

~ 1949-02-01

Tells How He'd Run Things**'Work Simplifier' Would Fire Most Wives for Inefficiency**

New York, Feb. 1 (U.P.).—Most wives should be fired because they are so inefficient, a fearless male said today.

Gideon M. Varga, an industrial engineer and lecturer on work simplification at Columbia University, writing in American Magazine, told the Nation's 20 million housewives how he would run things if he were a homemaker.

"Most of our wives are so wasteful of their time and energy that no modern industrial concern in its right mind would want them on the payroll," Varga declares blandly.

The trouble with women, he continues calmly:

1. They do too much groping and searching. A New Jersey housewife found she saved 10 miles walking a year when she placed her dishpan and soap at the sink instead of in 2 cupboards 6 and 9 feet away, Varga said.

2. They do too much running back and forth. Housewives trot at least one billion needless miles a year because they believe like

objects should be stored together. It isn't so, says Varga. Things should be stored where they are used first.

What's more, if the little woman had any sense, she'd make one side of a bed completely before moving to the other, or put brass eyelets at the corners of sheets and blankets to hook them into place. She now walks about 170 feet while making up one bed.

3. They do too many unnecessary chores. To name only a few: they iron sheets, underwear, bath towels and pajamas, dry dishes although it's more sanitary to drain them.

4. They abuse their backs and feet. What this country needs, he believes, is a high kitchen chair and rocker in every kitchen. Women should sit while they wash dishes, iron or work at kitchen counters.

5. They woolgather and don't stick to their jobs until finished. Housewives should advertise they're not available for party-line chatter during certain hours, he thinks.

~ 1949-02-02

Inefficient Wives

Probably 50 per cent of the housewives in the Washington area are hanging their heads in shame if they have read Mr. Gideon Varga's interesting commentary on our life work with the same fascinated attention that I did.

Mr. Varga is entirely correct. We grope; we search; we run back and forth; we store things where neither we ourselves nor Mr. Varga could possibly find them; we do far too many unnecessary chores; we abuse our backs and flagellate our feet. We are, in short, quite inefficient workers.

I believe it is generally conceded that the efficiency of workers almost invariably goes down, in inverse ratio to the number of hours on the job, as he or she plods steadily on through the week. It would be interesting to make a comparative study of the efficiency of a domestic employe working five days a week of eight hours each, with a similar employe on a schedule of seven days a week, 10 or 12 hours per day. Mr. Varga might try his hand at such a study. I am sure there would be no lack of test cases.

PHILINDA KRIEG.

Bethesda.

5208 Glenwood Road
Bethesda, Maryland
February 2, 1949

The Editor
The Washington Post

Sir;

Probably fifty percent of the housewives in the Washington area are hanging their heads in shame today, if they have read your reporting of Mr. Gideon Varga's interesting commentary on our life work with the same fascinated attention that I did.

Mr. Varga is entirely correct. We grope; we search; we run back and forth; we store things where neither we ourselves nor Mr. Varga could possibly find them; we do far too many unnecessary chores; we abuse our backs and flagellate our feet. We are, in short, quite inefficient workers. I believe it is generally conceded that the efficiency of workers almost invariably goes down, in inverse ratio to the number of hours on the job, as he or she plods steadily on through the week. It would be interesting to make a comparative study of the efficiency of a domestic employee working five days a week of eight hours each, with a similar employee on a schedule of seven days a week, ten or twelve hours per day. Mr. Varga might try his hand at such a study. I am sure there would be no lack of test cases.

Deary me, I'm woolgathering! I'm not sticking to my job until it's finished! Is there a work simplifier around?

Abjectly and in haste,

(Mrs. William L. Krieg)