new ways of behavior."

Horne cited Ellen H. Richards, the founder of home economics as a career and new behavior, as a futurist.

"Ellen H. Richards was a futurist. She perceived people didn't have knowledge of good nutrition and good sanitation," Horne said. "She had a plan for low-cost, nutritious and sanitary meals. She founded the New England Kitchen, a public food service that taught people how to eat."

Horne said this idea didn't work at first, but when Richards got the approval to go into the public schools to serve meals, as long as all children were fed, her ideas became ways of the future.

"Richards began this program about 100 years ago," Horne said, "and there is still a lunch program in the public schools. She had ideas that are still in use today."

Horne explained that with our present technology, people can use home computers to do things for them once thought to be out of reach. She cited the use of these computers as good sources of information for people.

"No one can predict the future with any certainty," she said, "but we can go into the future better by using our present technology and affluence."

Horne said that one scary aspect of computers and other technology is how children in the future will handle it. "Children in the post-industrial age



Staff Photo by Kent Morgan Olsen

Marilyn Horne

could very well become more comfortable with technology than with people," Horne said.

She added that our future is dependent on our technology.

"Whether we follow the path of hope or disaster depends on if we use our technology properly," she said.

Horne said some people don't worry enough about the future, possibly because they don't feel they can look at it optimistically or don't know how to look at it.

"A lot of people who read 'Future Shock' behaved differently after they read it," she said. "They were afraid of the future."

Horne said she feels optimistic about the future and people must decide how they feel about it.

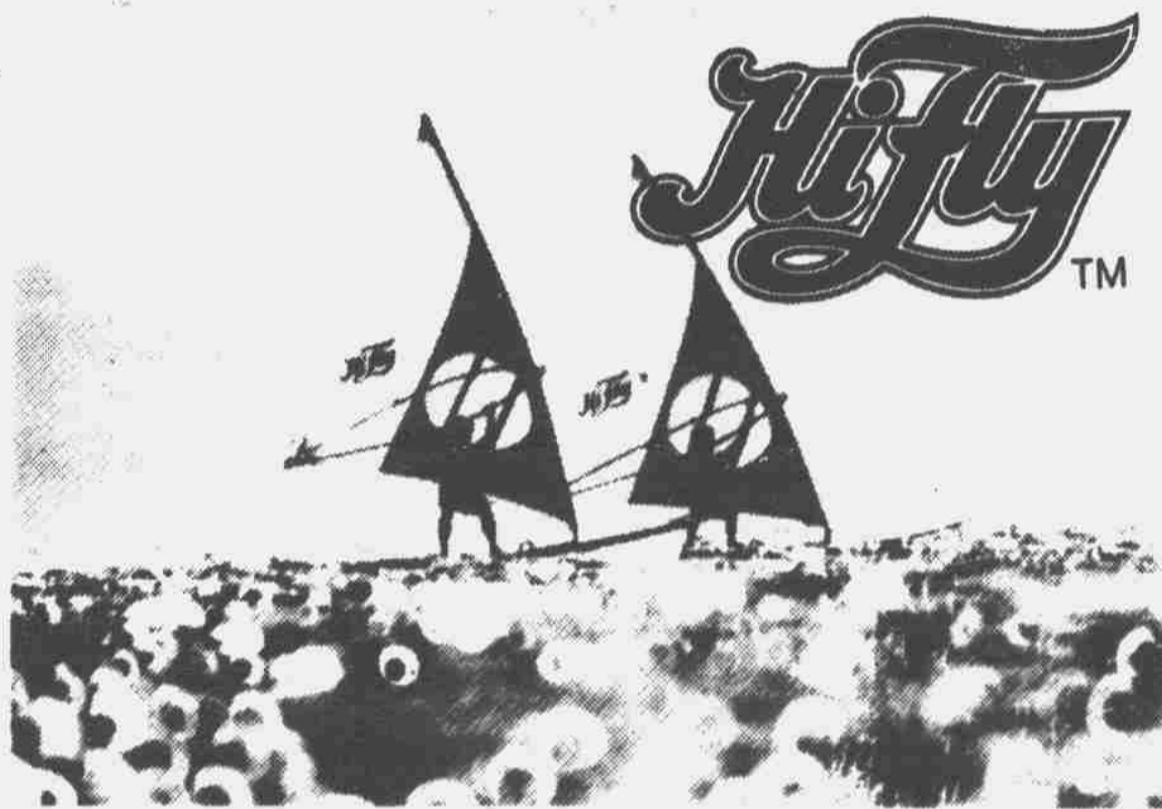
"Americans have a bright future. There's a new morality on cutting waste," she said. "How you look towards the future depends on if you look at the same bottle as being either half full or half empty."

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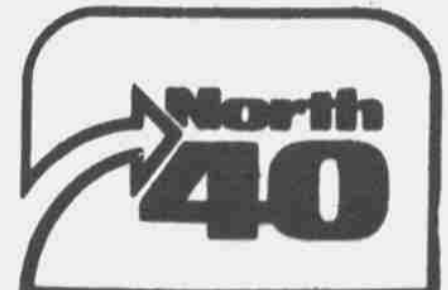
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