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Modern Coeds Expand College Budgets

Mary Ann McDonnell
Iowa State College

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Modern Coeds

Expand College Budgets



Today's college woman spends more money than her mother did, Mary Ann McDonnell reports.

MO^TH^ER was a lady, but statistics show she was a less-expensive lady to clothe and educate than her college daughter. Compared with the Iowa State coed of today, whose clothes allowance is not included in the minimum cost of between \$600-\$700 per college year, she tabulated the check stubs of a year in college at \$350-\$375. This allowance included wardrobe expenses.

A graduate of 1918, Mrs. Helen Kane Kelleher, Winterset, reported staying within this budget during her freshman year. Mrs. Margaret McCarty Meyer, '24, Davenport, spent many of her social hours in her only suit—an \$80 outfit whose quality made up for lack of variety.

The days of the cake-walk and the cloche hat following the first World War were not as profitable as the current era of jitterbugging and convertibles. Daddy may have had a car—a mobilized tin can—but Mother rarely could have sported a different costume each night of the weekend. Thirty years ago, according to Mrs. Kelleher, she and her classmates trod the campus attired in white middie blouses and straight-cut wool skirts or in one-piece wool dresses. Today her daughters, Joan and Mary Anne, Mrs. Meyer's daughter, Joyce, and their classmates enliven the campus scene wearing gay plaid skirts, sweaters of all shades and hues, tailored suits with sheer marquisette blouses and wool or gabardine dresses.

Mother had never heard of changing costume from day to day. In fact, daughter was in the early grades when this idea sprang up to join the rank of fashion musts. No one had more than two suits and only the better dressed women had any. Afternoon dresses usually numbered two then. Mother did take the lead over the modern college woman in one respect—she had at least one hat, and wore it to class in the winter.

AN^OT^HE^R alumna, Dr. Margaret Sloss, '23, assistant professor of veterinary pathology, commented on the difference between the number of formals deemed necessary 25 years ago and now. Con-

trasting with today's average of about 3, Dr. Sloss said that she and most of her friends had only one for each season.

A glance at our typical coed of today shows that she is smart, well-dressed and certainly at no loss for variety in her costume. Perhaps the record number of sweaters is owned by Marilyn Nuss, who has 22. Miss Nuss has seven suits, one more than Jewel Bartter. Nearer to the median are the sweater drawers of Helen Woods and Barbara Bates, who have 10. Twelve dresses compete for room in the closet of Betty Neilsen while Marion Miller and Lauretta Schenker lay claim to 5 and 10 formals, respectively. Most college women have two winter coats—one for classes and one for dress occasions. The dress coat as frequently as not may be a soft, durable mouton lamb fur. Although we have no figures on the comparative number of fur coats of now and 25 years ago, it's safe to assume the mouton lamb coats of today outnumber the famous raccoon coats of the "rah-rah" era by a comfortable margin.

PURSES and hats are in abundance during this cycle of the fashion wheel. Most coeds average two or three, but one senior owns nine hats.

Lipstick used to be a mark of brazenness, according to Dr. Sloss. Cosmetics, outside the use of powder, were not common. Today, the college woman makes a substantial contribution to the annual United States cosmetic expenditure, which ranks as one of the nation's five biggest industries. Jean Doty was given an outfitted set of makeup which includes liquid and cream bases, astringents, several lipstick shades, face powder for daytime and evening wear, jars of night cream, day cream, soil adsorbing cream, night emollient cream, complexion cream, dressing cream, blushing cream, suntan and cucumber cream, eye makeup, hand lotions and face packs.

Mother had her charm—didn't Dad marry her? But it was tremendously less expensive. Her daughter spends more, but her extravagance may be largely attributed to the current period of prosperity which enables her to earn money on her own.

When the snap shots of today's coed have mellowed with age in the family album, perhaps her children will look with surprise at the modest wardrobes of 1947.