

WILL YOU BE WEARING THIS BUTTON WHEN YOU GRADUATE THIS SPRING?

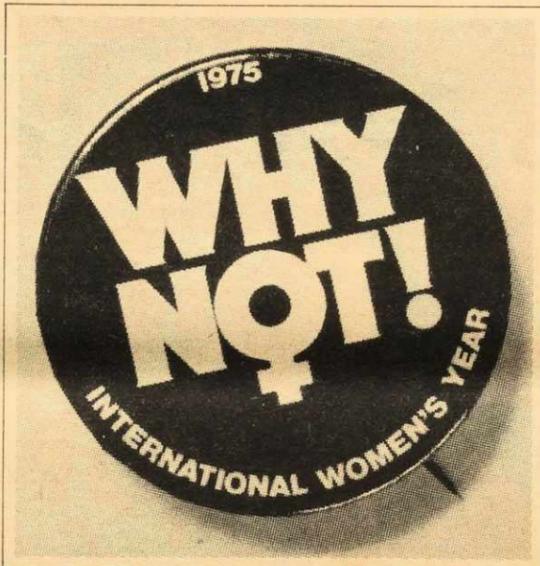
Canada has one of the finest educational systems in the world. But many Canadian employers unjustifiably underpay some very well-educated graduates of that system. Women.

A 24-year-old male, leaving university with a degree, earns on the average 19 per cent more in his first job than a woman of the same age with the same degree. A male high-school graduate can expect an average 34.2 per cent more than the equivalent female graduate. It just isn't right.

It just isn't right, either, that long before graduation, some schools still insist on channelling girls into home economics classes and boys into industrial arts.

Some girls make excellent mechanics and engineers. Some boys make excellent designers and chefs. Why curb their natural talents?

There is no logical reason why we should. Equal educational opportunities are guaranteed us under law, but there are prejudices and precedents. Society expects women to cook and sew because it expects them to get married one day. Don't men



get married too? Maybe they should learn household skills as well.

When it comes to employment, the same kind of archaic thinking brings us less pay and recognition. Certainly women get married, but many keep on working. Of some three million women working in Canada today, more than 50 per cent are married. Why are they being paid less than their husbands? Because they are married? How about a single working woman? It costs her as much to live as a single working man. So why is she also being forced to live on less? Particularly when 50.0 per cent of all Canadian women in the labour force, having completed their high-school education, have gone on to take

post-secondary training, compared to 39.3 per cent of the men. So no one can use the excuse that working women are less qualified.

The entire situation must change. But if it is to change, we have to start thinking of ourselves as equals. And demanding that others do, too. We have to teach our children to think differently. Because they are the next generation of educators and homemakers, employers and employees. We must break down the barriers of prejudice for ourselves and remove them entirely for our children.

If you would like more information on International Women's Year and the status of women in Canada, all you have to do is write us at: "WHY NOT!", OTTAWA, ONT., K1A 0A3.

We're here to help.

WHY NOT!