



A SCHOOLGIRL'S BIGGEST PROBLEMS

The Korean war has had its heaviest impact on college men, but the more than 760,000 American girls now in colleges also face an insecure future. How are they planning for it? Has cold-war tension meant a lowering of moral standards? Or pessimism about marriage, family,

Quick

January 19,

1953

* p. 22 *

career? To find out, QUICK queried women students and officials on leading U. S. college campuses. Here are the results:

BENNINGTON COLLEGE, Bennington, Vt. At first, Korea brought a sense of disaster to girls on this campus, but no longer. The fact that world tensions are a normal part of life, said one faculty member, "is being faced coolly and intelligently here." What still hits students hardest is "when the young man at the top of the list goes off to military training or to Korea." But a more widespread concern springs from the desire for independence—the problem of breaking away from home cleanly, but without hurt.

MT. HOLYOKE COLLEGE, South Hadley, Mass. "Count on a less secure future life, but don't moan about it" is the general opinion here. Grades have improved, possibly

because the students expect to need good post-graduate jobs. ("We may have to wait several years before marrying because of the draft." . . . "We may have to support a family later.") A husband and a job are not thought of separately, but as a combination for greater security. Some Holyoke girls think their families are too protective, "particularly when we see boys our age at war." Others worry over how the rising cost of their education will pinch parents' finances, and whether they're getting full benefit from it.



SARAH LAWRENCE, Bronxville, N. Y. In some ways, Sarah Lawrence girls sound more serious, more interested in philosophy, religion, psychology and literature. "Many students," said one, "shy away from controversial topics," but the pessimistic "tomorrow-we-die" atmosphere is not as widespread as adults may think. There is now more interest in dating and early marriage (tied to a career). Their biggest problem: "to marry a man who will recognize his wife as an intellectual equal"; to profit from college opportunities—which won't occur again.

MILLS COLLEGE, Oakland, Cal. A college official here believes that the younger generation "has never known 'security' in the old-fashioned sense." Security, to them, is to be prepared to meet any urgency of life and to maintain self-respect whether things go well or badly. Chief long-range problem: "preparation for getting and keeping a job, a husband, or both, and preparation to live a well-rounded life." More immediate aim: to become economically independent.



TEXAS U., Austin. In the eyes of one Texas coed, "the average college girl knows nothing of world affairs unless

The College Girl's Problems

These were most frequently mentioned in replies:

1. Getting married
2. Finding independence
3. Getting the most out of college
4. Choosing a job
5. Social life (not directly connected with marriage)
6. Cost of college education

she's taking a modern history course." Social life, she adds, "is therefore on an even keel." Scholastic averages, said a faculty member, are rising. The age-old coed problems remain the same: balancing time between studies and social life; "keeping boy friends from finding out about each other"; and getting engaged.



WISCONSIN U., Madison. "How can you help but be pessimistic when you hear that the boy you sat next to in high school English was killed in Korea last week?" wrote one coed. Students are

much more serious. As a by-product of unsettled times is the admitted problem of lowered moral standards. Explained one girl: "You're dating a fellow in service, you go to his base to see him, no housemother, no nosy roommates . . . the setting is perfect for things which wouldn't happen in a normal . . . environment."



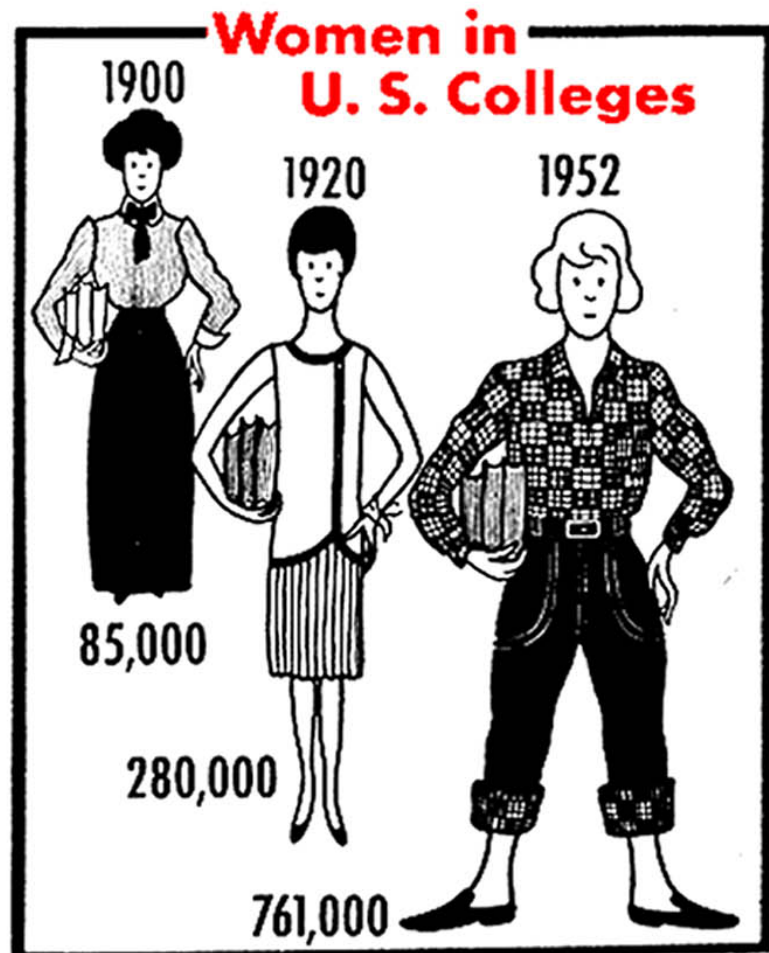
INDIANA U., Bloomington. "We live in a small world of our own that revolves around itself," a senior girl told QUICK. The suggestions "from many sources" that this is a pessimistic generation "have caused some of us to live up to this expectation." The main idea of most of the women here is to combine a career with marriage, though they realize

the hardships of marrying a serviceman now, and the clash between their ideas of women's role ("wife and working girl") and many men's ideal woman ("the perfect homemaker").

OHIO STATE U., Columbus. The most notable change on this campus is that more girls are "going steady." Many freshman girls arrived last fall already "pinned." One reason, according to a coed: "There is some feeling that there won't be enough men to go around and so the drive is toward marriage." But there is little pessimism ("the war hasn't touched us yet"). They worry about becoming independent people ("not a stick of furniture"); and how to use free time so that they'll know something "besides Mickey Spillane."



SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE, Sweet Briar, Va. Casual campus visitors would never notice it, but serious bull sessions tend to reveal a "fatalistic attitude" toward life. The man shortage, however, is becoming acute. So much that, to some students, an early marriage is considered more important than completing their educations. If moral standards have fallen, then part of the blame lies with parents who "are also in a state of unrest and perhaps have neglected their children."



U. S. Office of Education