

# Rise of Coeds Termed Long, Hard Struggle

By JACKIE HUDGINS

The rise from bustles to bobby sox has been a long, hard struggle for coeds at the University. Since the first woman was graduated in 1872, the rules of decorum have been streamlined as sleekly as fashions.

In 1871-72 when the first six women were admitted to the then agricultural college, 16 years after its founding, few things were considered more hazardous than a coed. Many 'authorities' said:

"The standards of scholarship would be lowered by the supposedly inferior quality of women's minds."

And then, of course, there was the burning but unmentionable problem of just how having men and women together in the same classes would affect the moral behavior at the school.

Mrs. Ellen A. Cop, Wisconsin native, is credited with being the first registered woman student and recalls that while the professors were very kind and considerate, the male students did not at first favor the innovation. However, she relates, when Rev. Francis A. Robinson, professor of mathematics and civil engineering brought his charming daughter of seventeen, the attitude of the men changed and the women's department became very popular.

Rebecca Hanna Ewing of Angola, Ind., was the first graduate. She received her diploma in 1873.

## Housed in Old Main

In the early days women were housed in Old Main, then a six story stone structure which also housed the men and the administrative offices. Regulations were as strong as the building itself and women were strictly forbidden to communicate out of the window or by means of the pipes.

In 1883, men presented requests to call on or to accompany women, and women presented to the Lady Principal their requests to receive or to accompany men in the Ladies Parlor between 6:45 and 7 p.m. daily except Sunday. The Lady Principal chaperoned the parlor dates and saw that the couples said goodnight at 10:45 p.m. Saturday, 8 p.m. Sunday, and 9 p.m. weekdays. Men needed written permission from the College President to accompany women beyond the building door.

## Women Advance

In 1888 a woman was selected associate editor of the student newspaper, Free Lance, predecessor to the Daily Collegian.

At chapel service, coeds sat on one side of the hall and men on the other. After the services, an early student writes, the men would scramble to the women's exit to wait for the first coed to come out and make a date to take them to the next literary society meeting, one of the approved social events. Discreet and well chaperoned parties between the students were even permitted openly now and a photograph of college activities in 1898 shows sailor-hatted coeds and their high collared fellow students hammock-swinging on the front porch of the president's house.

## Dances Allowed

With the advent of the nineties, Penn State followed the trend toward gaiety and, at specially designated and appropriately chaperoned places, students were permitted to dance. It wasn't until 1923 that seniors could walk off campus during the week and all coeds could walk in town unchaperoned on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday evenings.

Domestic Economy (now Home Economics) was introduced in 1891. Organized gym classes began in 1893 and for their old-fashioned pushups, the coeds donned heavy blue serge bloomers, middie blouses, black stockings, and white tennis shoes.

Studying in 1883 was strictly

## Future Homemakers?



COEDS OF THE early 1900's learn the arts of cooking during home economics classes. More than half of the women enrolled in the University then majored in home ec. Today coeds enjoy modern conveniences which make cooking simpler.

regulated by the faculty. Young women could not study in the parlor, visit, or receive visitors in the parlor or elsewhere, during study hours. Violation of rules were treated like absences from recitations of public exercises. If a coed met visitors or communicated via window or steam pipe she received 50 censure marks and an official admonition from the Lady Principal who also notified her parents.

## Fashion Musts

Amid all these strict regulations were just as severe fashion musts. "All the coeds" wore medium length skirts, full tailored blouses, knee socks, and little tailored hats.

May Day exercises were organized in 1914 and women first appeared in Players dramatic productions in 1920. Thespians, another dramatic organization, barred them until 1926 except for a brief time during 1918 when there was a shortage of men.

Women's Student Government began in 1915 altering some of the

strict regulations when the faculty ceased making rules. Coeds were allowed to dine at fraternity houses if a chaperone were present.

In 1919 women students bought out all the "flats" in town. French heeled shoes became strictly taboo for the modern coed.

## Organize Debate

The first women's debating team was organized in 1926 and in 1935 an unprecedented precedent was set when Dorothy Anderson '35 was allowed to play on the varsity tennis team. In 1937 women organized their own newspaper, the Co-Editor.

The Second World War clinched the establishment of women's rights at the University. During the war years, when men students were scarce, the Collegian had its first woman editor, as did the Penn State Engineer. Coed enrollment rose from the original six to an all time high of 2300.

Throughout the decades, women students have been looked after

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## Stew Compensated For Rough Life

Maybe life was a little wild and woolly for the boys in the early days of the University, but it also had its compensations—one of them being a culinary discovery called "The Allegheny Stew."

The recipe for this famous dish popular on hunting trips was first recorded in 1869 by President Thomas Henry Burrowes. It was

designed to satisfy the appetites of 20 to 25 men after a day of hunting in the mountains.

The 1869 recipe read:

"Take one old-fashioned iron pot with handle. Swing same over a good fire. Then put in it in the following order and at the proper intervals:

"Eight quarts of water.

"Six medium sized turnips, pared and cut small.

"Three pheasants, cut into the usual portions.

"Six squirrels.

"Twelve Partridges

"Twelve partridges, wood-cock, or other small game, cut into quarters or less.

"Two pounds of cold roast beef, cut small.

"Two pounds of the fat end of ham, or of good bacon, cut small.

"Four middle sized onions, cut small.

"Add butter, pepper, and salt to taste.

"Just before dishing, add a dozen of large cold boiled potatoes, cut small. When these are heated, but before they become mashed, dish.

Venison Improves

"Note: If venison be on hand, it is supposed that its substitution for cold roast beef would be an improvement; also the addition of a couple dozen mushrooms, if on hand; and if cold potatoes be absent, the raw tubers pared, cut small and put in long enough to boil and not mash, will answer.

"If gunner ever tasted anything better than this in the woods, we would like to have share of it. It was good enough for our mess, so good that nothing was left of it, but the memory of a first-rate stew—hot, savory, and satisfying."

One of the pleasantest parties this term was given by Professor and Mrs. Reber, in their rooms on second floor, from eight to ten o'clock P.M., Saturday eve, November 24th. Among those invited were all the members of the Senior Class, and all the ladies rooming in the college building. All present expressed themselves as having had an enjoyable time and being sorry they had to leave when the ten P.M. bell rang.

On Thanksgiving eve Misses Nellie and Mary Patterson, entertained quite a number of their classmates at their sunnyside home.

A number of the ladies of the village have organized, called the "Young Ladies of the Village," semi-monthly sociables, phantom parties, taffy pull, etc., which are held at different residences. The first of these was a phantom party, given at Miss Mary Foster's, to which many elite gossamer were invited. After an hour and a half of merry making between the incognito, the ghostly robes were laid aside and the masks removed, and all breathed more freely. Several hours more were pleasantly spent in dancing and various games. All were delighted with the excellent time, and think the organization a worthy one.

The second sociable, a taffy pull, was given by the "Young Ladies of the Village" at "Thrifty." Here many of the youth were taught by their fairer companion how to make good taffy. Choice selections were rendered on the piano, dancing, progressive euchre, and the singing of songs, kept the party merry until a late hour. In progressive euchre, B. Demming took the prize. The sociable was a decided success.

Evan Pugh, University President from 1859 to 1864, died at the age of 36.

The first LaVie, published in 1890, had 129 pages and measured 8½ by 7½ inches.

Cost per student, it was pointed out, has been on the rise ever since the end of World War II. It reached an astronomical \$707 in 1944-45, but only because that school year consisted of three semesters instead of the traditional two.

Indirect expenses, such as physical plant maintenance and operations, library services, insurance and general administration expenses, are embraced in this figure.

Education Costs

\$586 per Student

It cost the University a record-breaking \$586 to provide resident instruction for each of 12,000 students during the 1952-53 school year.

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## Congratulations . . .

P. S. U. 1855-1955

Some other names to remember are . . .

Keepsake Diamond Rings

Hamilton and Bulova Watches

and

B. P. Moyer—Jeweler

Serving Penn State students for five years.

**JACK'S  
BARBER SHOP**

Pugh St.

**In 2055 . . .**

**Penn State women will outnumber the men . . .**

**All exams will be abolished . . .**

**And Kaye's great-grandson will have everything for . . .**

**A Complete Meal or Quick Snack Redi-to-Eat**

**KAYE'S  
KORNER**

The Post Office is Just Opposite Us