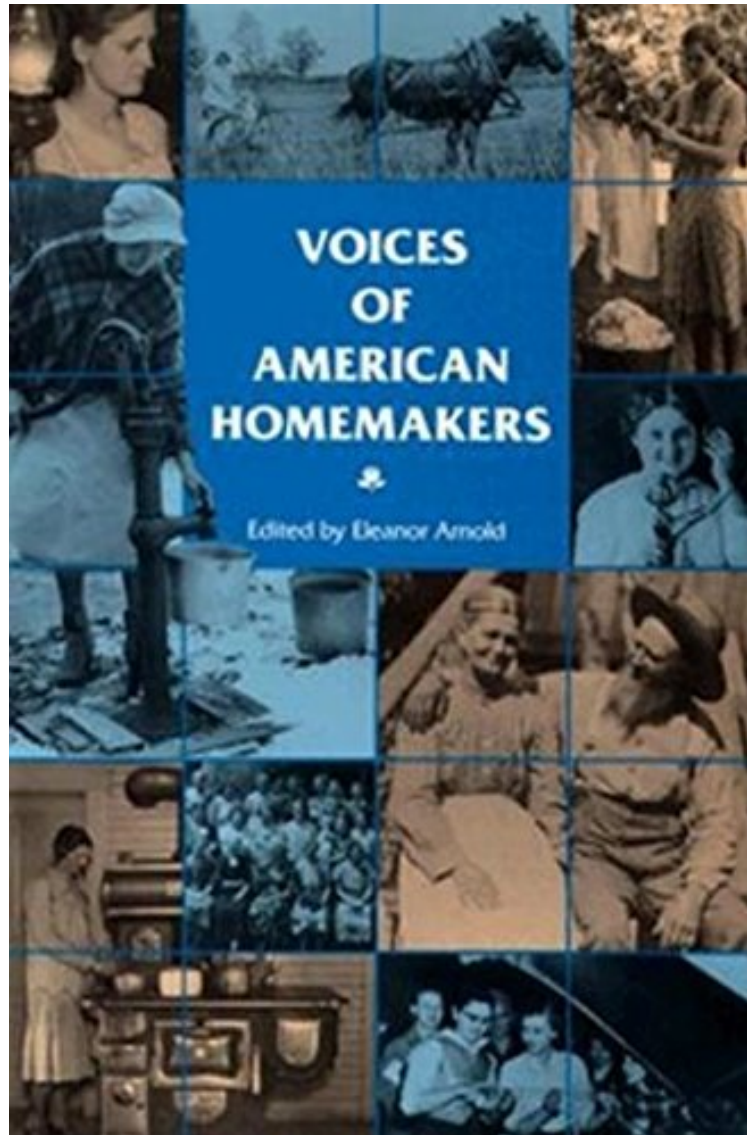


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Voices of American Homemakers

From Indiana University Press

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From Indiana University Press : Voices of American Homemakers before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Voices of American Homemakers:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I enjoyed reading the homemakers stories By Karen L Locey I enjoyed reading the homemakers stories. I wish the homemaking lessons and the homemaking club was available to me. It sounded like fun. It also would help keep old fashioned homemaking skills alive. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An Important Historical Chronicle By Sabrina Dent Back in the days before digital books, "If

the house was on fire, what five books would you take out the window with you?" used to be a fairly common point of discussion among readers. *Voices of American Homemakers* has long had a place on my list. It captures and chronicles a narrative of American history long ignored, and these voices are strong, fascinating and important. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I really enjoyed this book. I really enjoyed this book, stayed up all night to read it. I liked how it was divided by subject, as though I was sitting with these women and each was sharing in a conversation.

"These are women whose lives inspire admiration and respect. They are women of strength, resolution, and great common sense. They could deal with difficulties with patience and wisdom. They were innovative and creative in their use of the simple materials with which they worked. They were experts in making do and getting by - and they did it well. Working with what they had, they were able to create loving and pleasant homes, to be good neighbors and friends to those in the community, to be good helpmates and companions to their husbands, and to rear fine families. The basic tenet of this project has been to prove, both to the world and to these women themselves, that their lives have value, dignity, and worth. Their memories are the best proof that could be offered of the truth of this statement." - Eleanor Arnold. *Voices of homemakers* from all over the United States, excerpts from their taped interviews, tell of their experiences as children, wives, and mothers. They reminisce about life as it used to be on the farm and in small towns, with tales of one-room schools, sod houses, long underwear, childbirth at home, outside privies, and much more. They share their deep feelings about their lives as women and as homemakers. Many previously unpublished photographs which were unearthed from private files and albums accompany these compelling stories.

From *Publishers Weekly* These interviews focus on members of the National Extension Homemakers Council, an organization that tries to educate and uplift housewives, particularly those in isolated rural areas. While it presents surprising and often touching information about women's lives, this book makes poor use of its subjects by splitting their experiences up by topic rather than leaving them whole, so that a chapter on the women's younger years, for example, presents many extracts from different women's narratives but never gives the unified story of any one woman. This approach is repeated throughout, as are the interviewers' rather intrusive comments. Statements like "You have some fond memories" seem designed to lead the subject rather than to draw her out, and a happy veneer is often encouraged. Still, there's no denying the little joys found in anecdotes like the one about the woman who enlisted her mail carrier to bring starter for bread dough to her closest neighbor, only to have it rise on the way, or the useful fact that pages from the Sears, Roebuck catalogue made better toilet paper than those from the Montgomery Ward one. The period photographs are a delight. Copyright 1992 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From the Back Cover *Voices of American* is a book about women, family values, and making a life in rural America in the first half of this century. It distills some 200 oral histories collected from 37 states organized around the essential rites and functions of life: growing up, education, courtship, marriage, child rearing, the homemaker and her work, the organizations that supported her, and her sense of self.