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Home Economics for Homemakers

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HOMEMAKING is an excellent example of "science with practice." Is home economics training in college an asset to women who choose homemaking for their careers? Seven homemakers who studied home economics at Iowa State were questioned on the subject. All were whole-heartedly in favor of home economics training as a preparation for homemaking.

Four of these homemakers held positions before marriage. They found that their college training added to efficiency in the use of time, energy and money. It gave them ideas and valuable sources of information. One homemaker suggested that the college girl needs to get from her courses, "visions, understandings and a sense of proportion."

But specifically, how has college training helped these homemakers? All agree that it has helped in entertaining by adding to ease and enjoyment. It has aided in family relationships. In home furnishing they have found training helpful in making the home an appropriate background for the family personality, and in remodeling and rebuilding.

In several cases homemakers stated that their training had raised their standards of an ideal home. "The successful home," according to one homemaker, "is a versatile home, an elastic home ready to shift and change with the shifting needs of the members in it. The successful homemaker must be ever on the watch for these changes, for it is she who must make the changes in the home, quietly and often unobserved so that each member of her family has an opportunity to develop as an individual."

It was almost unanimously agreed that meal planning in the home had been easier because of home economics work. Only one homemaker stated that she had received no help in the technique of preparing food. All said that college work in clothing construction and selection had been worth-while. This training enabled them to better judge materials, make over garments and buy wisely.

Four stated that they enjoy homemaking more since studying it in college.

The list of subjects which homemakers found helpful to them includes almost all home economics courses. Those most often mentioned were meal planning, foods and home management.

Several mothers feel that they have been able to make more pleasant homes for their children because of their home economics training. One mother of two teen-age daughters says, "My home economics course has proven a very valuable foundation for all my tasks as a homemaker." She has been able to keep her daughters interested in the home. "They both make all their school clothes and are very good cooks."

This same homemaker says, "Whether a girl expects to teach or not, the very best investment she can make is to take a course in home economics and she will have a foundation for a full, well-rounded life and be an asset to her community and her country."

"What's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander." Therefore the husbands of these Iowa State trained wives were given an opportunity to express their opinions on this subject of college training for homemakers.

They were unanimous in thanking their lucky stars that their wives had studied home economics in college (or they secretly patted themselves on the back for having the good sense to fall in love with a home economics major). One husband is glad that his wife had home economics training, but feels that the course could be more practical. "My wife is a darn good cook, better than my mother or hers, but she didn't learn this in college. I was in the same class as a guinea pig the first years we were married. The foundation of such training in college undoubtedly had its influence after a great deal of experimentation."

Most of these husbands agreed that their home life was more pleasant because of their wife's home economics training. They gave reasons—"adds to one's comfort as far the aesthetics of the home is concerned"—"a smoother running home"—"higher degree of proficiency—attractive meals, home decoration, the solving of budgeting, marketing and domestic problems."

A number of these men whose wives worked before marriage felt that the experience was valuable because after marriage they more fully realized the advantages of homemaking in comparison to commercial work.

Other husbands said—"I feel that she is better contented, happier, a better homemaker than she would have been without the experience gained from a job. A more rounded knowledge of people, tended to increase mixing ability and the give and take of life. She gained a 'dollar appreciation.' It's hard to beat experience in the commercial field."