

David Foot's forecast What's in your future?

THE 35 TO 44-YEAR-OLDS

It was better to be born in 1947 than in 1957, but the early boomers have their problems, too. For those in the workforce, the biggest is they are stuck on a plateau leading nowhere. There aren't enough jobs at the top of the corporate pyramid for all the capable boomers in the middle ranks. That situation accounts for the large number of small businesses formed during the last few years, as frustrated boomers strike out on their own. It's also why many women in their 30s have decided to quit work and have children instead.

"They are finding the labor market is not all it's cracked up to be," says David Foot, a demographics specialist at the University of Toronto. "They are working long hours and not getting rewarded. It's not necessarily because of sexism but simply because there are so many in that age group."

Day care will continue to be a big issue for boomer mothers with small children in the 90s, but gradually it will be surpassed in importance by elder care for the 35 to 44-year-old group. As the early boomers age, says Foot, "they are going to find it increasingly difficult dealing with their aging parents."

Because women take on most of such care giving, female early boomers could be in for some stressful times during the 1990s.

Sensible employers will try to find ways to ease the stress. Foot says employers should open "intergenerational care centres" a mixture of day-care and elder care. "You would have one room for small children, another for grandmas in their 70s and a middle room where the grandmas could look after the children." Career counselling, as the "40-somethings" have their career crises, will be a growth industry in the 90s. So will the treatment of lower back pain and poor eyesight. "Bifocal snorkelling and scuba masks will be a growth industry in the 90s," Foot said.

More women in labor force each year Women hold most jobs, least pay

By Heather Hand

Among western democracies, Canada ranks behind only Scandinavia in its dependence on women in the labor force, and the percentage continues to grow.

In 1951, 23.5 per cent of Canadian women worked for pay outside the home. The figure more than doubled by 1987, up to 56.2 per cent. By 1993, says a Conference Board of Canada estimate, the number of women in the paid labor force could reach 63.1 per cent. The trend is even more dramatic for women with children, particularly for those with young children. In 1986, 60.7 per cent of married women with at least one child under the age of six were in the labor force.

Increasingly women and men have the same employment patterns. They enter the workforce between the ages of 18 and 24 and stay in. Today, a Canadian woman aged 20 can expect to spend 37 years in the workforce, while a man of 20 can expect to work for 42 years.

But there the similarities end. A recent United Nations human development report suggests Canada is the best place in the world to live—unless you're a woman. The report puts Canada at the top of a list of 160 countries in terms of overall life expectancy, education and national income. But we slip to number eight overall once employment and income of women become part of the equation. In 1990 the average earnings for a woman working a full year and full-time was \$24,923; for a man it was \$36,863. Women with eight years of schooling or less earned 62.4 per cent of what men earned with the same education. This increased to 72.8 per cent for university graduates.

Even though the number of men and women in the workforce is nearly equal, they are not evenly distributed among the more than 500 occupations classified by the Canada census. There are only 15 occupations in which women represent more than 90 per cent of the labor force. These jobs are generally in the clerical, sales and service sectors where wages are low and much of the work is part time. There are no occupational categories where the average earnings of women exceed those of men.

Women still bear the major share of family responsibilities,

even if they are in the paid workforce and in two-income families. Although Canadian family structures have changed, the needs and wants of family members remain the same. There are more than two million Canadian children under the age of 13 whose parents work or study for a substantial part of the week.

Furthermore, the number of single-parent families is growing. And most of these — 82.2 per cent — are mother led.

A recent work/family study done by the Conference Board of Canada shows that balancing the demands of work and family can be both difficult and stress-

ful for many employees. Continuing high-quality care for children is difficult to find and expensive, particularly for parents who work unusual hours or shifts. Emergency care for infants or sick children, or substitute care for school professional activity days and summer vacations, is both hard to find and expensive.

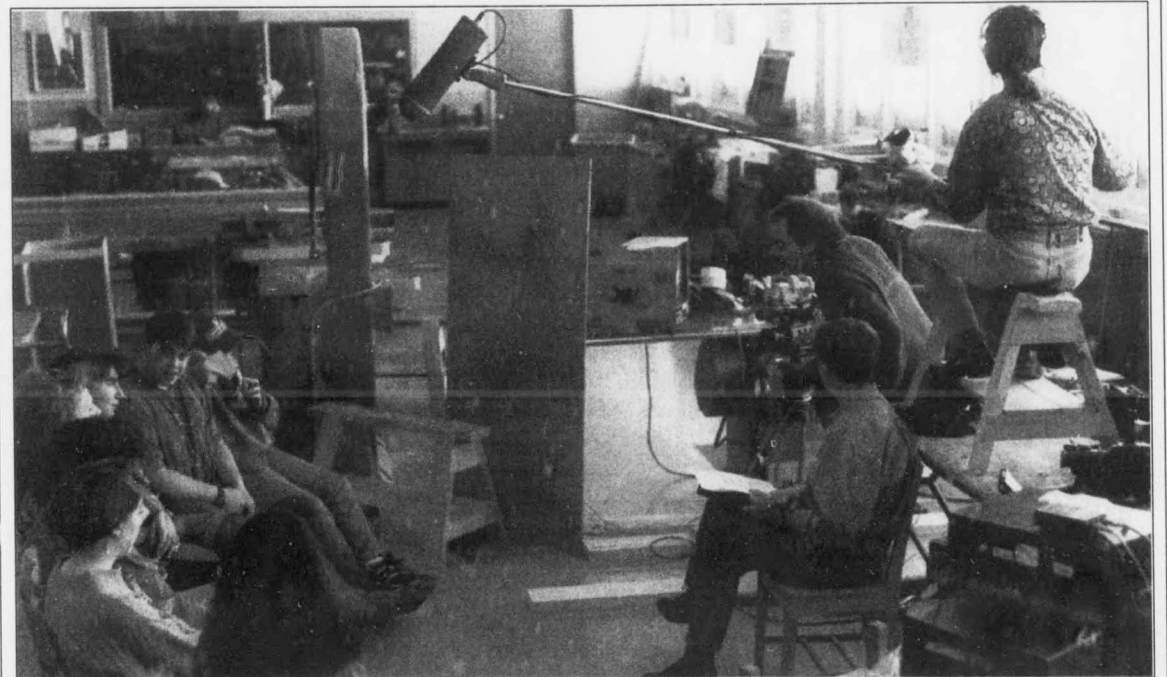
Child-care responsibilities diminish opportunities for career advancement. Many employees are unable to put in extra time at work or to relocate when asked.

Some employers and union contracts provide important benefits to help employees balance their paid work and family re-

sponsibilities. These include sick leave, leave for family or personal needs, flexible working hours and vacation time. But these benefits are not available everywhere. Many employees are required to take time off without pay to meet family needs.

Research by the Vanier Institute of the Family has found that even Canadian families barely kept pace with inflation during the 1980s. They estimate that if women stopped working, the number of low-income families would jump by 62 per cent. In many households, having both partners in the paid labor force is simply a matter of necessity.

Students star in new video



"Cut. That's a wrap." For seven junior high school students from across New Brunswick, those words hold special meaning. They were the words used by director Claudette Babineau at the end of an eight-hour group discussion videotaped on the subject of apprenticeable trades.

The students star in a video produced by Équité NB Equity called *Just Right for the Job!* Their comments, taken from the group discussion, form part of the message contained in the 13-minute video designed to encourage young women to pursue careers in the apprenticeable trades.

Two female apprentices working in the province are also featured in the video. They use their first-hand knowledge of their careers to promote the benefits associated with the

apprenticeable trades. The students offer their thoughts on the subject and reinforce the message that women can follow any chosen career path.

The students' group discussion was shot on location in the carpentry workshop at the New Brunswick Community College (Moncton campus) while the apprentices were filmed on location in their places of work and at home. For their efforts, each student and apprentice received a *Just Right for the Job!* T-shirt and a copy of the video.

The video will be shown in junior high schools across the province providing students, especially young girls, with new career options to consider.

A user's guide was also produced to provide teachers with ideas for classroom discussion and activities after showing the video.

An advisory committee including a former guidance counsellor and a representative of the Department of Education, was formed to work with Équité NB Equity's communications sub-committee in the development of the video. Four teachers volunteered to act as advisors and assist in the development of the user's guide. Two of these teachers focus tested the video in classrooms prior to its release.

"The whole project was a labor of love and we're delighted with the final product," said Équité NB Equity president Tom Muisse, who also participated in the production.

Muisse said the communications sub-committee will ensure each junior high school in the province receives a copy of the video and user's guide.