

Seven Steps to a Happy Husband

by Joseph Newton

Art by Lou Peters

AMERICAN HOUSEWIVES are being accused—with some justification—of browbeating their husbands. Much of this is just plain nonsense, but our society is becoming geared to female dominance in some areas that used to belong exclusively to men. In such an atmosphere, it's increasingly easy for the wife, perhaps unwittingly, to bite the hand that's feeding her and her family.

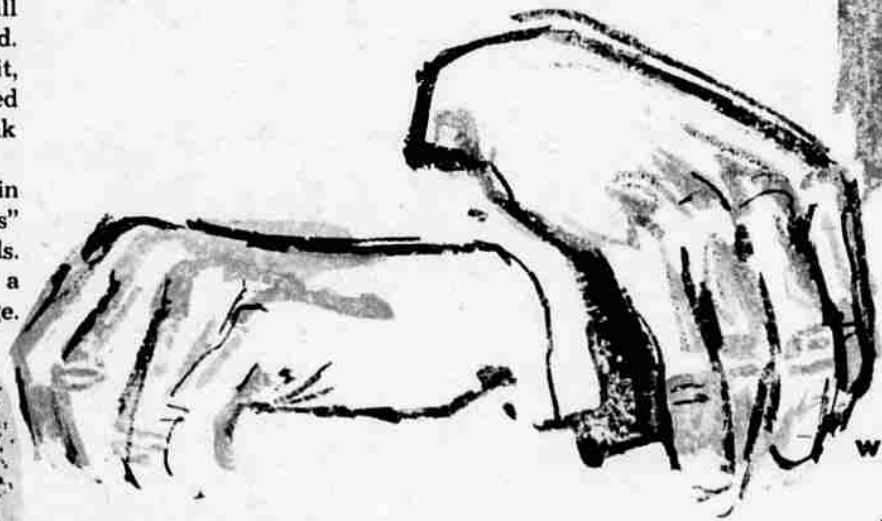
Many times this is unintentional. With young married people especially, it often happens because the wife is caught up by the predominant thinking of the times and hasn't bothered to try understanding her husband. The result is likely to be an unhappy marriage.

How to avoid it? That's easy: don't exploit your husband!

It's a tremendous temptation and usually easy to do. He's handy, frequently adoring, anxious to please—but he can be pushed too far. And when he is, it's sometimes difficult to win back his former affection.

Giving wives the benefit of the doubt, let's assume that often they don't know they're exploiting their husbands. For example, I know one family where, when the children were very small, the wife had a siege of illness and the husband helped out by making the beds before he went to work. The wife has been well for quite some time and the kids are now old enough to handle the job themselves, but the husband still makes the beds. He's being exploited. Sure, he's a simpleton for doing it, but he's an easy-going, good-natured guy who just never bothered to break the familiar old routine.

Is the husband being exploited in your family? Here are seven "don'ts" in the care and feeding of husbands. They comprise a handy guide to a happy husband and a blissful marriage.



1 DON'T ASK HIM TO DO HOUSEWORK. American husbands are the only men in the world who help their wives with housework. Instead of appreciating this fact and accepting the help gratefully, some women look upon it as their right. It isn't.

This doesn't mean that it's wrong for a husband to give his wife a lift around the house when there is some special need for it. But it is wrong for a wife to expect it, or to ask her husband to do her work for her as a matter of daily routine.

2 DON'T BUDGET HIS POCKET MONEY. Nothing gives a man more self-respect than having money in his pocket for which he is accountable to no one but himself.

Not long ago we stopped after a show for a sandwich with some friends. The other couple insisted on separate checks, and when they came, the wife had to dig into her purse for money while her husband stood by, acutely embarrassed. Afterward, they explained lamely that he had "overspent his budget" for that month.

A man should be able to pick up an occasional check, treat himself to a luxury, or lose a few dollars at cards without being made to feel he's a rounder or a spendthrift. Family budgets should be arranged to give the husband a fair amount of financial freedom—if necessary, by providing him with his own checking account. And however it's arranged, his wife shouldn't look over his shoulder at how, when, or why the money is spent.



He was the most wonderful man in the world when you married him; here's how to keep him that way.