

1960

## An Experience in Education

Helen Rank

*Iowa State University*

Follow this and additional works at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker>



Part of the [Home Economics Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Rank, Helen (1960) "An Experience in Education," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 40 : No. 4 , Article 5.

Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol40/iss4/5>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Homemaker by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact [digirep@iastate.edu](mailto:digirep@iastate.edu).

# An Experience in Education

by Helen Rank, H. Ed. 4

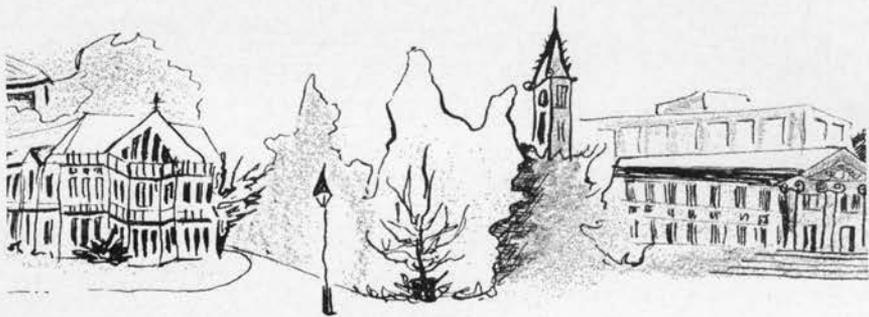
"Where ye going miss?"

"71 East Ferry Avenue please, sir."

"East Ferry Avenue, eh? 'Air ye sure? I tain't believe there is such."

And so was my introduction to Detroit, Michigan, the home of Merrill-Palmer, where I was to study human development and family life spring quarter. At first, I was quite taken back because for months I had been corresponding with 71 East Ferry Avenue, and now the cab driver informed me that there was no such place. However, we compromised, went to the street he called West Avenue, and there I found the old buildings that were to be my home for the next three months. With laden hands and arms, I rang the door bell at my pre-assigned residence, No. 70. I was greeted with a flurry of warmth and hustle and led to Cupalo 4, the four-girl room on third floor where I would hang my hat.

By the second week on campus, people were beginning to fall into personalities and I had drawn myself a "motating map". The campus at Merrill-Palmer is exceedingly small — arise at 8:55 for nine o'clock classes and get there on time! But I had the curiosity bug so I drew Merrill-Palmer as the center of my world with arrows and directions pointing to the Detroit Institute of Art, the Detroit Public Library, the Children's Museum and Wayne State University campus. All these cultural areas were within a stone's throw of Merrill-Palmer and I became the school's best rock-skipper.



Our classes were small and very informal. The time was spent discussing the readings on various topics done prior to class. Each girl undergraduate was required to take the core class for eight hours of credit. This class study program was determined by the members. My core class delved into the social deviates resulting from our pressured society and the relative minor role now played by the family group.

The other required course was a laboratory for a community service job. I chose the school age laboratory, therefore transforming myself into a girls' (13-14 years of age) club leader. I was responsible for the activity of eleven adolescents, two hours a week in a housing center of lower middle income families. The path sometimes had brambles and cockleburrs, but most of the time we were on even ground, and I gleaned much knowledge of human behavior.

Religion and culture was the only class resembling a lecture period, and it became the center of heated debates long before the quarter's end.

The living situation at Merrill-Palmer is on the co-operative ba-

sis with all students divided among three houses that were at one time mansions of early wealthy Detroit. One week I was the housekeeper. No house cleaning, just close curtains after dinner and empty ash trays; another week assistant housekeeper, or waitress, or assistant food manager, food manager, dishwiper or week-end dishwasher. These duties took little time, helped me become better acquainted with fellow house dwellers and reduced the living expenses.

When a person unacquainted with the school life asks a Merrill-Palmer student to tell of her experiences there, what it was like and what she did, the Merrill-Palmerite can only sigh and with a dreamy look in her eye say, "It was wonderful, simply wonderful." Basic things, such as hours, classes and living conditions, can be explained in everyday language making communication possible. But the enthralling aspect of Merrill-Palmer is found and gained in the real-life human relationships one finds. These cannot be explained in words, for they are emotions based on memories.

Ah yes, it was simply wonderful.