

Married Students Face Problem In Balancing School, Homemaking

By Lucy Lane Riddle

Around the square and beyond it reside as small but significant number of a recent but ever-increasing species of the genus Salemite. I belong to this comparatively new species: I am a married student. Furthermore, I am a young married student. The title of a young married student carries with it (among other things) the stigma of inexperience and the inevitable barrage of questions from every passer-by as we run tardily to class—"How are you getting along?" (or more specifically) "How's the cooking coming along?" "I hear you had a simply tremendous fight last weekend!" or "Tee-hee (pause and a tasteful blush) somebody said you were pregnant! Are you really?"

Not that we resent friendly questions—why just last Saturday (cleaning day you know) as I stood hopelessly entangled among the cords and attachments of my vacuum cleaner, smelling my second apple pie burn cheerfully in the oven, I, too, wondered how I was doing. I thought consolingly of my colleagues and wondered how they were doing about now, also.

The biggest problem most of us have in keeping house and going to school seems to be the 24-hour day. As Olivia Sowers says "the clock is my worst enemy!" Dean Major Clifford and I share the crucial problem of getting to class on time, as our professors can readily witness!

There is one professional among us, Nancy Lytle Hutchins, who has been married for 18 months. However, much to our comfort (I think) Nancy says she still finds it difficult to fit all the things she is supposed to do into one day.

Part of her problem might be that she is a music student carrying a mere 18 hours, along with practice hours. Nancy and Jeanie Turner Blackwood, another music student, sometimes find themselves not getting home until six o'clock or later. This doesn't provide a tremendous number of study hours after supper!

Nancy and Jeanie have a second characteristic in common which complicates their evening study period—their husbands are working men who love to come home to relax with the television or a movie. Nancy and Jeanie try to get most of their studying done during the day!

Barbara Harrington Williams also has a husband who works and she says she can't always finish her studying at school. When big tests come up, she has to retire to the kitchen or the den to study in order to get away from Butch and his television programs!

The rest of us, Dean, Olivia and I have student husbands. Fred and Jimmy are at Wake Forest and Phillip at Bowman Gray. Ted, Nancy's husband, plans to return to school after Nancy finishes. Therefore, we don't have any money, but at least our husbands have to study with us. This is very good for us because we never finish our studying at school.

The second biggest problem of adjusting to marriage and school was for some of us the loss of contact with dormitory life. Dean expressed it as a feeling of being removed from things that happen on campus—a lack of communication that came with the transition from a boarding student to a day student. As Barbara Ann said, "You just can't keep up with all the gossip." Nancy, who boarded her freshman year, said she felt she didn't see as many people as she did when in the dormitory. Spare moments find us dashing into the nearest junior or senior dorm to catch up on the latest doings.

When asked what part of house-keeping we liked best, most of the

"young marrieds" answered cooking. All of us, except Nancy and me, had had some experience in cooking. Dean practiced during the summer; Jeanie and Olivia already knew how. However, Olivia really had a letdown because she found that "the story about brides' cooking was true. Everything I cooked for the first six weeks wasn't really worth eating." In the meantime, Dean holds a full time job in the Salem library, and I work rather erratically for the English department.

Barbara Ann had the biggest head start, however, because she is a home economics major. Barbara Ann said that she didn't think it took her as long to adjust, because living in the Home Management House last semester helped me immensely. The things I learned about buying groceries for a week's period and budgeting my time have been invaluable to me!

How much do our husbands help us? Olivia's Phillip, after recovering from his six-weeks experience with mild malnutrition, got into the spirit of decorating their apartment. Olivia says that Phillip really has some good ideas and is quite a fine carpenter around the house! Butch helps Barbara Ann get the clothes washed at the laundrette and even accompanies her to the grocery store sometimes. Jimmy and Fred are wonderful about doing the dishes when their dear wives are in a big rush.

Our connections with campus activities vary. Jeanie and Nancy are restricted by necessity to music

activities. Jeanie does student accompanying for student recitals and works with her church choir. Nancy sings in the choral ensemble, tutors a student in music theory, and has two voice students. Both these girls attend all concerts and recitals held in connection with Salem. Barbara Ann finds that due to home economic labs she must limit her outside activities to home ec. and SNEA activities.

Olivia is not only new to marriage and housekeeping, but also to Salem. She finds time along with the full schedule for auditing choral ensemble and getting to know her fellow Salemites: "I thought it would be hard to get to know the girls but they have all been so friendly and nice!"

Somewhere in the middle of all our rushing around we manage to get home to our husband and supper and dishes and small moments of warm happiness that come from being together. However, we sometimes get home just in time for moments of panic as Dean did the Sunday evening she transferred her membership from the Methodist to the Baptist Church.

Fred calmly informed her, as her hair dripped water into her face, that Mrs. Clifford and one of her friends had come down to see the service as a surprise. Little did they know how much of a surprise they were! In 45 minutes Dean had raced home, swept all three rooms, made cookies, shoved books and clothes into the nearest closet, and answered the door smiling, but breathless, to greet her new mother-in-law!

Olivia and Phillip have a hysterical experience to match that one, however. Last weekend they went to the woods to steal their Christmas tree and they were so excited because it was their first Christmas tree. They kept turning down smaller and smaller roads somewhere on the outskirts of Winston-Salem in order not to be noticed. Finally they found an area on a small road with beautiful trees.

Phillip dropped his saw when he spied a frowning farmer coming, and the two thieves put on their most innocent expressions. After the farmer had driven slowly by, Phillip yanked the tree up by the roots and raced across the field with Olivia close behind. However, Olivia lost her shoe and was almost left behind for the farmer!! But the adventure ended happily with a beautifully decorated Christmas tree and one muddy shoe—and now vacation . . .



Phillip and Olivia Sowers wrap Christmas presents—a part of their first Christmas together.

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