

Equality: our children don't know

by Linda Atchison

According to some Canadian children, women can't be forest rangers because they can't run away from fires in high-heeled shoes and men can't be nurses because they don't wear dresses.

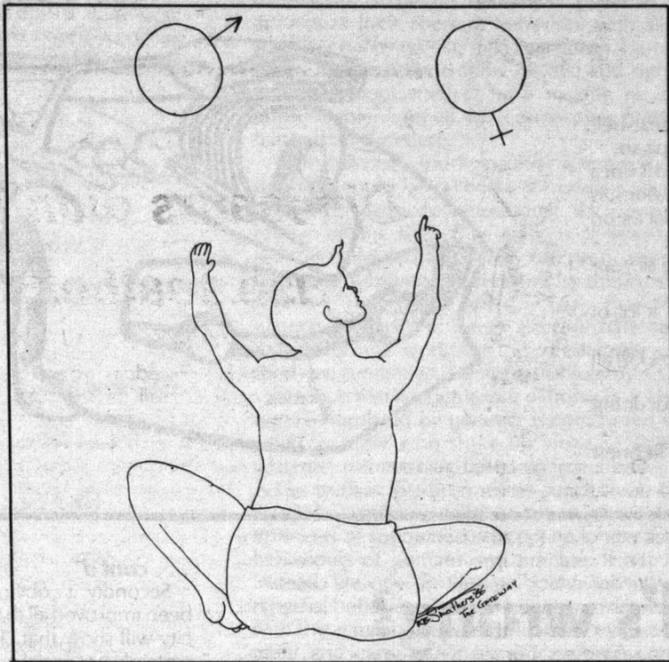
These were some of the answers given by children in a study of career choices entitled "When I Grow Up...", recently released by the Women's Bureau of Labour Canada.

Questionnaires were administered to over 700 children, ranging from six to 14 years of age, in 12 schools across the country.

The children were asked what jobs they would like to have when they grow up and why, and what activities they enjoy. They were given a list of careers and then asked to indicate for each one if they could be practiced by men only, by women only, or by both.

Results of the study suggest that children's views of their future careers are still shaped by traditional female/male stereotypes, since the only variable found to influence their choices was the sex of the child. The girls' views were not influenced by whether or not their mothers worked outside the home. A possible reason for this finding may be that many of the mothers in the study worked in traditionally female occupations.

The study found that while boys and girls stated that many occupations could be held by either men



or women, this was not reflected in what children thought they would be doing when they grew up. The report notes that in effect many girls seemed to be saying, "Yes, women can become doctors, but I expect to be a nurse."

The authors, Dormer Ellis, an associate professor of education, and Lyz Sayer, a psychologist, conclude that greater efforts in education are needed to make children aware of the range of job options

that are open to men and women.

In addition, the study points to the importance of role models for influencing children's career choices. For example, in one town, many more children stated that only women, or both men and women, could be dentists than those who said only men could be dentists. The authors followed up on this finding and discovered that in that town, there is a prominent children's dentist who is a woman.

Also, one little girl said she wants to become a lawyer because her Dad told her about a woman lawyer he knew who had just won a major case. A little boy said he wanted to be a marine biologist since he saw Jaws.

In Baie-Comeau, Quebec, Brian Mulroney's hometown, many little boys intend to become Prime Minister.

According to Dr. John Mitchell, a professor of Educational Psychology at the U of A, the results of the study may also reflect the way children think.

"Children's thought patterns in general are narrow, stereotypical and in essence reflect what parents, peers and the media tell them. Younger children, especially around the ages of six and seven, have an exaggerated sense of female and maleness, and have definite ideas about which activities are appropriate to each."

The study supports this suggestion, showing that younger children stereotype slightly more than the older children.

The answers given by some of the younger children were also

quite humorous, as in the case of a little girl who wished to be either a bus driver or the Queen.

The authors of the study hope to encourage schools to use the questionnaire so that children's attitudes will be brought to light. "Often teachers and parents don't even realize that children have these attitudes," said Michel Cleroux, an Information Officer with Labour Canada.

"The findings present a challenge to everyone concerned with children to take it from here, and when they are aware of children holding stereotyped beliefs, to correct them, saying they can choose non-traditional careers if they want to."

Cleroux adds that the results of the study are not pessimistic. "They contrast to studies done years ago in which children thought, for example, men can be doctors — period. There have been changes — lots of girls and boys think that both sexes can undertake a variety of careers."

The publication has been extensively distributed to guidance counsellors, schools, education faculties, the media and the public.

ND Club petitions H and FS

by Rod Campbell

The U of A New Democrat club has collected 300 signatures on their petition to have Housing and Food Services refrain from purchasing Gainers products during the current labour dispute.

The N.D.'s should achieve their goal of 500 signatures sometime

next week says spokesperson Rita Kolpak.

Forty seven students signed the petition in Lister Hall where HFS has a monopoly on eating facilities.

Asked whether she felt positive about the number of signatures collected to date, Kolpak replied, "In general yes, all in all it's been

positive. Even though we received negative comments, at least people are being made aware of the issues."

The New Democrats intend to present the petition to the president of the university, Dr. Myer Horowitz.

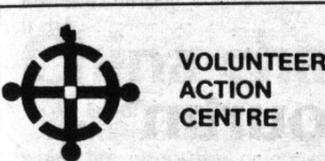
WRITING COMPETENCE PETITIONS

Notice to students who have not met the University's writing competence requirements and whose deadline for meeting those requirements occurs on or before November 1986 or January 1987: **If you plan to enroll in the second term of Winter Session 1986-1987 or any subsequent term and you have not yet passed the writing competence test, you may petition the GFC Writing Competence Petition Committee for permission to continue your registration.**

Registrations of students who do not successfully petition or pass the writing competence test will be cancelled prior to the start of classes.

Advice on preparing and submitting petitions can be sought from the Student Ombudsmen, Room 272 Students' Union Building, or the Student Advisors in the Office of the Dean of Student Services, Room 300 Athabasca Hall. The regulations and procedures used by the GFC Writing Competence Petition Committee are available in either of these offices.

Hearings will be held from November 25-28. The deadline for submitting petitions is Thursday, November 13, 1986.



VOLUNTEER ACTION CENTRE

The Volunteer Action Centre (Phone 482-6431) is recruiting volunteers to befriend these people and help them gain confidence in themselves and interest in the community.

Right now a volunteer who is fluent in sign language is urgently needed to befriend a young woman who was discharged four years ago, has a job, and lives on her own, but is desperately lonely in a silent world with no one who knows her language.

Another volunteer is needed for a young man who is enthusiastic about camping, walking, music, and photography, but has poor "coping skills", and another for a Lauderdale woman who is mentally retarded. Special visitors are also urgently needed for hospital patients who are preparing to go out in the community.

All volunteers working with post-patients receive support from social workers and counsellors at Alberta Hospital.

The Volunteer Action Centre (Phone 482-6431), a United Way agency, has urgent requests that are of special interest to students:

The jump from hospital to community is a long, difficult leap for discharged patients from Alberta Hospital, Edmonton, who often have to face the world without friends or family to help them.

Mental Health: Volunteers needed to work one-to-one with people who are experiencing emotional problems or are recently discharged from hospital.

Handicapped Children: (Special interest to Special Education students). A west Edmonton development centre needs volunteers to help with swimming, feeding, motor exercises, life skills classes and general individual assistance.

Clerical: Volunteers needed to help with typing at agencies which provide information about Diabetes, work with mental health problems and sponsor a literacy program for adults.

Tutoring: Tutors needed to work one-to-one and with groups of new Canadians. Urgent need at present for Spanish (and English, speaking tutors).

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WINTER SESSION EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES!

Challenging positions are now available for post-secondary students in Edmonton City, Edmonton Region, Calgary, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, and Red Deer regions as:

JOB SEARCH PRESENTERS

To be considered you must have:

- * current post-secondary student status
- * knowledge of the region
- * good public speaking skills
- * experience working with youth
- * access to your own transportation and be willing to travel to outlying communities within a given region
- * a school schedule which will allow you to work variable daytime hours and attend a training session in Edmonton, January 23 - 25, 1987.

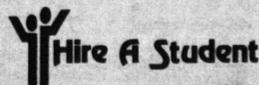
Working under the direction of the local Hire A Student committee, you will conduct presentations on job search techniques to secondary students, interact with educators and prepare reports.

This position is part-time (minimum 40 hours/month) January to April and full-time May and June 1987. The wage is \$8.00/hour plus travel expenses.

Competition closes November 14, 1986. Interviews will be held in early January, 1987.

Applicants are asked to submit a resume, a copy of their winter session timetable and an indication of preferred location to:

**Hire A Student Resource Section
Career Development and Employment
2nd Floor, Sun Building, 10363 - 108 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 1L8**



For further information, call the Hire A Student Resource Section collect at 427-0115.