

Pity The Poor American Husband—Overworked, Bullied, Criticized And Unprepared

Husbands—No. 1
By HARRY FERGUSON
WASHINGTON (UPI)—No one knows for sure whether the American husband is the world's unhappiest man, but there is no doubt he is the most criticized. Experts in social behavior—amateur and professional, foreign and domestic—keep him constantly under the microscope and describe in millions of words how and why he squirms.

American husband a sucker because of the way he handles his money. In Germany many women can't say for sure how much their husband earns because it isn't considered any of their business. They accept whatever housekeeping money they receive and keep their mouths shut.

Frenchmen cannot understand why Americans work themselves to death to provide things their family doesn't really need. Their most prevalent theory is that the American husband is a sort of voluntary slave—indentured for life to a woman who lashes him periodically with demands for jewelry, expensive clothing and hats she doesn't need. French wives accept as a fact of life that it is possible to cook a meal and dispose of the dishes without the help of enough electric kitchen gadgets to operate a space capsule.

The American male plunges into marriage at an earlier age and with less thought than any man on earth. Every behavior expert who studies the situation notes the increasing number of teen-age marriages, and

the subsequent high divorce rate. Only seven per cent of the American women in their thirties have never been married. Comparable statistics for Great Britain are 18 per cent and for France 28 per cent.

One out of every 4.5 American marriages ends in divorce, the world's highest rate. There is no way to measure the number of men who remain married even though they are unhappy, and, as one philosopher puts it, "leading lives of quiet desperation." Apparently only a small percentage of these men seek the assistance of marriage experts and counselors, and Dr. Paul Popenoe of the American Institute of Family Relations cites the case history of one of them:

"Mr. H said: 'I put in a full day at the factory and by the time I get home about a quarter to six I am glad to lie down and rest. But my wife meets me at the door and tells me the two kids are driving her crazy and will I please take them off her hands? And will I at the same time vacuum the rug, sweep off the front porch and the sidewalk and bring in the clothes from the line as she didn't have time? It turns out she was in the park with the children all afternoon.'"

There was general agreement that husbands should remember birthdays, anniversaries and other "special" days, that husbands should be adept in "adapting themselves to the various moods and changes so typical of women," that wives should be treated after marriage just as they were before.

After marriage, a new set of rules apparently is drawn up in the feminine mind, and Dr. Popenoe tells the results of a survey among women in Columbus, Ohio, on what the ideal husband should do. Some of them:

"Tell interesting things about his work. Do thoughtful things the wife does not expect him to do. Sense when his wife wants affection and when she doesn't. Clean out the bathtub and wash basin after using them. Appreciate and praise new dishes the wife prepares. Know how to pull the wife out of the dumps when she gets into them. Always telephone when he is going to be late in dinner. Never talk about his former girl friends. Enjoy reading and discussing good books with his wife."

Next: Nagging wives and what they do to marriages.

There are 48 covered bridges still in use in Lane County, Ore.

Mexican Engineers Study Deepest, Fastest Subway

MEXICO CITY (UPI)—Engineers are making serious studies of a proposal which would give Mexico City one of the deepest and fastest subway systems in the world, it was reported today.

The system would operate north-south between the university, San Angel and Villa de Guadalupe and east-west from Lomas to the airport by way of the downtown "Zocalo" (central square).

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