'The Pretty Girl at the Machine': feminine appearance and workplace identities in British Women's Magazines 1919-1939

Dr Fiona Hackney Associate Professor Falmouth University

Streamlined bodies & modern workers

Men seeking wives, employers looking for workers, mistresses engaging maids - each and all are favorably impressed by good looks, it is undeniable that the plain girl is handicapped.

Home Chat 22.02.1919: 231

Almost every employer realizes that there's more often than not a fundamental connection between neatness of fingernails and neatness of type margins.

Hazel Rawson Cades in *Modern Woman* 03.1930: 27



Fay's work-a-day dress: economy, tips & etiquette



usually smooth out

a hot-air cupboard

pressing is inade-quate, and they

must not be ironed but hung in the steam from a bath-ful of boiling water

GREASED and tumbled clothes, however good, never look really chic. Sedentary workers need to be particularly careful of the backs of their skirts. Often the chair used is responsible for permanent horizontal creases, or, if it is a polished bentwood one, for that dreaded shiny look. Press out the creases, sponge away the shine with diluted ammonia, and provide your chair in future with a soft, thick

WHEN travelling, you may need to wash out handkerchiefs in an hotel room, but have no opportunity to iron them. An easy remedy is to spread the handkerchief, when wet, smoothly over your mirror, pressing it out quite flat against the glass. If left in this position it will be quite smooth and ironed-looking when

when hung near the fire for a time or in

AND MAKE

SIVEN AWAY WITH THIS WEEK'S "MODERN"

A FREE PATTERN OF

FAY'S WORK-A-DAY DRESS-

THE perfect little office frock which would look adorable made up in a fine speckled tweed, with crisp white collar finished with a decorative bow. You simply must make it up for the Autumn and Winter days ahead!

ETIQUETTE.

A Dumness life a girl, must not expect the little courtesies which she regards as her right out of the office. Most employers are too busy and too preoccupied to retrieve a fallen notebook or open the door for a junior in the office, regardless of her sex.

THERE also begins in this same bright number a magnificent new serial story by MARGARET CULKIN BANNING entitled:

"PARTIES."

"PARTIES" is a novel of modern life as lived by "the bright young people."

> "MODERN" can be bought where. Price 2d. with p

DO YOU CARRY YOURSELF WELL STRANGE to say, while all women long to





THE SECRET

Care of WOMAN'S WEEKLY

THE NEWCOMER IN AN OFFICE. WHEN a newcomer appears

W in an office the other employees should introduce themselves and show her the run of the office."

WOMAN'S WEEKLY

ETIQUETTE.

Don't wait until she asks your help; it is much more courteous to give it, straight-



WATERCRESS CLEARS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

ETIQUETTE.

IN AN OFFICE.

THE NEWCOMER

employees should introduce themselves and show her the run of the office."

Don't wait until she ask WASHING GREASY HAIR. P.—Wash it with hot water

Chats on careers: 1919



frequently,

WHEN PHOTOGRAPHING
CHILDREN.
DATIENCE is openial when plate
graphing hidren. The woman whote

about the business, it can be well see!

phononemon, responsional contration and contration



orders. If orders are not forthcoming a been must use tack and discretion, plus persuasive eloquence, to secure them been controlled to the controlled must wait for hours white the buyler conner back, words and forwards, engaged all the time as he is upon sundry business.

There is searely a day inteed in whell to hely commercial upon work of this kind finds set is not forced to ant out soon of

part of her programme. Perhaps she may return later in the week. Or she may collect some of her orders by correspond-



IN A TURKISH BATH.



THE MAKING OF A MANNEOUIN

WOMAN'S WEEKLY

Every Week: A Selection From a Popular Song Hit-Inside. Don't Miss Our Every Tuesday

This remarkable series has been

specially written for the girl who has had no especial training.

A MAN IS RESPONSIBLE!

MAN is responsible for this week's article in this helpful series. When ashed what he thought was a good coreer for girls in the present day, he promptly replied—Well, you must turn to page 335 to sechat he suggested. There is a chair about a different conserver you would be part and series and the support of the series of the present out for a new position. :: :: ::

THE LADY COMMERCIAL.

orders. If orders are not forthcoming,

A PRODUCT of the war, the lady commercial axidil to be found on the road. There are not an enormous number of lady travellers, but it is very possible that the the family on the programme for the following days in the future women may Ceasify and A LONDON traveller will probable.

business & bachelor girls: single women, work & marriage 1920s



October 26th, 1929.

BACHELOR GIRL SPEAKS HER MIND TO HUSBA



to the extent of glancing up, but contents herself with a mumbled "M'm I" and goes on

The World's Worst

Everything 1 AND did you ever

fiancée suggested he

should carry her coat, book, or anything else

she'd had enough of

yanking around 1

Want To Marry!

Looking around at your married friends you might think that marriage carried with it the glorious privilege of being

Never | Not on your life !

Why, there was often a pretty little struggle as to who should have the privilege of carrying

as to who should have the privilege of carrying the beastly unwanted coat or book—the man, of course, being an easy winner. Just you ask John these days to carry the coat that's grown too hot and heavy. You'll learn in a few bright, teres sentences that you're positively the world's worst everything. That positively the world's worst everything. anybody, anybody but you, would have known you wouldn't need the beastly coat, and now you wouldn't need the beastly coat, and now of course, the something, something walk is going to be spoiled, and it's a proper something walk is going to be spoiled, and it's a progressive something to be spoiled, anyhow, and you do think it's a pity one ever set out on it, and you wow most passionately you'll never, never do it again.

And would you, friend John, before marriage.

And would you, friend join, before matriage mysteriously conferred upon you the privilege of being detestably rude and hurtful, have ridiculed and laughed at Eve's efforts at golf or Bridge, or anything else she was heroically trying her inept hand at in an effort to keep pace

with you? You know you wouldn't!

The Sentries of Life!

AND you, Eve, would you in the old days have taken all John's little attentions for granted, without so much as a "thank you," as you do now? You know you wouldn't.

That sort of thing's bringing life down to a

pretty cheap level.
And that's the sort of
thing that puts the onlooker off marriage. Little everyday courtesies are a

protection. They are the sentries that guard the beautiful things of life. None of us is big enough, great enough, strong enough, to be able to do without them and keep-love!

The Robin

I SAW a robin hopping on
The grass, to-day;
His beady eyes looked up at me,
In such a way

That I forgot the winds of March, And winter weather! The robin and the spring and I

The robin and the spring and I,
All felt like humming,
It was as if, throughout the world,
New faith were coming!

New faith and April—ah, they wait Each year to greet us, To tell us that no winter world Can quite defeat us!

MARGARET SANGSTER

п п



Jazz Pochette

MATERIAL REQUIRED.

† yard cancos, 12 inches wide.

† yard silk for lining.

A wool needle.

1 skein each 0 3 different purples,
black, white, dark grey wools
(1d. each).

2 skein each grey wool.

2 skein each grey wool.

CUT off the selvedges of the canvas and turn it down about four threads all round. Work to three and the total stitch with black and white wools, working the same stitch over four threads of the canvas all along to make a stripe of satin stitches. This stripe consists of about 15 white satin stitches, 15 black, 15 white, and so on, giving the appearance of short bars.

short has possed to the same way, but instead of regular bars of black and white, work bars of varying length in the other colours using more of the light grey wood than the bright purples. When the sarvas is filled in, line with silk, press thoroughly, the same work of the same work of the same with the same work of the same way to be same work of the same wor

THAT JOB YOU DON'T LIKE

Stick It Without Grumbling-You'll Reap Your



But I happen
to know that
she gets a very
good salary. So
good, indeed, that she will be a long time
finding another job where she will get
as much, unless the adds to her qualifications—which she doesn't want to do. might not have anything better than you—but they are probably making a better job of it.

No, she won't take the trouble to work a little harder, and take evening lessons for a time, so that she can move without losing money. And neither will she lose the money.

But what she will do is to make But what she will do is of made everybody miserable with her continual complaints. She grumbles and grouses over her rotten job from morning till night, and really, if she acts at the office like she does at home, I don't wonder that they are uncivil to her!

Of course you will say that if her job is so unbearable, surely it is worth while, losing a little of the money to get a job, where she would be happier?

MONEY OR HAPPINESS

WHICH means most, money or happi-Doris has decided that money matters more than anything else, and now she cries because she can't have her

cake and eat it. too. Well, who can?

Perhaps she must have the money, you say. Perhaps so, but if she looks matters in the face and realises that she

can't do without it, why, then she must accept other drawbacks. Other girls get comfortable jobs, at

Don't you believe it! Nobody finds that working for a living is a sunshiny and and made very interesting— and the com-pensations can be counted.

Every job can teach you something. Whether it is the loathsome invoicing at Blank's or the troublesome books as Smith's, you are steadily learning, and being fitted for something better.

But if you are going to whine about it you won't learn. You will only be a nuisance with a slack mind and an

STICK IT-WITHOUT GRUMBLING

IT will make a wonderful difference to your mental muscles if you tackle that job you don't like, and hang on to it until you are master. The next job will be easier, and your mind will be more

All through life you are going to meet jobs that you don't like. Even when you are married, and safely through the magic gateway, you will find those tiresome jobs cropping up.

When it rains, and the clothes simply won't dry. When Jack comes home early with a bad cold. When you have a wretched headache, and the sweep is due at ten o'clock, and the "char" doesn't urn up.

Well, what about it?

You can't run away from the disagree-able jobs all your life, you know. What about sticking that one you've got?

Believe me, you'll reap your reward when the better one comes along.



GREEDY!

VOUNG Jimmie Doodle's very bad : His thumb he always sucks, And in the park he eats the bread We've brought to feed the ducks !

feed your nerves: neurasthenia & the perils of modern life

November 23rd, 1929.

THE BUSINESS GIRL SHOULD ASK HERSELF THIS QUESTION VERY SERIOUSLY-

"Have You a Safety Valve?"

Nothing is truer than the familar proverb, " All work and no play"—but the wise person will happily combine both.

IF we "humans" only realised the importance of having a safety valve—not one of us would be foolish enough to try to live without

one.

How many tragedies are due to the fact that people go on, and on, with their own particular job, never slackening—ignoring life and its interests. They rush and hurry—let their work absorb them until sooner or later the inevitable happens. The pressure of the incessant "sameness" becomes unbearable and they "crack up" under it.

These are many business started out with tremendous



girls who have hope of making a huge success of their jobs. They sacrifice all to become "Efficient with a capital E," and they usually annihilate the very object they set out toaccomplish.

They live in the office, they carry it with them wherever they go, forgett-ing that to work well they must be FIT-and to be fit there must be time for play as well as for

If they won't learn this early they'll find that Nature has taken her revenge-ravaged complexions, fretful nerves, and loss of friends who won't bother with them because they have become "difficult."

Tied to their Houses.

MOST of us know housewives who have tied themselves to their houses to the exclusion of everything else. They become neurotic. Husbands and children seem to be growing away from them, because they have



They rush and hurry and let their work absorb them until sooner or later the inevitable happens. give to h e m. Then they wake up to the fact they are the most un-

happy of mortals. Some women, when they realise the prison they have made for themselves, try to escape by running away from their duties. One wife I know left her husband who adored her. Writing to him, she said: "I cannot face the hundred-and-one tasks a woman has to do in the

We women are such extremists. We are either house-bound or we neglect our homes. When we marry we are so enthusiastic about our home-it's so fresh, dainty, and new-there are so many little pleasant tasks to attend to that we can't tear ourselves away from them.

We see a neighbour passing by our window, smartly dressed, full of the joy of life—and we think: "Well, Mrs. Brown can't be looking after her home properly or she'd have no time to be gadding about as she does."

After the First Thrill.

LATER on, when the house begins to lose to staying in that we feel we cannot get out; we have made prisoners of ourselves ! Mrs. Brown bright and cheerful, and we think with bitterness: "Ah, yes! Mrs. Brown must have more money than we have or she couldn't dress so well and go out as often as she does."
The real fact is that Mrs. Brown hasn't allowed

herself to forget that keeping a house doesn't nerself to lorger that keeping a noise doesn't mean losing all sense of proportion. The wise and happy ones of life are those who arrange their time so that play as well as work has its place. If we only remember that, our jobs will not suffer, but rather improve, and, what's more—we'll gain health as well as keep youth.

For just as the business girl must look to her appearance and preserve her freshness if she would make a success of her job, so should the housewife keep her life balanced by help of a safety valve, if she would keep that first-year thrill of her home, her husband happy, and her-

Feed your Nerves & Forget them

and ragged the cause is simply nerve starvation. The nervous energy you have expended has not been made good by sufficient restorative material.

That material can only be obtained from food. The ordinary daily dietary does not contain sufficient of the nourishment which rebuilds worn nerves and restores lost

From no other source can such a wealth of restorative nourishment be obtained as from delicious "Ovaltine." It is the only food beverage prepared from malt, milk and eggs — Nature's supreme restorative foods.

The egg constituent of "Ovaltine" is specially valuable because it provides lecithin (organic phosphorus)—an essential requirement for building up brain and nerves.

"Ovaltine" is not a mere mix-ture of different ingredients, but an original product manufactured by unique and highly scientific processes which cannot be imitated. The essential food elements "Ovaltine," correctly proportioned in "Ovaltine," and are presented in the form of a delicious, easily digested, and rost economical beverage.

Feed your nerves with the nutri-ment they need and you will no



Restores - Strengthens - Rebuilds Prices in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 1/3, 2/- and 3/9 per tin.



MODERN WOMAN

Don't Starve Yourself of Sleep

PAUL GRINSING gives advice

and adds a solemn warning to

bachelor women

business & bachelor girls: new looks for new consumers: 1930s' advertising

THIS IS JOAN



She works in an office—puts in a pretty stiff day as a rule — doesn't scamp her work—but often scamps her lunch. Mother guesses as much but says nothing. She just makes sure that the evening meal is thoroughly appetising and nourishing. And famished Joan sighs contentedly after the first course—always one of Magzi's Souns.

Joan likes Julienne best—or Oxtail, she's not quite sure which. But whatever she says, her soup plate is empty every evening in the fortnight, which rather shows that she is keen on the whole 14 Varieties.

MAGGI^s SOUPS

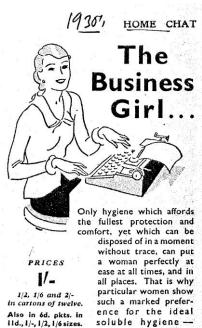
IN 14 VARIETIES, EQUALLY DELICIOUS

Each tablet yields a pint or three large platesful. Magg?'s Soups must be cooked with water only because they already contain the necessary stock and salt.

Price 2d. per Tablet.

MARBER & CO., 17 & 18 Great Pultoney Street, London, W.I.





Please send me samples of SU-CAN Soluble Towels.

assess &d. stamp sufficient if envelope unsealed

NAME.

ADDRESS_

IN BLOCK CAPITALS

To Miss Haynes, 168 Old Street, London, E.C.1



a worldly wisdom

PLAYER'S BACHELOR CIGARETTES

frocks we work in & dressing to your salary: running two jobs

No. 26,525, 9d.

BUST SIZES 34 - 40 inches PATTERNS



No. 25,826, 9d.



36

No. 26,673, 9d.

MODERN WOMAN

beauty on the job: feminising the workplace: self-presentation



were Susans in the world. I've been rather a fool abutting out women the way I have, but three years ago I had a beastly jolt. A girl let me down pretry badly. We—we were going to be married, and someone else came along. More money—more of a woman's man than I am, I

Susan's fingers closed round his.
"I know, David, how you must have suffered.
I've been feeling rather desperate myself for the
last six months. If I hadn't come right away
on this holiday, I—I think I should have died.
Now, I can't think why I went on minding so



The most important factors in getting and keeping jobs are physical well-being, emotional control and sartorial smartness. In other words you must look well, feel well and be well. Hazel Rawson Cades, Modern Woman, 04.1932:

beauty on the job: feminising the workplace: cleanliness & subversion





Pond's Skin Freshener, per Bot., 5/6,



Pond's Cold Cream. After removing the surplus cream—and the impurities which it has brought to the surface from deep down in the pores where soap and water cannot reach - by gently wiping with a Pond's Cleansing Tissue, she braces the skin and closes the pores with Pond's Skin Freshener. Every daytime cleansing she finishes off with Pond's Vanishing Cream, which she also uses before going out = of = doors and whenever she wants to look her best. She finds this cream protects her skin from dust and weather, gives it a beautiful pearly lustre, and makes a reliable base for her powder.

COLD CREAM. CLEANSING TISSUES



"I see you also use Cherry Blossom Boot Polish."

Cherry Blossom Boot Polish





HOME CHAT

modern professionals: suits and permanent dress models



ook out for these LMS and PLAYS "BABY TAKE A BOW,"—Shirley Temple,

Some thrills and many lengts. Charles Russies

its it worth seeing.
"MY OLD DUTCH,"—Excellent British film, pular entertainment and a grand "come back"

ir entertainment and a granu-try Balfour. WENSONG — British film based on the life alba. Evelyn Laye in her best screen part, by secommended to music lovers.

THE SHINING HOUR" (St. James's).—

after a few abortive attempts here for the control of permanent, and the permanent of the control of the contro

MARGERY LAWRENCE the well - known author, tells you why many.

> Professional Women Are **FRUMPS** chosen their own way out of the imfasse by frankly choosing to wear either practically masculine dress, or else a modified version of it, and stick to that year in and year out. There is a good deal to be said for this style. For women who

cover, not then have be best through halfof the control of the except for the control of the c

une awaits long hours spent by Pepys and (reds) and the property of the proper

MODERN WOMAN

of looks and her busy life

problem comits of witching precisally
invariably to severe shock for out-door
work, which saves the bother of 'matching''; having a good draw that suits mo
ten to be severed to be a severe shock for 'matching''; having a good draw that suits mo
time choosing half-adooren different ones.

I wear smocks to work in, and the same
trousered longing unit for evenings, in
same model made by the same dresmaker,
so that I merely have to send one and
half-and half way. I have solved my problem,
and yet even my method to a woman who
must needs work every bour of her working.

Frankly, I see nothing for it but a form of
standardized dress for women who haven't,
the persistent appearance, of small hats,
straight simple dresses, veraje coats, impers,
the persistent appearance of small hats,
straight simple dresses, veraje coats, impers,
who have neither the time not realination
to the persistent processes the search
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URSULA BLOOM Has a Straightforward Talk with a Girl Who is Contemplating One of Those-

Marriages.



HAVE before me a letter from a reader asking my advice. Her fiance, to whom she has been engaged four years, is earning The mas been cogaged tour years, is examing two pounds ten shillings a week. She is earning three pounds. A rise for him is unlikely for some long time—possibly years. It is a case of going on with this tediously dragging engagement, of which she admits they are both sick, or of both wordstar. The funch has bless that or of both working. The finned has ideas that a woman should not work after marriage, and her people do not hold with it. What are they

I am answering the letter here in print, because it is a problem that beneat so many of year. I say with all my heart 'dow' pay any attention to stripid prejedices. Don't thing to stilly out-of-date notions; don't waste the best years of year youth apart; marry—and good

Yes Mry Loss Love. Will allow an over-long engagement to keep Will' allow an over-long engagement to keep when you from marriage? You have the can work, and it is ridicules to felt that it would be wrong. It is no longer topic add, for a woman to do her share. This girls people are obtained, and her fance is only fighting down the last remnant of that old folly called the correct under these direct. Are better to lois force under these direct, are better to lois force under these direct.

forces under these circum-stances than to drift apart. because that is what will

happen as things are,
Yes, I know you are terribly in love, but love cannot go on being put off and off, with no poal in view. Love is a spontaneous and happy is a spontaneous according continue continue its iny like to postpone its juy like that. Love after marriage is very different from love in the engaged state. If you

marry, you will keep that love; if you stay capaged, you will lose it. Take the opportunity now, you won't regret it. But if you are starring on the fitty fifty built, do not try to housekeep on the hundred and one system. The husband cannot come house as the meany breadwinner, and flop into the best casy chair while the wife fusees with the bousework, and cooks him a good meal. If both are bread and cooks him a good meal. If both are breast-erinars and share the duties of earning, then both must be borne-makers and share the duties of "consectivety. Divide the work Early," I myself mase made the mistake of trying to earn agree my fass, but and also to do do do bot unsided in the bease, and I learnst a pretty sharp lesson there. It can't be done. there. It can't be done.

Shafer Work and Play.

If yow will go on trying to do it, love suffers,

If yow will go on trying to do it, love suffers,

The will go on trying to get irritated with each other;

The more than the product of the trying that the sea in a woman sharing to be askamed of in a majustang domestic duties, any more than there is in a woman sharing the bread-winning once.

The successful filty-offly marriage is the oot in the control of the centre of the control of the centre of the control of the control of the control of the control of the centre of the centre of the control of the control of the centre of the ce

both must play.
Don't be binsed by what

people say; it is your life, not theirs. Your husband will see the sense of this, he will understand. Workafter marriagn is possible; it makes for independence, it makes for haploess—if you set about it properly.



Home Notes 26.11.1932: 505 'Fifty Fifty Marriages'

Fantasies of transformation: fiction and working girl heroines





Miss Battersby's Day

by DOROTHY WHIPPLE

ILLUSTRATED BY YATES WILSON

A light-hearted love story in which two rejections made

one-acceptance

THE EDITOR REGRETS



MODERN WOMAN



A.B.C to Business Success

Women *must* work



CAREER into MARRIAGE





by ELLEN WILKINSON, M.P.

WOMEN WORK

women workers

AND WHAT THEY DO

Most Marriages



SHREDDED WHEAT

