1937

What Goes on Behind the Swinging Doors

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Recommended Citation

Ingle, Doris (1937) "What Goes on Behind the Swinging Doors," The Iowa Homemaker: Vol. 17 : No. 1 , Article 2.

Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol17/iss1/2

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LONG white tables beautifully appointed. A dining hall crowded with people—hundreds of them, gay in anticipation of the banquet about to be served.

In the kitchen white-clad girls are calm, but busy arranging hundreds of plates of hot, attractively arranged food to send out into the dining room. No small problem, indeed, but each plate arrives before the guest in short order, the vegetables hot, the salads crisp, the ices unmelted. The average diner uses about eight dishes, and at a banquet he may use more.

It takes skill and careful planning to serve these meals, and what goes on in the dining room and behind those swinging doors in the kitchen is a vast problem. It is a problem for institution management, a term which is used to describe a profession the purpose of which is supervising, housing and feeding of people in group life.

The Institution Management department at Iowa State College trains young women in the art of preparing and serving meals in large quantities and in the management of food departments in dormitories, restaurants, club rooms and tearooms.

Actual practice is obtained by work in the Institution Tearoom, where many faculty members eat their noon meal, and where numerous groups hold dinner parties. The Memorial Union, with its cafeteria, dining room service, parties and banquets, provides additional ground for experience for all institution majors.

The tearoom is not operated for profit. Many departments in the college receive appropriations for meeting operation costs, but the tearoom has no funds allotted to help defray expenses. It is entirely self-supporting.

Although the charge for each meal is small, from this revenue the overhead, food and departmental expenses are paid. In addition, equipment is replaced.

The tearoom has furnishings and decorations in black, and can accommodate 100 people daily. The dining room this year has been used to capacity. Reservations are usually necessary in order to be assured of a place for luncheon.

The situation at the present time differs from that of four years ago, when an average of only 25 to 30 people were served daily. The year of 1932 shows the smallest figures. Over three times as many are served now.

The development of institution management at Iowa State College has been rapid, for the first mention of such courses was made in the 1919 catalog.

It was not made a department until several years later. The earliest institution management training was given in the east. Three colleges and universities had entered the field by 1920. From this time on its extension has been very rapid.

Early nature and extent of instruction in institution management at Iowa State included the following courses: institutional foods, buying of institution equipment and supplies, institution management and institution field work.

Courses of study have undergone a process of evolution during the past few years. When the first courses in institution management were offered, practically the only positions open to women were those of hospital dietitian.

With the development of the training, more and varied positions are open to the trained woman. Opportunities in the field have become diversified, including all kinds of food work.

Women registered in institution management are given experience in preparing and serving meals twice during each week. There is a definite organization including the following: kitchen manager, head and assistant dining room girls, cook, cook's helper, head salad girl, head dessert girl (with assistants under each), pantry girl and round man.

The kitchen manager has complete charge of food production and service, and assigns special duties for food preparation. Following each day's work she fills out a cost sheet showing the actual food expenditure and overhead cost for the day and the definite profit or loss.

The head and assistant dining room girls have charge of setting up the dining room and service of the meal. The head cook is responsible for the main dish of the meal and makes a cost report of the dishes prepared. The assistant cook makes the hot bread and prepares the plates for members of the class. The head and assistant salad girls prepare all desserts and also keep a cost sheet. The pantry girl makes tea and coffee, cuts butter and fills creamers. All assistants act as waitresses in the tearoom. When service is completed each has her own luncheon in the kitchen.

All kinds of equipment for preparing food in large quantities are found in the tearoom kitchen.

The problems of the institution manager vary somewhat depending on the region of the country where the position is located. A larger percentage of institution management graduates of this college are located in the middle west, and employed in commercial positions. However, during the year 1936 a larger percentage were employed in colleges and universities.

More institution majors have duties connected with food preparation than any other phase of the work.
Since a student must have opportunity to study the field, make plans and have some responsibility in supervision, an apprenticeship training for institution management majors is advised.

An apprenticeship period of from 6 months to 1 year under the supervision of an experienced manager should be completed before the graduate accepts a position requiring managerial responsibility. Such training gives students opportunity to develop ability to work with others and to manage employees. Graduates from last year have accepted appointments at Michigan State College, Mills College in California, University of Nebraska, and University of Chicago.

It is also suggested that institution majors spend the summer vacation following the junior year working in either the food or housing department of an institution.

It takes skill and careful planning to serve in hotels, cafeterias, tearooms and restaurants. What goes on behind those swinging doors into the kitchen is, among other things, a difficult problem.

Shifted away from a college campus and translated into commercial terms, the problem includes the fact that restaurants and hotels consume one-fourth of the food used in the United States. There are about 200,000 restaurant and hotel dining rooms. In a recent year they sold one-half billion dollars' worth of food and served about 6 billion meals. Another kind of dining room serving food in quantity is the school dormitory.

State institutions are also a group of organizations needing efficient management applied to their food departments.

Institution management is concerned with obtaining dignified living in the physical aspects of group life. Attention is also paid to the managing of a food serving organization at a financial profit, otherwise there would be no organization to manage.

Iowa State College is one of the very few colleges and universities to offer complete work in the field of institution management training. Its graduates fill positions as managers of food and housing departments of clubs, hotels and college dormitories, and direct the food service in tearooms, restaurants, cafeterias, school lunch rooms and college dining halls.

How Many Wish a Soft and Gentle Voice?

by Ida Ruth Younkin

No, not all of us can have Franklin D. Roosevelt voices, but we can avoid the Casper Milquetoast type! Is your voice pure, melodious, warm, alive? Or is it high pitched, shrill, harsh, or whiny? Does your voice say, "I'm afraid I can't succeed in this?"

As Miss Home Economics Graduate is called on to give radio talks and demonstrations, and to make consumer contacts she feels the importance of this tool—speech. To make her speech an effective tool she must cultivate and improve her voice. Just as she wishes her hair and dress neat and attractive so she wants her voice to be pleasing.

Few of us know just how our voices sound. And here the Iowa State student is fortunate, since she may have an electric recording made. The electric recording will soon reveal to her why people always ask her to repeat what she says over the telephone and why she is not so popular at fraternity dinner tables! President Nielson, head of Smith College, deploring the neglect of the voice, said, "One sees a beautiful girl on her campus and thinks of what great heights American womanhood has risen—and then she speaks."

Shakespeare offers the solution to the problem with a statement as valid as it was in Queen Elizabeth's time, three hundred years ago. "Her voice was ever soft, gentle and low; an excellent thing in a woman."

Thus gentility is associated with the soft voice, a voice whose volume is controlled. Your voice should express you—your personality. Personality is really the impression you make on others, whether it is favorable or unfavorable. And the only way you can impress them is through what they see and hear. If your voice is loud and raucous, your listeners will be unfavorably impressed. The kindest words spoken with a harsh, strident voice produce an undesirable effect.

Indistinct, poorly enunciated speech is associated with a person who is rather lazy, and too uninterested to make the necessary effort; or with one whose thinking is rather slipshod or confused. One may be quite unconscious of the defect, since it has become a habit. A common cause of indistinctness is the failure to open the mouth wide enough. A lazy tongue and lazy lips produce a mumbling speech.

A good voice doesn't call attention to itself. It is merely the instrument by which the thoughts are expressed. Just as the paints in a paint box are not beautiful as they stand, the wielding of the artist's brush makes them a lovely, colorful landscape or a life-like portrait.

Improvement in voice must be approached from two angles: the mental and the physical. Good health and plenty of rest are prerequisite to vital, alive, animated speech.

A lack of mental and emotional control shows itself immediately in the voice. There are "discouraged" voices and "cold" voices. The surest means to good speaking are relaxation and a sense of inner harmony. Let your voice express that which is deep and genuine in yourself. Be sincere. Artificiality seldom escapes your audience!

Walk, sit and stand "tall." Good posture allows for good speech mechanics. Slumped down in your chair, you can't work up more than lukewarm interest in your recitation on the effect of over-stirring a waffle batter!

Loosen up your tongue and relax the throat. Use your lips to form the words. Don't slight the "t" on kept or the "d" on found. A study of the speech of others will be a great help in analyzing and improving your own.

Does your voice transmit your personality to others?