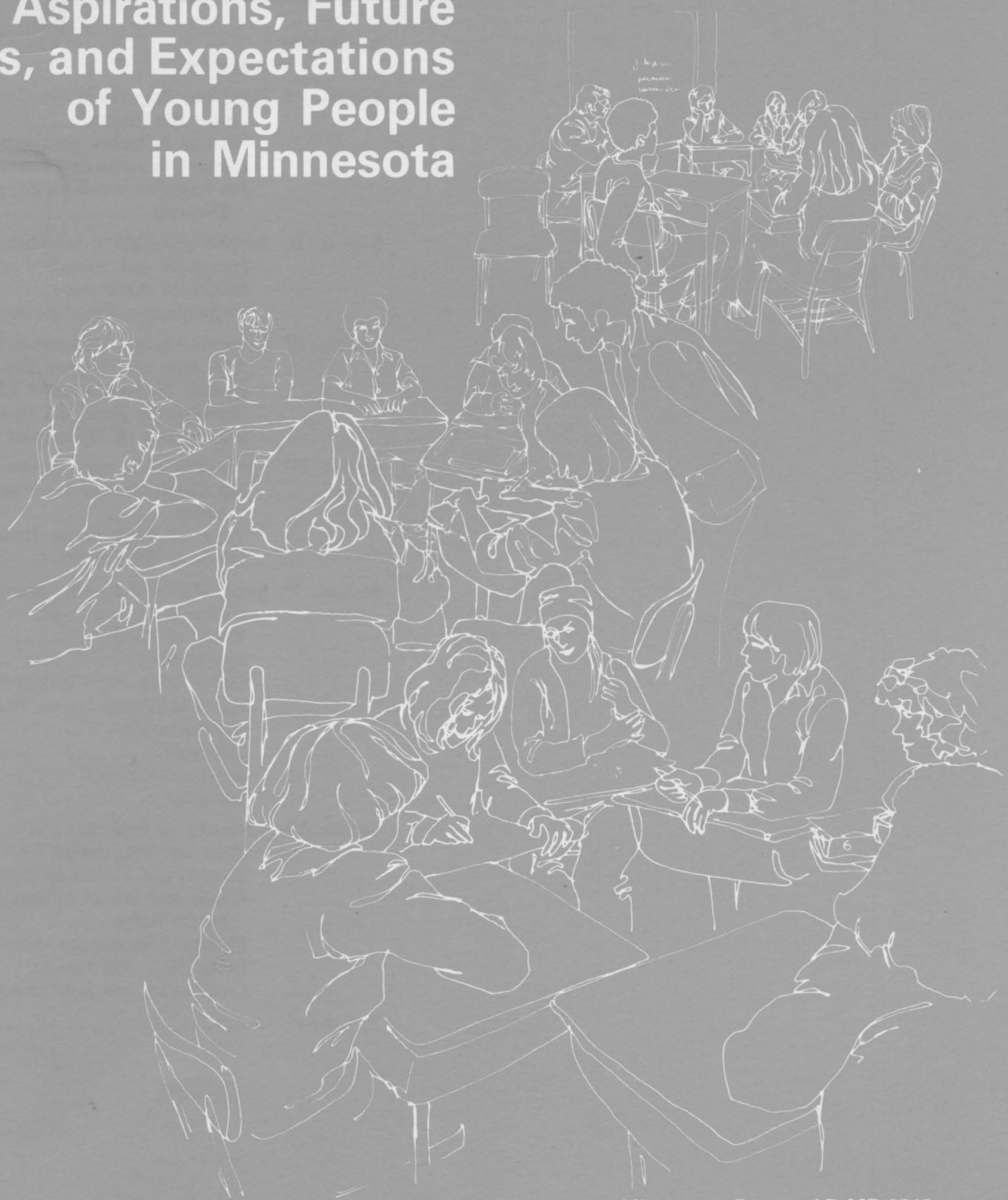
MINNESOTA YOUTH POLL:

Aspirations, Future Plans, and Expectations of Young People in Minnesota



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Aspirations, Future Plans, and Expectations of Young People in Minnesota

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INTRODUCTION

This study of the aspirations and expectations of Minnesota high school students is a part of ongoing research into the opinions and concerns of teenagers around the state by the Center for Youth Development and Research, University of Minnesota. The Minnesota Youth Poll provides a continuing communication channel between the youth of Minnesota and those adults who make decisions about their lives. This poll was undertaken both as a regular edition of the Minnesota Youth Poll and as a background paper for the Conference on the Economic Future of Girls and Young Women held at the Spring Hill Conference Center on May 22-23, 1984 and co-sponsored by Dayton Hudson Corp., Humphrey Institute, University of Minnesota, and the Springhill Center. In this poll, males and females between ages 14 and 18 reflect on their plans and preparation for adult life, including their career and family life expectations; their perceptions of sex-role development and stereotypes; their definitions of success and failure in adulthood; and their family, school, and work experience and its impact on their future plans. The special focus of this study was on the differences between young men and young women as they plan for and dream about their future.

METHOD

Approximately 725 Minnesota high school students in 115 discussion groups from urban, surburban, and rural schools and one adolescent treatment center participated in this poll in April, 1984. The schools were in Braham, Chokio-Alberta, Thief River Falls, Coon Rapids, Hopkins, Rochester, Minneapolis (Washburn, Work Opportunity Center, and the Children's Theatre School), and St. Paul (Holcomb House, a residential treatment facility). This is not a random sample of youth in Minnesota, but the schools and youth agencies selected were representative of Minnesota high school students by geographic area; about half were from the metro area and the other half outstate. Also, two alternative programs—Work Opportunity Center and Holcomb House—were included to ensure that youth experiencing problems in the family, school, or community were included. The opinions and ideas of the students were obtained through both a group and an individual questionnaire.

In each school, the questionnaires were administered in a required course—English or Social Studies. An individual questionnaire (Appendix A) was given to each student, followed by the group questionnaire (Appendix B). For the group discussion, the students were asked to sit in self-selected groups of 4 to 6 people. In this poll, students were asked to sit in all male or all female groups. One member of each group acted as both recorder and discussion leader. The recorder read the questions, which had been designed to elicit discussion, explanation, and elaboration, and wrote down as much of the commentary as possible.

The group questionnaires were then analyzed using qualitative methods. This involved first separating the questionnaires by area of residence (urban, suburban, or rural). The answers to each of the questions were then scrutinized for recurring themes and ideas.

The responses from the individual questionnaires were machine scored, and frequencies, cross-tabs, correlations, and t-tests were run according to the major variables of age, sex, race, socio-economic status, etc.

The strength of the Youth Poll method is that it combines the best of both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. This poll focused on both the meanings and the assumptions young people use to understand their world as revealed in the group discussions, and provided survey data through the individual questionnaires. The Minnesota Youth Poll method was designed to capture and preserve the richness and complexity of the adolescent experience. The information obtained is treated as themes or pictures in an attempt to retain both the "music and lyrics" of what the young people have said.

A second study is included in this edition of the Minnesota Youth Poll to further explore gender differences among young Minnesotans. The data come from a different source than the Youth Poll. "Being Male and Female: Essays from Journal Writings," is based on analysis of essays written by 10- to 18-year-olds for the *Journal Juniors* feature of the *Minneapolis Star & Tribune*. *Journal Juniors* is a writing program which revives one that the *Minneapolis Journal* conducted from 1898-1913. This report analyzes a sample of 160 of more than 2000 essays on the topic, "Would you Rather Be a Man or a Woman?"

Section I:

PLANS AND PREPARATION FOR CAREERS

"These jobs have influenced me a lot—I now know that I would hate to be a stockboy at Cub Foods for the rest of my life." (male, suburban group)

Both the individual and group questionnaires asked students for information about their plans, expectations, and preparation for their future occupations and careers.

CAREER ASPIRATIONS

In the individual questionnaire, students were asked in an open-ended format to describe the kind of work they expected to be doing by age 30. The question is a difficult one for teenagers since they are asked to project themselves 15 years into the future. The responses can at best be a conscious dream, at worst a random thought. This "uncertainty" factor contributes to considerable shifting of career plans during adolescence. Studies indicate that as many as 70% of students change their minds about what career they want during one school year (Cooley and

Table 1. Occupational plans: percentage of males and females by job category

Job Category	Male	Female
1) Laborer, Service Worker (waitress, janitor)	—	7%
2) Semi-skilled (bus driver, assembly line worker)	1%	—
3) Sales Clerk	1%	—
4) Office or Clerical (secretary, bank teller)	1%	7%
5) Protective (police officer, fireman, day care)	9%	1%
6) Military Service	1%	—
7) Craftsperson, skilled technical worker (carpenter, computer technician)	25%	4%
8) Farm Owner	4%	1%
9) Owner of Small Business	2%	4%
10) Sales Representative	3%	2%
11) Manager/Administrator	11%	4%
12) Professional (nurse, teacher, social worker)	21%	42%
13) Performing, Creative Arts	8%	12%
14) Professional with extensive graduate level training (lawyer, physician, college professor)	9%	9%
15) Homemaker	—	2%
16) Don't know	4%	6%

Lohnes, 1966). Nevertheless, the responses do provide us with a picture of the level, prestige, and status of occupations deemed desirable by young people, if not their actual blueprints for the future. These data help us understand what teenagers mean when they say they want a "good job," a central part of their definition of success and happiness in adulthood (discussed below).

Table 1 groups their occupational plans, using the categories devised for the study Monitoring the Future, University of Michigan (Johnston and Bachman, 1980). It shows that overall females tend to have both lower and higher aspirations than males. Fourteen percent of female high school students chose either service or clerical work (categories 1 through 4), in contrast to 3% of the males who chose this occupational level. At the other end of the prestige and status scale, 63% of girls chose professional work (categories 12 through 14), while only 38% of the boys did so.

Table 2 illustrates the same data, but this time using the U.S. Census categories. Again, girls are found more likely to choose high-prestige occupations than are boys. Sixty-seven percent of the girls expect to be in some kind of professional or technical job, in contrast to 47% of the boys. The girls are similarly over-represented in the lowest status and lowest paying categories of

Table 2. Occupational plans (% males and females by census category)

Census Category	Male	Female
Professional/Technical	47%	67%
Business	20%	11%
Clerical and Sales	2%	7%
Crafts/Foreman	16%	—
Operatives	1%	—
Service Workers	—	7%

clerical and service work. For girls, these data are similar to those found by Tittle (1981) in her study of low and middle class youth in New York City. However, the proportion of males aspiring to technical-professional work was lower for the Minnesota sample (47%) than for the New York City study (70%). This may be because the Youth Poll included a high proportion of students from nonmetropolitan areas.

Teenage Women as Homemakers

It is clear from these data that very few young women aspire to the feminine ideal of less than a generation ago—the full-time homemaker. Only 2% said they would be a homemaker at age 30. This is particularly interesting in light of their responses to another question about whether there would be times when they would not be working outside the home. Sixty-three percent of the girls said they would not work when they were pregnant or had young children. Although 30 years of age is most probably the time when women would have young children to care for, almost none of the female respondents noted that they could very well be full-time homemakers at this point in their lives. We interpret these inconsistencies to mean that it is no longer acceptable for a young woman to identify herself as a housewife alone. While she may realize she will be working at home caring for her family at some point in her life, to the adolescent female this is not being a housewife. Rather, she derives her identity from the career for which she was trained. Thus, she is not a housewife but a nurse or a computer technician or a dental hygienist or a lawyer who is staying at home while her children are young.

Girls do appear to be influenced by their mother's work history on this issue. Eighty-one percent of the girls whose mothers are currently homemakers planned not to work outside the home when they were pregnant or had young children, in contrast to approximately 55% of girls whose mothers were skilled workers or professionals. Further, girls whose mothers were in low-status, low-paying jobs also were more likely to state that they would stay at home.

PARENTAL INFLUENCE ON CAREER CHOICE

A significant relationship was found between the kind of work young persons expected to be doing at age 30 and their fathers'—but not mothers'—occupations. In other words, the kind of job that the father holds is a better predictor of the kind of work his teenage child aspires to than is the mother's job. This was the case for both sons and daughters. For example, about 40% of sons who aspired to be in skilled occupations had fathers who were unskilled or in semi-skilled or skilled jobs, while only 22% of sons whose fathers were in business, sales, or the professions expected to be skilled craftspersons. Similarly, sons and daughters whose fathers were professionals were significantly more likely to aspire to professional careers than were those whose fathers were in lower-status occupations.

This pattern was not found with mothers' occupations, perhaps because nearly two-thirds of them held lower status jobs in service or clerical work or were full-time homemakers. For young people in the study—especially the girls who, even more than boys, tended to aspire to higher status occupations than those of their parents—mothers were not used as role models. The proportion (60%-65%) of daughters who wanted to hold professional jobs was about the same whether their mothers were

clerical workers, technicians, professionals, or homemakers. Another dynamic that would undermine the mother-as-role-model may be at work here. Rexroat and Shehan (1984) have analyzed the work histories of 35-year-old women who did and did not plan to be in the labor force when they were in their early 20s. About 62% of this group, who are approximately the age of the mothers of some of the teens in the Youth Poll, had planned to stay home and care for their families. When they were working, it was more likely a response to changes in domestic circumstances than a consequence of "career planning." We expect that such women would be less able to provide credible guidance to upwardly mobile offspring, either male or female, for whom the American Dream of exceeding the occupational status of their parents remains meaningful.

The respondents were asked what kind of job they thought their parents expected them to have by age 30. Almost half of the males were unable to predict their parents' expectations. Some said that they realized their parents wanted them to have a job that would be satisfying, but they didn't know what that job was. A little less than half the girls (46%) also did not know what their fathers expected in terms of occupation, but only 30% said they didn't know what kind of work their mothers expected of them. This is consistent with national data that indicate that girls and mothers talk more about personal matters than either fathers and sons, mothers and sons, or fathers and daughters (Erickson, 1982). When our students did predict what work their parents expected of them, it corresponded closely to their own expectations. This may be more a matter of adolescent egocentricism (i.e., other people's thoughts are similar to mine) than a reflection of their parents' actual expectations.

BARRIERS TO ACHIEVING CAREER GOALS

The young men and women in this study have extremely high career aspirations. We wondered if they saw any significant barriers to the achievement of these plans and asked about this in both the individual and group questionnaires. Each student was given a list of personal and external factors that might prevent a person from getting the kind of work s/he would like to have, and asked to what extent s/he thought this was a hindrance. Table 3 presents the percentage of respondents, by sex, who said that it was "not at all" a problem for them.

Overall, males perceived fewer barriers than did females. However, the pattern of barriers was quite similar for both. For example, both agreed that the size and shape of the job market and not having the necessary skills were major barriers. In general, though, the males were less concerned about these limitations than were the females.

For females, the most serious barriers were the job market in their chosen field, followed by lack of money, not having necessary skills, not knowing the right people, and lack of knowledge about career possibilities. In each case under 40% of the female respondents said this was "not at all" a barrier. For males, lack of money, the job market, and lack of knowledge about possible careers were the most serious barriers.

On several items, the differences between the responses of males and females were quite large. Young women were considerably more concerned about the economic outlook, gender, lack of necessary skills, insufficient intelligence, and capacity to work hard than were young men. The girls' concern about the factor of intelligence and sufficient skills is of particular interest since they are considerably better students in high school, as evidenced by their grade point average (in this study 62% of the girls had A or B averages, while only 48% of the males did). Apparently the girls don't see a clear relationship between grades in high school and their intelligence and skill level in adulthood.

Table 3. Factors preventing achievement of career goals in rank order of importance (% responding "Not at All")

Limitations	Female	Male
External		
Job market/economic outlook	15%	25%
Lack of money	21%	21%
Not knowing right people	36%	38%
Family/home responsibilities	48%	53%
Gender	60%	73%
Parental disapproval	67%	73%
Internal		
Don't have necessary skills	35%	51%
Lack of knowing about career possibilities	40%	40%
Unrealistic expectations	43%	45%
Didn't take enough hard, academic courses	45%	49%
Lack of intelligence	55%	65%
Not enough motivation to succeed	58%	59%
Not wanting to work hard	62%	71%

The subject of barriers to achieving their occupational plans was raised in the group discussion through the following question:

America has been thought of as the land of unlimited opportunity where anyone can become successful. What is your reaction to this statement?

Just as we found in the survey questions answered by individual respondents, young men are more optimistic about their chances for success than are young women. Seventy-five percent of the groups of male respondents believed that this is the land where fame and fortune are within the reach of anyone. Twenty-five percent of the young men accepted this notion without qualification while another 50% said it was true under certain circumstances. Only about half of the female respondents believed in the Horatio Alger dream. Ten percent of the female respondents totally accepted this idea, while 40% gave their qualified assent.

Below are several comments that illustrate the enthusiasm among those who totally endorse this notion. They tended to understand the question as demanding a comparison between opportunities in this country versus the rest of the world, and because of this, ended up sounding a little like the speeches at the 1984 National Republican convention:

"God bless America! This is a bit unrealistic but America is the best place for opportunity." (female, suburban group)

"It's absolutely true. All it takes is ambition because there is opportunity for all in the U.S.A." (male, suburban group)

"This is the best country in the world. I believe it." (male, rural group)

Both males and females offered the same set of factors in qualifying their acceptance. Most crucial was that the person be ambitious, intelligent, and willing to exert a great deal of effort

in the quest for success. Being reasonably well-off financially, "having money to start with" or "having rich parents" was the second most important factor. They noted:

"You must have the will to do it and the banker to back ya." (male, rural group)

"You have to work for everything you want and have to be smart enough to achieve your goals." (female, urban group)

"You can be successful if you really work at it. It's all within yourself." (male, urban group)

Fifty percent of the females and 25% of the males argued that not all people have the opportunity to be successful. Girls listed discrimination—by gender, race, social class, and religion—as the single most significant factor:

"Some people don't have the opportunity to become successful because of their background, their family situation. There are a lot of people who are prejudiced against women, blacks, handicapped people, Jews, etc. and don't allow opportunities for certain people." (female, suburban group)

"Social class determines options. There are rags-to-riches stories but usually you are locked into the same socio-economic bracket as your parents." (female, suburban group)

"Some people who are poor have to drop out of school to help support their family. They don't have the opportunity to become successful because they were born poor." (female, suburban group)

"Immigrants and women are at a serious disadvantage in this country." (urban, female group)

The unemployment rate was viewed by young women as the next most significant barrier to opportunity. Male respondents argued that this factor, along with racial and religious discrimination, lack of intelligence, and lack of education were equally responsible for denying people the chance to succeed:

"America has high unemployment. There aren't that many jobs left. So a lot of people feel like failures because they're at the bottom. People feel like it's their fault if they're at the bottom. They don't realize that there just isn't enough room for everyone to make it. I'm afraid that when I look for a job it won't be there. I've been persuaded not to go into social work because I've been told there are a lot fewer jobs now than a few years ago." (urban, female group)

"Some people don't get a chance to even choose what they want because they haven't got the money and aren't smart enough to win a scholarship." (male, rural group)

JOB EXPERIENCE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CAREER PLANNING

We were interested in how teenagers perceive the connection between their current jobs and their future careers. Youth Poll participants were asked what kind of jobs they have had and how these jobs influenced their future career plans. Table 4 shows the distribution of jobs held by male and female students.

Four findings deserve particular attention. First, and not surprisingly, most of the jobs held by teenagers in Minnesota are in unskilled or semi-skilled, low-status, and low-paying occupations. The work that youth do is largely in the service sector—babysitting; working in restaurants, service stations, grocery stores, or cleaning houses; performing janitorial service; and taking care of other people's yards. In a real sense, teenagers are the new "servant class" in America.

Secondly, males hold a substantially wider range of jobs than do females. Of the 18 most frequently listed jobs held by Minnesota teenagers, at least 5% of the young men reported having had some experience in 14 of the 18 categories. If we use the same criterion of at least 5% reporting employment in the category, we find that young women have had jobs in only 7 of the 18 job categories.

Third, the jobs held by girls are concentrated in three major areas—restaurant work (cooking, waiting on tables, bussing dishes), sales (cashiering or being a sales clerk), and babysitting. The jobs held by males are less concentrated in a few categories. However, restaurants are also the most frequent employer of males as well as females. The next most frequent jobs held by males are janitorial work and that of stockboy. But in addition, males work frequently in the following activities: yardwork and landscaping, at service stations, as cashiers and sales clerks, in construction, on farms, and in factories.

Fourth, both male and female teenagers are likely to hold different kinds of jobs according to whether they live in suburban, rural, or urban communities. By far the most typical job held by rural males is farm work, with 33% reporting they had done or do this kind of job. Rural males seldom held jobs in restaurants or were stockboys (the most frequent jobs for suburban and urban males); they were somewhat more likely to have worked as coaches or referees or in service stations. Overall, suburban males seemed to have access to the widest selection of job opportunities.

Table 4. Types of jobs held by teenagers (% who had or hold such jobs)

Job	Surburban	Rural	Urban
Females			
Babysitting	13%	29%	13%
Caddy	1%	—	—
Cashier, Clerk	16%	9%	23%
Coach, Referee	—	—	—
Construction	—	—	—
Driver	—	—	—
Farm work	—	10%	3%
Factory work	—	1%	—
House cleaning	9%	9%	7%
Janitor, Maintenance	—	—	—
Nurse's aide	3%	2%	2%
Office work (receptionist, secretary)	13%	—	7%
Paper route	—	1%	—
Restaurant work (cook, wait on tables, bussing)	24%	29%	29%
Service station (mechanic, pumping gas, body work)	—	—	—
Stocking shelves, inventory	—	—	—
Teacher aide, counseling	12%	—	—
Yard work, landscaping	—	3%	3%
Males			
Babysitting	4%	5%	2%
Caddy	1%	—	8%
Cashier, Clerk	8%	3%	4%
Coach, Referee	3%	8%	2%
Construction	9%	7%	2%
Driver	3%	5%	—
Farm work	—	33%	7%
Factory work	7%	3%	2%
House cleaning	—	—	—
Janitor, Maintenance	10%	8%	10%
Nurse's aide	—	—	—
Office work (receptionist, secretary)	3%	—	—
Paper route	5%	3%	2%
Restaurant work (cook, wait on tables, bussing)	16%	2%	29%
Service station (mechanic, pumping gas, body work)	5%	9%	4%
Stocking shelves, inventory	12%	1%	12%
Teacher aide, counseling	1%	—	1%
Yard work, landscaping	9%	14%	16%

Girls in rural areas were much more likely to have done babysitting and, not surprisingly, farm work than were suburban or urban females. They were less likely to have held jobs as cashiers or sales clerks. Suburban girls were the only group that listed teaching and counseling and were also more likely to have done office work (receptionist or secretary) than rural or urban girls. Overall, suburban females, like their male counterparts, appeared to be the most advantaged in their choices of part-time and summer jobs, if we assume that teaching, counseling, and office work are the most desirable occupations.

Influence on Career Plans

The majority of respondents (about half) indicated that the jobs they held as teenagers had little positive influence on their future career plans. The most frequent response to the question: "How have these jobs influenced your future career plans?" was a terse "not at all." It is difficult to know exactly what this means. To some, it may be an indication that the job was irrelevant to their future plans or they would avoid this kind of work in adult life. There were, indeed, some respondents (17% of females and 24% of males) who specifically said that they wanted no part of these kinds of jobs in later life:

"These jobs have influenced me a lot—I now know that I would hate to be a stockboy at Cub Foods for the rest of my life." (male, suburban group)

"I never want to become a maid or have children." (female, urban group)

"You know you want to advance and you get sick of making low wages." (male, suburban group)

"Most of the jobs that teens can get, they don't want them as careers. Like washing dishes or pumping gas, these aren't skilled jobs and nobody wants them." (male, urban group)

"They influence us to want to work in management and business, not in the peon jobs we've had." (female, urban group)

"I know that no way do I want to be a cashier or a carhop. It was really motivating to have these jobs so I could find out what not to do. I saw people real unhappy in their jobs and with their lives. I realize they had no opportunity for something better; it's hard to start up again later in life." (female, urban group)

"Found out that they do not suit our lifestyle." (male, rural group)

"We don't really like those kinds of jobs; we want white-collar jobs." (female, urban group)

This indictment of their current work was predictable in light of the high career aspirations that young people have, the majority hoping to be in professional or technical fields by age 30 (see Section I). Since most of the jobs held by youth are low-status, low-paying service jobs, it is not surprising that the majority do not aspire to these fields for adult careers.

Although not a direct influence on their choice of careers, 20% of the males and 30% of the females indicated that the jobs they've held as teenagers have had a positive influence on their career development in that they have learned basic job and work skills, such as being responsible, punctual, understanding what is expected of employees, and learning to get along with their boss:

"They haven't influenced me except the experience has helped us to learn about the working world of supervisors, responsibilities, co-workers, taxes, etc." (female, suburban group)

"They make you more responsible. Better prepare you for a job later on. Widens your views on life and what's available." (female, suburban group)

"You can get experience with people, learn responsibilities, learn to be prompt." (male, suburban group)

"They teach you about the marketplace, how the business world works." (male, urban group)

"It doesn't have to do with future plans but teaches me responsibility right now." (female, urban group)

"They help you relate to people, find out what the public is like, learn responsibilities of money, prepare you for the working world." (female, urban group)

Girls were more likely to discuss how these jobs had increased their understanding of and ability to work smoothly and productively with others:

"They've been very good. Babysitting helps you to appreciate children, being a counselor helped me to understand junior high kids better." (female, suburban group)

"Babysitting will help me to be a good mother." (female, rural group)

"I've learned that kids are hard to take care of." (female, urban group)

The next most frequent set of responses reported that these jobs were influential in that they provided a way to explore and assess interests and experiment with a variety of work roles. More males (15%) than females (6%) perceived this value in part-time youth jobs. It is interesting to note that those who advocate employment for youth very often cite this as an important reason for helping young people to secure jobs, yet relatively few young people themselves understand that such jobs can help them to pinpoint and test out their interests and preferences. Some who did said:

"They make you think about what a job is like. That you really have to enjoy it to do it for the rest of your life." (male, rural group)

"Makes you know about the things you like and don't like to do." (male, suburban group)

"They give you new experiences we would never have otherwise. You decide what you like doing and what you would like for a future career." (female, rural group)

About 10% of both males and females saw jobs as merely a way to earn money. A few linked earning money to future career plans by indicating that they were saving their earnings for college. Most of the responses of this type made a point of saying that their jobs don't influence their career development, but just provide money:

"They don't really influence you cause all we're doing is earning money for college." (female, rural group)

"They just bring in money and everyone needs that." (female, urban group)

"They haven't influenced us, they just supply spending money." (male, suburban group)

Finally, the smallest group (7% of the males; 4% of the females) said that their current jobs did have a direct and positive influence on their future career plans and they intended to go into these fields. The occupations cited were: daycare, teaching, and farming for girls; auto mechanics, truck driving, farming, and construction for boys.

Section II:

SUCCESS AND FAILURE IN ADULT LIFE

"Being happy is knowing that you didn't have a dream you didn't try for, knowing you tried to do what you wanted to do." (female group)

The students were asked a series of questions in the group discussions about their definitions of happiness, success, and failure during adulthood. We were interested in learning how these perspectives related to their occupational aspirations, discussed above, and their hopes and dreams beyond the career domain.

HAPPINESS AND SUCCESS

First, there were strong similarities between their definitions of happiness and success. Because they are so similar, the two issues are discussed simultaneously. Table 5 shows how females define success, and Table 6 illustrates the male view.

For females, the most frequently mentioned characteristics of success were happiness/contentment (31%), a good job (24%, which they defined as one which has high status, is enjoyable, and pays well), wealth or enough money to live comfortably (23%), and a happy family life (13%). There were some differences between urban, rural, and suburban populations in that a good job was most important to rural females and happiness was considerably less important (14%), but overall the top three factors remained the same regardless of residence.

For males, having money and wealth (26%) was the most frequently mentioned attribute of success. This was followed by

Table 5. Young women's definition of success: factors mentioned by 5% or more of female groups

1. Happiness/contentment	31%
2. Good job (high status, enjoyable, good pay)	24%
3. Money, wealth	23%
4. Happy family life	13%
5. Nice car, house	7%
6. Friends	6%
7. Achieving goals	5%

Table 6. Young men's definition of success: factors mentioned by 5% or more of male groups

1. Money, wealth	26%
2. Nice car, house	15%
3. Good job	13%
4. Happiness, pleasure	13%
5. Happy family life	12%
6. Friends	5%

other symbols of material success, a nice car or house (15%), followed by a good job (13%). The lists for the urban and rural males were quite similar to the overall male picture. Suburban males, while still believing that money was the most important factor (30%), also listed happiness (18%) and a good family life (14%).

There were several key differences between the females' and males' definition of success. The females focused more on psychological, philosophical attributes such as happiness both in general terms and in relationships, while the males were more likely to see success in concrete, material terms, such as wealth and high quality consumer goods (cars, big screen TV's, houses, etc.). The same themes appeared when they talked about jobs as attributes of success. The females were more likely to describe a good job as one which was enjoyable and interesting, while the males thought of a good job as one which paid well. The following quotes, first from females and then males, suggest the flavor of these differences.

Typical Female Responses:

"Happiness with where you are, your relationships, what you're doing."

"You are content and happy with all you do. You have good communication with others and are proud of yourself and your accomplishments."

"A house, car, happiness, successful in their jobs (a lot of money) and if there is a family, for it to be happy and not broken up, to accomplish their dreams."

"Happiness, security, a big screen TV, career, make a difference in other people's lives (positive) and still have a fun life, children."

"Feeling content with yourself and able to get up in the morning and not dread going to work. Well-respected and liked is also very important."

"Being happy is knowing that you didn't have a dream you didn't try for, knowing you tried to do what you wanted to do."

Typical Male Responses:

"A few children (3) and a lot of money."

"Happiness, well paying job, active sex life, good friends."

"Lots of money, nice house, good car, and freedom to do what you want and pay for it."

The difference in tone and content between the male and female responses may be interpreted in several ways. First, the females seem to be more complex and abstract in thinking about the future. This is somewhat inconsistent with research findings that teen-aged males are more advanced cognitively. Our findings raise the question of whether this may be true only in the areas measured by typical tests of formal operations, perhaps because they tend to use scientific and mathematical items with which boys are more familiar. Females seem to excel in other less frequently measured domains, such as philosophy (e.g., the meaning and purpose of life, what is worth striving for, what defines the good life) and in personal and interpersonal considerations (e.g., what is a good relationship, how is it maintained, what defines a "good friendship") (see Gilligan, 1982).

It is also surprising to find that adolescent females are more likely to define success and happiness in terms of job satisfaction than are males. This suggests that there has been a real revolution in the way young women view their adult roles. They seem to be saying that work and career are crucial aspects of happiness and success, not merely an add-on or a way to kill time until they get married. It may be that young women are just assimilating the idea that they are going to be workers and that satisfaction and meaning can come from that activity. In fact, they may have heard that idea so many times in their childhood and adolescence that they have come to believe that a woman cannot lead a full and satisfying life without having a "good job" or meaningful career. In contrast, work is a given for young men and there is no choice about whether or not to "have a career." Perhaps this is why young men are less likely to cite satisfying, enjoyable work as a key to success and happiness.

"Lots of money, nice house, good car, and freedom to do what you want and pay for it." (male group)

FAILURE IN ADULTHOOD

We also asked students to describe "What does it mean to be a failure at 30 or 40?" and found many of the same categories as we did in the question about success and happiness. Table 7 shows how young men and young women define failure in adulthood.

The same general categories were used by both males and females to define adult failure, though the frequencies with which they were cited were somewhat different. Both defined being unemployed or having a menial, unsatisfying job as the most typical sign of failure. Females (28%) were more likely than males (22%) to focus on the absence of or poor quality of a job. This strong emphasis on jobs and work by young women is merely the reverse of their definitions of success and happiness:

Table 7. Definition of failure in adulthood: factors mentioned by 5% or more of the groups

Males	
1. Unemployed or having a menial job	22%
2. Very poor, unable to support self	17%
3. Not married, no family	16%
4. No ambition, not trying, giving up	10%
5. Being an alcoholic	9%
6. Divorced	9%
7. No friends	6%
Females	
1. Unemployed, menial job	28%
2. No ambition, not trying, giving up	23%
3. Very poor, not able to support self	19%
4. Not married, no family	9%
5. Believing you are a failure	6%
6. Alcoholic	5%
7. No friends	5%

"When you lose your job when you've had the job for a long time." (female, urban group)

"Someone who is making poor money at his job and still doing the same thing he was when he was 20." (female, urban group)

"Being stuck in a job you don't like." (female, suburban group)

Males were more likely to assert that not having a job was worse for men than for women:

"Being unemployed. It would be different for a woman because if she's married, she still may get some income from her husband." (male, rural group)

Both males (17%) and females (19%), in approximately the same numbers, said that being poor—not being able to support oneself or one's family or being on welfare—was another symbol of failure. For males, not being married or having a family was the third most frequently cited sign of failure, with 16% stating this. Females were somewhat less likely (9%) to think this was so. Males were also more likely to think that being divorced symbolized failure than were females. Typical descriptions of failure in adult life for males was as follows:

Male Responses

"You have no money, no car, no house, no wife."

"Single, out of work, alcoholic."

"Assembly line job, 9-5 every day, struggling, poor. When you're still living with your parents. When you can't support yourself. When you're a drunk on skid row."

While females were almost equally concerned about symbols of material success such as having a "good" job (high status and high pay) and having enough money to support themselves, they were significantly more concerned about the psychological, intangible symbols of failure than were males. Twenty-three percent of the females, and 10% of the males said failure was the state of "giving up, not trying, not having any ambition, giving up on your dreams, not achieving your goals."

Female Responses

"When you don't have an aim in life, you're not happy with yourself and your lifestyle."

"Not trying, not caring, unhappy with what you've done."

"If you don't know what you want to do, not content with self, with your goals."

"The only way is to totally give up. I know a person who had so many dreams, now he just sits in front of the TV screen and stares at it. If you're bored but trying that's OK, as long as you're trying, you're not a failure. But forgetting your dream, that's being a failure."

"Someone who is really selfish is a failure. If you haven't done anything, freeloading, on welfare, unemployment, not trying to get a job, always criticizing."

A few of the female groups talked about the "empty nest" syndrome as failure for women:

"It's when your kids have grown up and moved out and you're getting older and your social life isn't that good. Your husband is an old frump and is losing interest in you. He's having an affair with a younger woman."

PREPARATION FOR ADULT LIFE BEYOND WORK

Young women, and to a lesser extent, young men aspire to be "Renaissance" persons—they want satisfying, prestigious, and lucrative careers; happy, love-filled marriages; beautiful homes; successful children; and happiness and personal contentment. How well do they think they are prepared not only to cope with all the duties and responsibilities of adult life, but to reap the benefits of such lofty goals? In the individual questionnaire, respondents were presented with a list of responsibilities beyond the job or career and asked how well-prepared they were in each area. Table 8 shows the responses for males and females in rank order of items from least to best prepared.

Overall, young women feel more adequately prepared to take on adult responsibilities in the noncareer domain than do young men. They feel considerably more competent to provide volunteer service, to raise children effectively, to run a household, and to balance home and work responsibilities. Males, on the other hand, feel better prepared to participate in public affairs and manage finances, two traditionally "male" domains.

The list gives credence to the old adage that "experience is the best, if not the only, teacher." The four areas in which teenagers feel most adequately prepared are the ones in which they have had the most direct experience—staying healthy (adolescence is the healthiest period of life), preventing pregnancy (either through education or experience), using leisure time (one of the major preoccupations of youth), and maintaining friendships (this period of life being the pinnacle of peer group involvement). The list suggests a useful agenda for youth-serving organizations that wish to create meaningful programs for older adolescents.

Table 8. Inadequacy of preparation for adult responsibilities (% Responding "Somewhat or Extremely Unprepared")

Responsibility	Female	Male
Being involved in public affairs (voting, working for political party)	55%	48%
Managing finances	43%	33%
Providing volunteer service	40%	57%
Raising children effectively	37%	45%
Maintaining long-term intimate relationships	27%	32%
Being able to support self adequately	22%	29%
Balancing home and work responsibilities	16%	26%
Running a household	16%	33%
Staying healthy	11%	11%
Preventing pregnancy	9%	13%
Using leisure time effectively	8%	9%
Maintaining good friendships	3%	4%

Section III:

FAMILY AND SCHOOL INFLUENCE ON FUTURE ROLES

"Boys learn to work for what they want. Girls think they can get anything they want just by acting cute and things like that. That doesn't work when you have a job." (male, rural group)

It seems obvious that the occupational choices, aspirations, ambitions, expectations, and future roles of young people are shaped by a number of societal forces, especially within family and school. We know that high school students tend to choose occupations that reinforce cultural stereotypes about the proper jobs for males and females. Menanteau-Horta (1983) found that 53% of Minnesota female high school seniors expected to enter typical female occupational roles and 38% aspired to typical male occupations. Males on the other hand overwhelmingly (87%) chose typical male jobs with only 9% choosing jobs typically held by females. This trend was more pronounced among rural youth. He also found that these differences begin early, with 65% of girls indicating by age 10 they wanted to be in women's occupations such as nursing, teaching, and clerical work. While a majority of girls in junior and senior high still wanted to be in typical women's jobs, the proportion declined to 53%. However, the proportion of females choosing clerical and service jobs, which require little preparation and likewise offer limited remuneration and status, increased dramatically from age 10 to 17. Other trends showed that older girls were less interested in nursing and teaching. However, interest in management and business and in various social science occupations, such as social work and psychology, increased with age (Menanteau-Horta, 1983).

In this study, which used the same system for classifying gender differences in the occupation structure as Menanteau-Horta (1983), we found fewer female students who expected to be working in female occupations at age 30. Forty-three percent of the girls chose typical women's jobs, 46% chose typical male jobs, and the remaining 11% selected "neutral" occupations. Males, on the other hand, were far more stereotyped in their choices with 93% choosing typical male occupations, 4% selecting female jobs, and 3% in the neutral category.

JOBS MEN AND WOMEN CAN'T DO

In the group discussions, the students were asked to describe in more depth their concepts about "men's" and "women's" work. Specifically, they were asked the following questions:

Do you think there are some jobs that women can't do? If yes, please list them and why women can't do them.

Are there some jobs that men can't do? If so, please list them and why men can't do them.

Young women were more likely to assume that both males and females were capable of performing a wider variety of jobs

than were the young men. About half the female respondents said that men and women could do any kind of work. The other half listed "jobs" that both sexes couldn't perform primarily because of biological differences. For example, young women argued that men couldn't be mothers, housekeepers, Playboy centerfolds, or female prostitutes. They suggested that members of their own sex couldn't participate in certain professional sports, like football and hockey, be priests, or perform jobs requiring great physical strength like ditch digging and construction.

On the other hand, the male high school respondents were more likely to think that there was a wider range of jobs women couldn't do both because of biological and cultural differences. Seventy-five percent of the young men listed jobs that women couldn't do, including being firefighters, police officers, in the military, politicians, president of the United States, or farmers! But young men could hardly think of any jobs they themselves couldn't do. Only 20% listed occupations or tasks that men cannot perform. Their list resembled the one that female respondents made—men can't be mothers, female strippers, housewives, cocktail waitresses, nuns, nurses, or cosmetics salespersons.

In general, we found young women to be more consistent in their personal choice of occupation and their general views about gender-specific jobs than were the males. In the group discussions half of the girls said that women can do any kind of job. In their response to the question about the kind of work they foresee for themselves in the future, about half chose male occupations and half chose female jobs. In contrast, the male respondents argued in the group discussions that there were few jobs men couldn't do, yet 93% chose typical male occupations as their personal choice. Again, we stand by our earlier conclusions that young men seemed to be more rigid and inflexible in their occupational choices than were young women.

PARENTS' EXPECTATIONS FOR CHILD'S CAREER

We also analyzed by gender their perceptions about the jobs their parents expected them to have by age 30. Remember these data refer to the young person's belief about the occupation their parents would like them to have rather than their parents' actual responses to the question. Table 9 below gives both sets of data—the young person's career choice for him/herself and the ones attributed to his/her parents. Of choices attributed to mothers for their daughters, 32% were typical men's jobs, 48% typical female jobs, and 20% neutral ones. Fathers tended to be less traditional, with an equal percentage, 40%, being reported as expecting their daughters to move into typical male and typical female jobs, and 20% selecting neutral occupations.

The same pattern exhibited by the young men in their overwhelming choices of typical male jobs was mirrored in their attributions of choice to their parents. Eighty-two percent of the mothers were thought to prefer typical male jobs for their sons, 6% female occupations, and 12% neutral ones. Fathers were perceived as just slightly more likely to want their sons to be in a male job at 85%, while only 2% were thought to prefer female occupations and 11% neutral ones.

These data suggest that young women perceived themselves to be more similar to their fathers than to their mothers in their choices of gender-typed occupations. Mothers were seen as having more traditional expectations for their daughters than were fathers. Both mothers and fathers were thought to have similar expectations about the kinds of jobs their sons should choose. Choices attributed to both were strongly oriented toward typical male jobs. It was of interest, however, that parents were not seen as being as traditional in their views of what kind of work is appropriate for their sons as the sons themselves were. Overall, it appears that girls are less locked into gender-specific jobs than are young men. It is a paradox that today it is the young male who perceives himself to have fewer occupational options.

GROWING UP MALE AND FEMALE

We wondered how young people themselves view the relationship between their socialization at home and in school to their future roles and aspirations. We asked a series of questions, first to find out whether they saw significant differences in the ways males and females were socialized, and then to stimulate speculation on the consequences of any differential child-rearing practices they identified. The questions asked of the high school students were:

Do you think parents treat daughters differently than sons? In what ways?

Do you think girls are treated differently than boys in school? In what ways?

If girls and boys are treated differently in school and at home, how does this affect their future plans and aspirations?

The respondents almost unanimously agreed that boys and girls were treated differently in the family during their adolescent years. (Few groups looked back to child-rearing practices experienced during early childhood or the elementary years.) However, they were less convinced that there were differential practices by gender in school.

At Home

Both males and females agreed that girls are more protected by parents because they are viewed as vulnerable to a variety of serious problems such as pregnancy and assault. For some of the respondents, both male and female, parental fears were understandable because they, too, were concerned about safety:

"They tend to keep females on a tight leash because of the weirdoes around these days." (male, rural group)

Table 9. Occupational plans by gender: choices by youth and those attributed to their parents

Respondent	"Male" Jobs	"Female" Jobs	"Neutral" Jobs
Male Students	93%	4%	3%
Father's Plan for Son	85%	2%	11%
Mother's Plan for Son	82%	6%	12%
Female Students	46%	43%	11%
Father's Plan for Daughter	40%	40%	20%
Mother's Plan for Daughter	32%	48%	20%

"They are more cautious and protective because daughters could go out and get pregnant. Guys are physically able to defend themselves." (female, suburban group)

"Parents don't let girls stay out as late at night, they put more restrictions on them because they are afraid they are not safe." (female, rural group)

More typical, though, was a tone of resentment and frustration on the part of young women about being *overprotected* by parents. They charged that males have more freedom and more opportunities to take risks, to experiment, to have fun. Girls, on the other hand, were too sheltered:

"Parents are a lot more protective of daughters. They always ask daughters a lot more questions about what they do." (female, urban group)

"They think we're fragile and that we'll get hurt, but that's stupid. Mostly, they overprotect us because of the fear of pregnancy." (female, suburban group)

"Guys get away with more, they can drive earlier and more often. They're liberal with sons. Like if I came in drunk, I'd be shot. But when my brother does, they just sort of shrug it off. There is a double standard toward sex, alcohol, drugs. Boys can, girls can't." (female, rural group)

"They trust boys more, they let them do more things than girls and let them go more places. They get cars easier cause they trust them more." (female, rural group)

While there was general agreement on the part of male respondents that girls were more protected and sheltered in regard to freedom to drive, go out at night, drink, be sexual, etc., they also found some advantages in this "overprotection." The most frequent theme among the males was that girls were "spoiled, pampered, and babied." Most did not elaborate beyond just asserting "they're spoiled." When they did explain this charge, the girls were thought to have more privileges around the house, such as talking on the phone and "getting their way" and in receiving material items such as clothes and luxuries.

"They think we're fragile and that we'll get hurt, but that's stupid. Mostly, they overprotect us because of the fear of pregnancy." (female, suburban group)

"Daughters get their way because they whine." (male, rural group)

"Girls get more money, more free time, and more clothes." (male, urban group)

"When we (males) talk on the phone, we get yelled at. When they do, nothing is said, they are just spoiled." (male, suburban group)

"Sons don't have daddy's credit card." (male, suburban group)

Both males and females noted another arena in the home where they are treated differently—chores and home responsibilities. Far fewer respondents discussed this theme, however. While nearly every group of males and females talked about the greater parental protection of girls and more freedom for boys, only about 15% of the groups made comments about home chores. They charged that they had stereotyped jobs around the home: the girls did more cleaning, cooking, and washing dishes and the boys did more yard work and, in rural areas, farm work such as milking cows, planting, and driving the tractor. Rural males were more likely to complain that they had to work harder than their sisters. This was not the case in urban and suburban communities. In fact, these girls were more likely to feel imposed upon and forced to do more than their share of the household tasks.

In School

While differential treatment of males and females is considered by the young to be a norm within their families, it is less so in school. Only half of the female respondents and two-thirds of the males thought this was the case in school. According to the majority of male respondents, girls received preferential treatment in school. They charged that they were disciplined less stringently, given better grades for less work, and more trusted and favored by teachers:

"Girls don't get punished as much. The boys are getting detentions left and right while the girls are disturbing just as much, but don't get detentions." (male, urban group)

"They talk their way out of everything. Teachers are generally nicer to them." (male, rural group)

Female respondents were more likely to assert that there were no major differences in treatment by teachers and administrators. Of the half that did find differences, some were similar to those of the male respondents—they were trusted and favored more by teachers and disciplined less harshly. However, according to the girls, this was justified because their behavior tended to be more acceptable.

"The girls are more mellow and the guys have to show off. Teachers will get more physical with guys." (female, urban group)

"I come in late to school and they say ok, but this guy, who the teachers can't stand, comes in right behind me with the same excuse and he gets three days suspension. They really watch the guys more, but that's because they goof around more." (female, rural group)

"Girls are treated better because they treat teachers better and they don't try to show off as much as guys. Guys are watched more closely." (female, urban group)

One theme appeared in the female responses that was not in those of the males: teachers have higher expectations of young women. The reasons supporting this assertion ran: 1) because girls are better behaved and more likely to follow the school's rules, it is assumed they will not act up in school; 2) because girls tend to work harder in their academic work, higher quality work is expected of them:

"It seems like guys don't have to work as hard to get good grades. They don't expect as much of guys. When guys don't do their homework, they don't seem surprised. If a girl doesn't, the teachers act real disappointed." (female, suburban group)

"Girls are supposed to be quiet and since they're better students, they are expected to work harder. Guys, especially jocks, just sit in history class, not doing any work, but since the teacher is also the coach, they don't get into trouble." (female, rural group)

"Girls are expected to live up to standards. They don't think you should be aggressive and loud and show off." (female, urban group)

"Girls are supposed to be quiet and since they're better students, they are expected to work harder. Guys, especially jocks, just sit in history class, not doing any work, but since the teacher is also the coach, they don't get into trouble." (female, rural group)

Curricular Choices by Gender

There has been a great deal of concern on the part of educators and policy makers about the American high school student's reluctance to opt for courses in math, science, and computers during their secondary school career. The problem has been documented in a series of recent reports about the dismal state of American education. Further, we often hear that young women are even less likely to choose courses in the technical and scientific areas, and this is viewed as a serious disadvantage to their opportunities for career advancement. We wondered if this was really the case among students in Minnesota in 1984.

In the individual questionnaire, we asked students whether they had taken or plan to take courses in a variety of areas, including advanced math (geometry, algebra, calculus, trigonometry); advanced science (physics, chemistry, physiology); vocational-technical courses (such as auto mechanics, drafting, office occupations, food service, agriculture); typing; computers; foreign languages; and advanced placement courses. The results are shown in Table 10. We combined the two categories of "am now or have already taken" and "plan to take" in order to find out the level of interest that students have in these various subjects.

Table 10. Courses students have taken or expect to take in high school

Course	Male	Female
Advanced Math	85%	85%
Advanced Science	70%	70%
Vocational-Technical	74%	54%
Typing	78%	86%
Computers	76%	69%
Foreign Languages	54%	65%
Advanced Placement	44%	40%

The key findings are: 1) a very high percentage of students in our study are interested in coursework in science, math, and computers; 2) there are no significant differences between males and females in their interest in math and science; and 3) girls are more interested in courses in typing and foreign languages than are boys, but boys are more likely to opt for vocational-technical courses.

These findings indicate first of all that Minnesota high school students may have heard the warnings from their elders about the importance of being well-prepared in the scientific area. Secondly, young women may have overcome their fears about venturing into the technical domain, traditionally a male preserve. Third, males seem to be willing to learn typing, which has been traditionally viewed as a skill women, but not men, need to earn a living. Fourth, females seem to excel in language arts, which may be the reason for their willingness to take foreign languages more frequently than males. Fifth, just as we found that males are more likely to choose careers in the technical and skilled work categories, we find they are also preparing themselves earlier and more frequently for these careers than are females.

IMPLICATIONS OF DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT

Almost all the respondents (90%) thought that the different treatment afforded to males and females at home and school does affect their future plans and aspirations. In general, they perceived that the overall impact was negative for girls and positive for boys. Two major effects were cited: 1) psychological impact on personality and goal-setting and 2) attitudes about the world of work.

"It's a downer. Makes her less confident so they don't try hard and settle for less and don't take advantage of what they've got." (female, suburban group)

About half of the groups focused on the psychological impact on all aspects of a person's life—personality, goals and dreams, work, and family life. Female respondents tended to emphasize this theme. They suggested that young women could emerge as less assertive, less aggressive, and more dependent than young men. They described how their confidence and competence could be eroded by being sheltered and protected:

"If she believes how she's treated, like a girl who has been overprotected, she's more likely to feel she needs it all her life." (female, rural group)

"If girls are constantly put down they think they won't be able to achieve anything in the future." (female, rural group)

"It's a downer. Makes her less confident so they don't try hard and settle for less and don't take advantage of what they've got." (female, suburban group)

"The boys will think they can do anything they want and boys will have more confidence than the girls will." (female, suburban group)

"Either they are spoiled rotten or don't think they're worth anything." (female, ruban group)

"Boys get treated like hell-raisers. Boys think they have more power." (female, urban group)

A few female groups (about 5%) thought that being treated as weak and in need of protection (especially if they realized they were competent) might make them want to prove that they were being misjudged:

"If they are treated unequally, they might be more competitive and ambitious, just to show everyone they can do it." (female, suburban group)

"Some of us feel the different treatment motivates girls into success out of spite. Others feel it hinders girls, making them feel more vulnerable to failure. Breaks your spirit." (female, rural group)

The other half of the groups focused on the impact on careers and work roles. They suggested that young men and women choose stereotypical male and female jobs because of the way they are reared at home and at school:

"I think it affects that because for example if a boy was treated like he should be tough and act like a man he would probably be ashamed to say he wanted to be a florist." (female, urban group)

"Women are often discouraged from getting a man's job, but men aren't always scorned for wanting a woman's job." (male, suburban group)

"Girls learn to accept and live in stereotypes, you begin to think you can only do certain jobs because you're a girl." (female, rural group)

Some emphasized that young men grew up knowing they would have the major responsibility for caring for themselves and their family:

"Parents expect them to be the breadwinner. They branch out into more areas of life because they know they have to figure out how they will support themselves and are trying to find an area they are really good at. Girls just think that someone will take care of them so they tend to stay in the same place all their lives." (female, rural group)

"Boys are just set up to go out, work, and get a job. Girls are not always trained in this way." (male, rural, group)

"Some girls just think that once they finish high school, they're supposed to get married and just wait to have kids so they don't really prepare themselves for a good job. (female, urban group)

Others, mostly male respondents, thought that girls might not be accustomed to challenging, hard work and would shun it:

"Women would not want to work in a harsh environment or do really hard work." (male, rural group)

"Girls who are pampered at home may find it harder to make it on their own in the future." (male, urban group)

"Boys learn to work for what they want. Girls think they can get anything they want just by acting cute and things like that. That doesn't work when you have a job." (male, rural group)

"The consensus for all six of us girls was that when guys go out in the work world after school they are more independent and they have more pressure to succeed, whereas girls tend to not feel as pressured to do well in the job area and may feel fine staying home and taking care of the house." (female, rural group)

Section IV:

MYTHS AND STEREOTYPES ABOUT SEX ROLES

"We want to marry a successful, handsome man but we want to have a choice to work or not, so in case that we are on our own we can take care of ourselves and not be dependent on anyone." (female, urban group)

ARE CINDERELLA AND SUPERMOM TEENAGE IDOLS?

In the group discussions, respondents were asked to react to two of the myths (or models) that have been held up as success stories for young women in America—Cinderella and Supermom. Despite the advent of Velcro sport shoes, the glass slipper has not been discarded. It is tucked deep in the closet, but it is there—boxed and tissue wrapped, waiting for the time when it will be needed. As to Supermom, her traits and role are admired and accepted almost as much as Superman's.

Cinderella

The discussion about the "Cinderella Syndrome" was approached with the question:

Many young women hope to marry successful, handsome men who will take care of them for the rest of their lives so they won't have to work. What is your reaction to this statement?

About two-thirds of both the males and females accepted the notion completely or with some qualification. Overall 20% gave total endorsement to the Cinderella idea. Rural acceptance was lowest (females 7%; males 13%) suburban acceptance was highest (females 24%; males 38%):

"It's true. And if the girl is real good looking, she will be rich." (male, urban group)

"We all go for it." (female, suburban group)

"That's my dream." (female, rural group)

"I hope to marry someone like that. It's every girl's secret dream." (female, suburban group)

"Everyone wants to be rich and women don't really want to work." (female, urban group)

"As long as they 'put out,' it's okay with us." (male, rural group)

Acceptance with qualification was expressed by half of both males and females. These respondents did not reject the notion that young women are waiting for their prince, but merely offered some cautions to the modern princess. These cautions and qualifications fall into five categories:

1. Good idea but really just a dream; old fashioned but appealing:

"We'd all love to have this wonderful, easy, dream-like situation. But in reality we want more important things. Most girls want that but there is not much chance for it to happen." (female, suburban group)

2. Good idea but there aren't enough rich, handsome men to go around (a shortage of princes):

"There aren't enough successful, handsome men for all these women. They may all hope to marry these 'handsome' men, but they will probably find some short, dumpy men that can barely support them. Sounds great if they can find one." (female, urban group)

3. Idea is good but not dependable; death or divorce make it impractical and you need a back-up plan.

"I hope to marry someone like that. I think they should also be independent because if something doesn't work out they can take care of themselves." (female, rural group)

4. It's good if you don't marry just for the money; love is important.

"It sounds kinda cold to just look for a rich, successful man. I don't think you should just think of money and security, there has to be love if a marriage is going to last. But like my mother says, 'It's just as easy to fall in love with a rich man as a poor man.'" (female, urban group)

5. Idea is okay but we must recognize people may choose to also have careers. The best plan is marry the prince and then work if you wish.

"We want to marry a successful, handsome man but we want to have a choice to work or not, so in case that we are on our own we can take care of ourselves and not be dependent on anyone." (female, urban group)

"Women should be expected to work also. They receive equal education in high school so they shouldn't cop out. However if she does find a guy to support her, she might as well not work." (female, rural group)

In their statements of qualified acceptance, the most common theme was that they liked the myth but recognized dual roles for

women and advocated that women might choose to work, particularly if her husband supports this option. More than any other group, urban females saw the myth as a way to gain choices, to be freed up to do "their own thing," and to have time to spend with children. As one group said:

"So many people have kids and it doesn't fit into their lifestyle. They are stuck. They have a responsibility that is so large, takes so much time. So many people don't take time to think about it." (female, urban group)

About one-third of the participants *rejected* the Cinderella concept because: 1) women need to work and be successful as much as men do; 2) a woman needs first to become independent then find a mate; and 3) the myth is degrading and insulting to women's aspirations. Rural females were least (21%) inclined to reject it, while rural males were most likely to (61%). Suburban males were less likely to discard the myth than were urban males.

The young women in this group are strong and unequivocal in their rejection:

"It's stupid and unrealistic. You can't make a living not working." (female, urban group)

"It's a poor reason to get married. It's a disillusion that they believe there is some perfect guy out there; there isn't any and they shouldn't depend on anyone. They should learn to depend on themselves more." (female, urban group)

"Horse hockey! That assumption is outdated, stupid, ridiculous. Women need to accomplish something for themselves. You can't get satisfaction sitting home and changing diapers." (female, suburban group)

"Women need to work to fulfill a need to be independent." (female, suburban group)

Rural females focused especially on economic constraints. They cited the need to have two incomes, the need for both parents to work to support the children, and the uncertain state of the economy:

"In most cases, you won't marry someone with a good enough job so you don't have to work. I think men want girls to pull their own weight nowadays." (female, rural group)

"It's hard with the economy for two not to work." (female, rural group)

Rural males were equally concerned about the financial picture. Their discussion emphasized two main themes. On the one hand they expressed support for a woman's right to work if she wanted to, particularly if it made it easier for the family and provided a better standard of living for the children. On the other hand, some saw the Cinderella idea as an easy way out for lazy women, a way to "rip off" men and take advantage of them. For some, the macho notion of "my old lady's gonna work" was expressed. Urban males made this point only half as often as rural males; suburban males didn't mention it.

Taking Care of Cinderella: The Male Viewpoint

A second question was posed on the Cinderella syndrome and represented a subtle change in emphasis. Rather than asking the young person to consider the advantages to the young woman in finding a man to take care of her, we asked the question from the male point of view. The question implies that a successful, competent man prides himself on being able to care for his wife and family financially. The question was:

A successful man makes enough money to support his wife and family so she won't have to work. What is your reaction to this statement?

Nearly twice as many males endorse this concept without reservation as do females (40% vs. 21%). While some males reject Cinderella because they feel used, they seem to feel proud and competent when considered as breadwinners. Below are some examples of glaring inconsistencies within the same group of young men. First, we give their response to the first Cinderella question, (labeled #1) and then to the second one, (labeled #2):

#1. "They are brown noses. All they are looking for is a free ride through life."
#2. "That's the way it should be." (male, urban group)

#1. "They should want a career no matter how successful their husbands are."
#2. "If she is happy with the arrangement, it is fine." (male, rural group)

#1. "Not enough confidence so they won't have to work, scared of the job market, looking for an easy way out."
#2. "They're lucky if they can, more power to him if the guy can work and support his family." (male, suburban group)

#1. "I believe that women are spoiled at home and expect to be spoiled when they marry."
#2. "If you can afford it, why not?" (male, suburban group)

Combining total agreement with qualified acceptance, 59% of males and 50% of females support this restatement of the Cinderella model. Again, rural youth were much more apt to mention economic considerations as a reason for offering qualified acceptance.

There were two noteworthy themes among the female respondents who gave their qualified and sometimes reluctant agreement to this question. One, coming particularly from rural and suburban girls, was that women needed to have permission from their spouses in order to work. The other, primarily from urban girls, was that being freed from the necessity to earn a living would offer opportunities to expand her horizons.

Below are some examples of the somewhat passive and powerless tone expressed by the rural and suburban females. Typical responses which followed the opening phrase, "Fine, but if she wants to work. . . " were:

"She should be able to work." (female, rural group)

"Men should allow women to work if they want to." (female, suburban group)

"If she wants extra money and if he will allow her to." (female, suburban group)

"We all say true to this with the exception of while making a comfortable living, a successful man will strive to make his wife happy and then will allow her to work so as not to be tied down if she wants to." (female, rural group)

This theme is underscored by several comments from males that support women working for financial reasons, but still imply that men have the final word:

"You'll never have enough money. If the woman wants to work, let her work. And if you don't have enough money, then make her work." (male, suburban group)

The responses from the urban females seemed more empowered and focused more on their own aspirations:

"I'd do some kind of work anyway." (female, urban group)

"It would be a chance to take care of kids, do some theatre, do what I want." (female, urban group)

"I wouldn't mind marrying rich, but I want to take care of myself. But I want to be supported too, emotionally, with respect, and be secure." (female, urban group)

Many females and males saw the woman's income as an extra, a supplement to be used for vacations and luxuries for the children. This was expressed in terms of "finding something to do to make a little extra, "to help out," to provide more opportunities for the children." Some commented that it was important for the woman "to keep busy." Housework and staying home was viewed as being boring, as doing nothing:

"The wife should get a job so she doesn't have to sit around the house, unless she has kids." (female, rural group)

"She shouldn't become a 'homebody.'" (female, urban group)

"The woman should look into charity work and make practical use of herself." (female, urban group)

Males echoed this idea of keeping busy and made numerous references to women "getting lazy" if they just stayed home and didn't work.

Supermom

Do young women want to "have it all," as columnist Ellen Goodman says? She worries that adolescent women have unrealistic expectations and have come to believe that they can be successful careerists, mothers, wives, and community leaders all at the same time, and in addition, feel personally actualized. We asked the young people, in their discussion groups, to describe their thoughts and feelings about this model using the following question:

Some women are "Supermoms." They have good jobs, nice, clean houses, two or three happy, smart children and contented husbands. What's your reaction to this idea?

"If they can do that much and be successful, good for them." (female, suburban group)

The responses form a continuum from strong endorsement to total rejection of the "Supermom" image as a worthy ideal. More males (70%) than females (60%) endorse the idea, either totally accepting the concept or agreeing with mild reservations. There were those who offered *uncritical praise:*

"If they can do that much and be successful, good for them." (female, suburban group)

"Show me this woman." (male, urban group)

"Really decent." (male, rural group)

"This is true for many women because it is the natural way to do things and they usually don't let things break down." (female, urban group)

"We'd like to be them." (female, rural group)

"That's good; I wish everyone could be that way." (female suburban group)

"They are a perfect family." (male, suburban group)

Some suggested that it takes a special kind of person—hard-working, energetic, possessing a strong self concept, dedicated, from a "good" family—to achieve this:

"That would take a lot of energy." (female, suburban group)

"They have prepared themselves before their career. They were sure of themselves." (female, urban group)

"She must be a super dedicated person." (male, suburban group)

"They had to work hard to get all that." (male, rural group)

"Probably raised in a happy, healthy family themselves." (female, suburban group)

Others qualified their endorsement with caveats about the importance of the mother *choosing* this lifestyle and the rest of the family being happy with the situation:

"Great if the mom is happy and not just the rest of the family." (female, urban group)

"It's okay if they can handle it and that's what they want to do." (male, urban group)

Others liked the idea of being or being married to a "Supermom" but worried that there were only a few of them. "It's rare" and "there aren't too many of them" seemed more a lament about their scarcity than a criticism of the concept.

About 10% of the respondents, while not actually rejecting Supermom and all she stands for, suggested that it was unrealistic and somewhat exaggerated. They argued that everyone has family conflicts and problems and that the picture of an "ideal" family lacked credibility:

"It's unrealistic, no way that five people can all be happy at once—you can come close, but it's impossible to be everything for everyone." (female, suburban group)

"It sounds great but there has to be a catch." (female, rural group)

Approximately 30% of the females and 25% of the males offered strong criticism or outright *rejection* of the Supermom concept. Some argued that it was a fantasy and that such families simply did not exist:

"It's too perfect. This is the 'Brady Bunch' image. All families will have their share of problems, things won't always run smoothly." (female, urban group)

"Life isn't that easy. It's just a show on the outside. They just seem happy, but they're not." (male, rural group)

"They probably are rich, have a maid, a nanny for the kids and the husband is on drugs so he's always happy." (female, suburban group)

"It's fantasyland. I'll bet she's too tired to have sex." (male, rural group)

Others asserted that "Supermom" was probably miserable if all the other members of the family were leading such charmed lives:

"My mom is a 'Supermom' and she just hates it." (female, suburban group)

"My mom is divorced but I think she's a Supermom. She doesn't have a 'contented' husband. That term makes me sick, like she's done her duty to please him." (female, urban group)

Some young women stated that the Supermom ideal was not one they wished to achieve:

"I don't want to be like that at all. I might want to be single, but I still think I will have a full, happy life." (female, urban group)

"I don't want to be Supermom. I don't have such high expectations. I just want a regular family. Some days the

house won't be clean and the kids won't be happy, but I can live with that. Some women just burn out from trying to do all of that. I won't let that happen to me." (female, urban group)

VALUE OF WORK IN THE HOME

We found that few teenage women aspired to be solely homemakers (only 2% expected to be primarily engaged in homemaking at age 30), but almost all hoped to be superb "home managers" as well as successful careerists. Given their changing and not very positive view of the role of the "housewife," we were interested in finding out how young people value work in the home. Since the issue of whether homemakers are entitled to Social Security benefits is so central to this debate, we posed this question in the group discussions:

As it is now women who work in the home taking care of their families do not receive Social Security benefits when they turn 65. Only people who work outside the home receive them. What is your reaction to this?

"They work just as hard as anyone else. In fact they deserve it more because they've never gotten paid for what they do at home." (female, rural group)

There were very clear gender differences on this issue. Seventy-seven percent of the young women thought this policy was unfair and discriminatory, while only 45% of the male respondents were opposed to it. The major objection offered by female respondents, but by very few male groups, was that work at home is equally important to work outside the home, and should therefore be recognized through Social Security benefits. They said:

"It's not fair because their work is just as hard or harder than working outside the home." (female, suburban group)

"It's just as much of a job at home as if you're working outside. Work is work." (female, suburban group)

"They work just as hard as anyone else. In fact they deserve it more because they've never gotten paid for what they do at home." (female, rural group)

"It's hard work to take care of kids. Why should women be put down because they do what people tell us to do. Raise kids." (female, urban group)

The most frequent reason offered by the males who thought this was an unfair system was that everyone was entitled to Social Security, regardless of where you worked or what you did. Many young women also took this position:

"Where they work is irrelevant to the benefits." (male, urban group)

"We think Social Security should be given to everyone." (female, urban group)

"They need it just as much as everyone else. We think everyone should get them. Otherwise they won't have any money for when they are old." (male, rural group)

The other frequent objection from both males and females was that it was generally unfair, without explaining their reasons for labeling it unjust. In summary, the reasons given by females in objection to the current practice in the Social Security system were similar to those of the males, with the exception that girls expressed the belief that work at home was just as hard, important, and worthwhile as work outside the home. Males disagreed with the current policy on the grounds of fairness and the right of all people to have enough money to live on during old age.

A majority of male respondents (55%) and a minority of females (23%) do support the current practice. By far the most common reason given by both males and females for this position is that only those persons employed outside the home, and who have contributed dollars to the fund deserve to receive Social Security benefits:

"The women didn't contribute to the Social Security fund so why should they benefit from it." (female, urban group)

"They don't deserve it if you didn't earn in the 'old-fashioned way.' "(male, suburban group)

"That's the way it should be, they don't provide a public service." (male, urban group)

"It makes sense since they don't have any taxable income." (male, rural group)

"That's the way it should be. They didn't put anything in, so how can they get something out of it. If they want Social Security, they should have forgot about a family and went out and got a job." (male, rural group)

Other reasons offered were that the husband's benefits should support the homemaker and that it would put too large a burden on the system to add this new category of workers. Young women were particularly likely to take this latter position:

"It may be unfair but nothing can be done because our economy can't afford it." (female, suburban group)

"It sounds terrible to say but we (the U.S.) can't even afford the Social Security it gives out now." (female, suburban group)

"'It would be very unrealistic to change the system. Where would the money come from?" (female, urban group)

Those who supported the current policy offered strictly economic arguments, i.e., if people didn't have some of their income deducted for Social Security, they shouldn't receive any back, or it would be too expensive to add homemakers to the system. In contrast, those who disagreed with the current policy almost never discussed the economic consequences, but built their case on human rights and human dignity issues—that it was an entitlement for all Americans and that women's work was valuable and worthwhile and should be so recognized.

SEX ROLE STEREOTYPES

Most of the young women in our study expect to achieve the American dream on their own with high status, high salaried careers, which they believe will bring them happiness and contentment. But they don't intend to give up a good family life for their success in the work world. They believe they can have it all. The attitudes of the adolescent male toward success, career, and family life show fewer signs of dramatic change, though many indicate that they would support and encourage their wives in their quest for career achievement.

We wondered how these new values affected the sex role

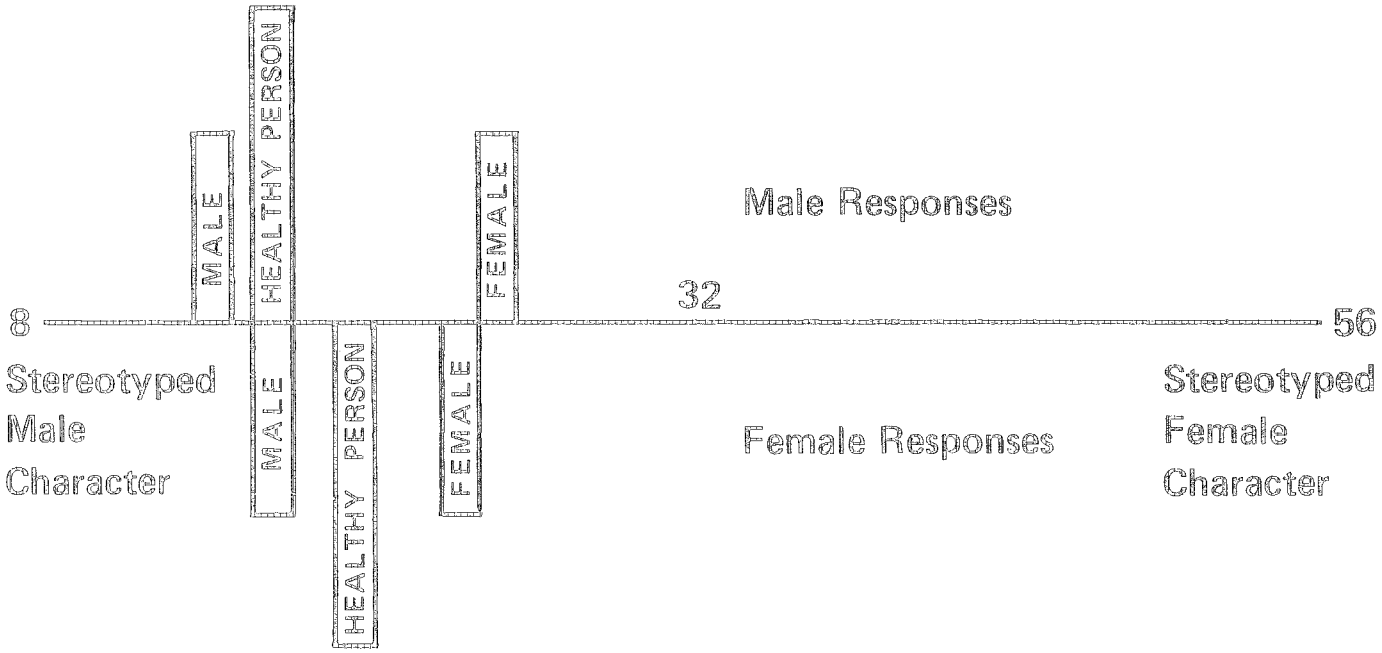

Figure 1. Youth's perceptions of stereotyped gender characteristics

stereotypes that most Americans hold from womb to tomb. Do young people still subscribe to the image that women are (and should be) emotional, interested in their appearance, intuitive rather than rational, nurturing, gentle, attuned to the feelings of others, dependent, passive, followers, etc.? Do they accept the stereotypic picture of men as independent, aggressive, unemotional, dominant, objective, rational, active, leaders, adventurous, ambitious, and self-confident? We studied this question through the use of a modified version of the instrument on sex role stereotypes created by Inge Broverman and her associates (Broverman et al., 1970). They conceived on stereotypes in terms of the degree to which men and women are perceived to possess any specific trait. Their questionnaire was set up as a series of bipolar pairs: passive-active, dependent-independent, aggressive-nonaggressive, and so forth. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which each item characterized a normal male, a normal female, and a healthy, competent adult. The questionnaire is shown in Appendix A.

Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the findings. As shown in Figure 1, most males and females think that the typical male, typical female, and healthy person have more stereotypical male characteristics than female ones. In the instrument we used, the characteristics considered to be "male" are: aggressive, independent, unemotional, competitive, adventurous, leader, not appearance-oriented, and selfish. Female characteristics were the polar opposites of these: nonaggressive, dependent, emotional, noncompetitive, cautious, follower, appearance-oriented, and unselfish. A person seen as possessing totally male characteristics would receive a score of 8; for one with totally female characteristics, the score would be 56.

In our sample, young men assigned to the typical male scores a mean of 14.7, the healthy person a mean score of 16.4, and a typical female a mean score of 24.6. Young women, assigned the typical male a mean score of 16.3, the healthy person a mean score of 19.3, and a typical female a mean score of 23.4. In other words, both male and female respondents describe males, females, and healthy persons as possessing more typically male characteristics. It is an indication that the stereotypically female characteristics of passivity, gentleness, submissiveness, dependence, etc., are neither admired nor perceived to exist in large degree in men, women, or healthy persons. In other words, stereotypic femininity was seen by young people as a negative assessment of the female sex and runs counter to popular assumptions about maturity and mental health.

As found in other studies using the Broverman scale, or modified versions of it, both males and females, including mental health professionals (Broverman, 1972), perceive competent, healthy persons to have more male than female characteristics. The young men in our study viewed the healthy person (mean score of 16.4) as more masculine than did the young women (mean score of 19.3). The difference was highly significant ($t = 3.07$; $P < .0001$). Nevertheless, both males and females agreed that a competent, healthy person tended to be very similar to the typical male, as shown more clearly in Figure 2.

This may create a bind for young women in that it appears to be difficult to be both a healthy person and feminine at the same time. As Gilligan (1982) points out, the very core of women's ethics and identity is nurturing and caring for other people. "Not harming others," intentionally or unintentionally, is a basic principle for most women. How, then, does this fit with the perception of the young women in our study that to be a healthy adult, one needs to be very independent, aggressive, competitive, and not too emotional? The more traditional view that woman, as the nuturant one, was by definition, self-sacrificing (this quality was labelled "unselfish" in our instrument) was also rejected by the female respondents. It is possible that the most basic personality structure of women may be in conflict with these newer perceptions of adult maturity. Young women have few guides among the older generation for resolving this conflict, and will have to find their own way.

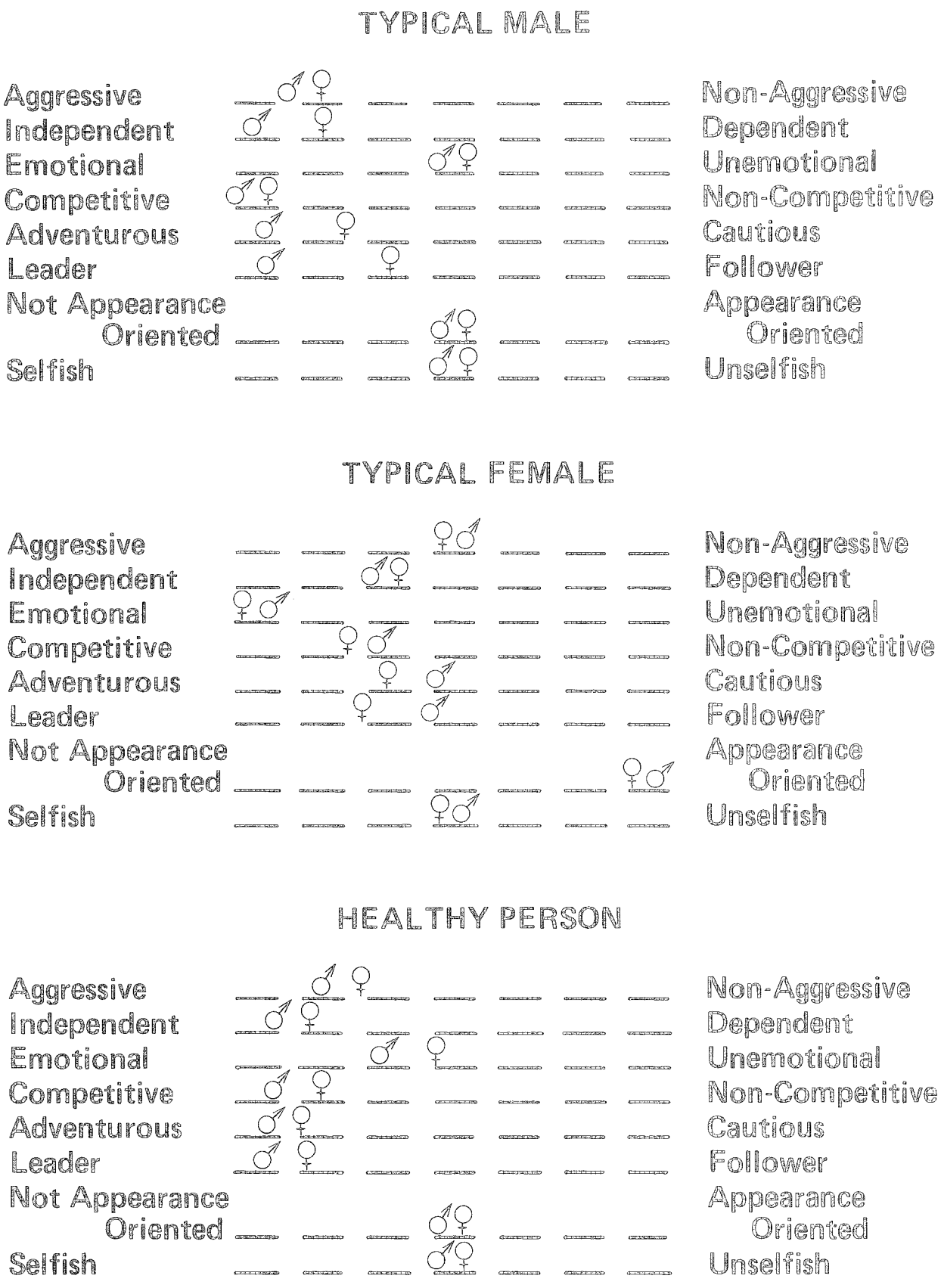

Figure 2. Perceptions of the characteristics of males, females,and healthy persons

Section V:

BEING MALE AND FEMALE: ESSAYS FROM JOURNAL JUNIORS

"I'd rather be a woman because you get to stay home and not have to go to work and go places in the car. You could cook the meals and clean the house and be called mommy all the time." (female, age 10)

In the fall of 1983, the Journal Juniors column in the Minneapolis Star and Tribune received more than 2,000 essays from 10-18 year olds on the topic, "Would You Rather Be a Man or a Woman?" A content analysis of the major themes and concepts of 160 randomly selected essays provides important—and delightfully expressed—insights into the ways young Minnesotans view male and female responsibilities, roles, and tasks.

A clear majority of young people indicated a preference for their own gender. Ninety percent of the boys and 80% of the girls reported satisfaction with their own sex. And while less than 1% of the males even considered being female, 20% of the young women indicated they would either like to be male (16%) or were not certain which gender they preferred (4%). It is interesting that the young women who would consider switching articulated the same "advantages" that young men did for choosing "maleness": better job possibilities, less emphasis on clothing and appearance, and a generally easier lifestyle.

Overall, the rationales for gender preference can be grouped in six categories. Both sexes referred to these issues. They appear here in order of frequency (the categories add up to more than 100% because some essays include more than one theme).

1. *World of Work* (56%)—Jobs, opportunities, career choices, options;
2. *Appearance* (31%)—Concerns with clothing, hair styles, looks, aging;
3. *Childbearing and Childrearing* (24%)—Parenting responsibilities;
4. *Emotional/Psychological Health* (15%)—Feelings, relationships, self-esteem;
5. *Discrimination* (12%)—Sex discrimination in all areas of life;
6. *Life Style* (10%)—Advantages in the ways males and females are perceived to spend their time, be it "easy" or "hard."

Several issues appeared to be exclusively male or exclusively female concerns. Boys described the opportunities to participate in sports and outdoor activities as a plus. They cited advantages in political power and leadership associated with maleness as well as opportunities for dominance/superiority over women (10%). By contrast, young women were the only ones to see the freedom to pursue interests in domestic tasks (cooking, sewing,

running a house) and a greater life expectancy as compelling advantages for their sex.

WORLD OF WORK

Advantages in the work world were a major factor motivating boys to be male and motivating one-fourth of the girls to be female. Young women discussed work from three perspectives. First, they saw work as encompassing a wide range of flexible options, allowing them to pursue career interests at the same time as they cared for a family. This was attractive because they did not have to choose one at the expense of the other.

Second, girls felt they had a wide choice of both typical "women's jobs" or nontraditional work. They felt men were more limited in their options because most men would resist "women's work" (being a secretary or a flight attendant).

"The joy of homemaking and caring for children is reserved for a woman only, yet if she prefers she may venture into any of the fields of man; doctor, lawyer, Indian chief (chieftess)." (Age 15)

"Women have a better chance at the job market now than they used to. Now many more women are doctors and lawyers, truck drivers and construction workers, always considered a man's job. It's also more acceptable for a woman to stay home and take care of the kids than it is for a man, but luckily for men, that's changing." (Age 14)

Finally, young women (particularly the 10-12 year olds) appreciated the opportunity to be a housewife:

"And you can stay home and take care of the kids, instead of getting up and going to work. When you wake up your job is right there." (Age 11)

"I'd rather be a woman because you get to stay home and not have to work and go places in the car. You could cook the meals and clean the house and be called mommy all the time." (Age 10)

"I would rather be a woman because if you have children you can stay home and play the Atari and/or watch movies with your children while your husband goes to work." (Age 10)

For about a quarter of the young men, work opportunities were the major factor in their choice to be men. Twenty-three percent said men had better chances for high salaries and job promotions. The opportunity for upward job mobility was one of the most attractive advantages of being a man. Most males, but particularly the 15-18 year olds, observed:

"Most of the time people start at the bottom and work their way up in a company. Men can usually work their way up faster without delays like having children or worrying about them. Sometimes because men are stronger and more determined to make a good living, they are able to put more hours into their work." (Age 16)

"Another reason is that men can get good jobs easier than women can. Men also get more respect than the women do. Men can be mechanics, plumbers, doctors, lawyers, pilots, and many other things. Some women might not want to be mechanics or plumbers. Even if they did and were just as qualified as men they still would have to work twice as hard just to get the job. Men also are better paid than women are when doing the same job. This is because the men are thought of as the 'breadwinners' of the family." (Age 17)

"Men are the ones who always get the better jobs. If one man and ten women all applied for the same job, the man would probably be the one to get the job. Also men are paid more than most women for doing the same job. Men also have the most authority and would have the most authority at the job." (Age 16)

"What women are fighting for now, men have had handed to them on silver platters. Things such as higher wages, better job titles, and easier employment." (Age 15)

Of the girls who indicated a preference to be male, almost half said that better job opportunities and chances for advancement were compelling reasons for their preference. They argued that men have more options because they are not limited by physical strength or notions of "socially acceptable" roles.

"Men can have jobs like being a secretary, nurse, or housewife. But most women can't really have jobs like ditchdigging, coal mining, welding, and fixing cars. Sure, they can do that, but who's going to trust a woman with their car? Not many that I know of." (Age 14)

"Men get better jobs, and have better chances at getting jobs. The manager or owner thinks they're more dependable, and more capable of handling a stressing job." (Age 15)

"Today men get paid more money than women for doing the same amount of work. A friend of my mom's working on a construction job gets paid $4.40 per hour, while the men doing the same job get paid $7.00 per hour." (Age 16)

"What women are fighting for now, men have handed to them on silver platters. Things such as higher wages, better job titles, and easier employment." (male, age 15)

APPEARANCE

Appearance was the second most significant factor influencing choice of one gender over another. In this area women are viewed as having more choices than men, although young men see this choice as a burden rather than a bonus. Broadly defined, appearance includes variety and price of clothing, issues of diet and weight, and the range of possibilities for altering one's looks. Younger boys were particularly cynical about the amount of time, money, and effort women spent on their appearance. They acknowledged a great social pressure for girls to be "in style." Conversely, young women felt that they had a much more interesting and varied selection of clothes, hair styles, jewelry, and other items from which to choose.

Men's clothing and hair styles were viewed as boring and limited. A few girls underscored the diversity of female options, mentioning that women could wear men's clothes but men could not wear dresses.

The issue of style, make-up, and clothing was significantly more important for the 10-12 year olds than for the older teen women. Still, 17% of all females seriously noted the importance of appearance:

"Women can put on makeup so they don't look that old when they're thirty-five, and men on the other hand would look old." (Age 11)

"When you are a woman you can be very smart and look really nice. I'm not saying that men don't look nice in three piece suits, they all look carbon-copied." (Age 12)

". . . girls can wear different styles of clothing that come into fashion such as blazers, knickers, preppy pants, miniskirts, and fringed lacy blouses. Also, women wear high heels which help them appear taller, graceful, and poised. Another advantage is that women can wear different shades of eye shadow, blush, and lipstick or lipgloss. Makeup makes women's faces appear attractive and pretty . . . although men can wear jewelry and earrings, most of the jewelry in this world deals with feminish trinkets and jewelry such as stars, hearts, apples, and other cute objects." (Age 13)

One woman comically noted:

"I will admit there are some disadvantages to being a girl. For instance if you are a girl you have to get up two hours before school starts so you can take a shower, put on make-up, curl

your hair, take another shower because your hair has a mind of its own, and recurl your hair. All for what? You rush to school and realize it is Saturday . . . I'm glad I'm a girl. Being a guy wouldn't be tough enough for me, and besides that you can't wear mascara." (Age 14)

"Makeup would be awful, putting that junk on every day, can you imagine (if you're a boy) when or wherever you go being worried if your mascara is running or if your lipstick is wore off." (male, age 11)

For young men, women's perceived preoccupation with clothing and appearance detracted from the possible advantages of being female. Rather than viewing the choices and variety as options, young men saw them as a potential source of worry, aggravation, and competition.

"Take fashion for instance. Guys can pretty much dress how they feel, but girls have to wear 'what everyone else is wearing.'" (Age 13)

"It takes women three times longer to get ready in the morning. They have to up on make-up, make sure their hair is perfectly in place, and then sort through a thousand articles of clothing to find just the right thing to wear on that day. When dressing in formal attire, women have to put on pantyhose, they have to wear dresses, and when they wear them, they have to sit with their legs crossed, what a pain." (Age 13)

"Makeup would be awful, putting that junk on every day, can you imagine (if you're a boy) when or wherever you go being worried if your mascara is running or if your lipstick is wore off." (Age 11)

"I don't like girls clothes either, like short skirts and long baggy pants, and some girls wear the ugliest colors like pink pants and rainbow colored shirts and pink and blue socks. For some girls it takes hours to put on makeup. Some girls won't go any place if their makeup isn't perfect, and if it comes off, they have to go to the bathrooms and spend most of the day putting it on. Some shoes they wear are the dumbest. Like ballerina slippers. And their high boots and high heels are the most dangerous I have ever seen." (Age 10)

". . . they have to be so perfect. They have to have their hair just at the right angle. Or they have to wear certain clothes or they'll get laughed at all day long. They can't be very fat or very skinny. For instance, my sister. Everyone in our family and I'm sure all the kids in school would say she looks great. But oh no, not her. She thinks she's too fat. And you know what that means, diet, diet, diet, all the time. Sometimes she asks me 'If I take a bite will you eat the rest?' and I would hate to go through life like that." (Age 11)

"Women have to put on makeup to look nicer, men don't. Men keep their regular looks that God gave them." (Age 12)

CHILDBEARING AND CHILDREARING

Fifteen percent of the girls saw bearing and rearing children as a positive aspect of being a woman. About 10% of the boys mentioned these factors but in quite the opposite way. Girls saw having and taking care of children as a positive function of being a woman; young men looked upon it with clear distaste. The idea of being pregnant and actually having a child was viewed as painful and troublesome to males; females focused on the joy of motherhood. References to having and raising children were important to women of all age groups and to the younger boys. For older males, the interest and concern diminished considerably. The boys wrote:

"I would not want to be a woman because I would not like to be rushed to the hospital looking like I have a bowling ball in my stomach, and wondering if I would give birth on time, too early or too late." (Age 12)

"Men don't usually change the babies diapers, which I'd hate." (Age 10)

"Men don't have to go through the suffering of pregnancy or anything like that . . . They don't have to take care of the children or care for them when they're sick or send them off to school." (Age 11)

"One of the physical differences is the basic fact that men can't get pregnant—that's a plus." (Age 16)

"Another thought that comes to my mind is that they (women) are the ones who give birth to a child, something that would terrify me." (Age 16)

Young women described a variety of reasons for wanting to have children. Some spoke of the miraculous idea of having another human growing inside them, while others saw the opportunity to have power and impact over another person's life.

"Having a baby is the best thing that could happen to a woman because you get to raise that child the way you want to, and make them do things that you want them to do. That is good because it gives a woman power, the power to be loved, looked up to, leaned on for support, and admired." (Age 14)

"My other reason is because women can do what men never will. We can have the experience of feeling a living growing being inside our body. Men will never know what this is like." (Age 15)

"And what I like about being a woman, they have babies. I don't like the suffering, the pain, but I like the babies. And some men don't like cleaning up after a baby but women like it. It is nice to know you are cleaning up after a baby. Some men hate the smell of babies." (Age 11)

"My other reason is because women can do what men never will. We can have the experience of feeling a living growing being inside our body. Men will never know what this is like." (female, age 15)

"A woman has the pleasure of giving birth. She watches her children mature and become adults. She is their role model and teacher." (Age 16)

EMOTIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH

Emotional and psychological concerns were discussed in very different ways by males and females. Fifteen percent of the girls who said they wanted to remain female focused on emotional health. Girls can "let their emotions out" and do not have to live up to the macho stereotypes males face. Girls felt that the "male" notion of being strong and in control was negative.

"Statistics show that women live longer than men. One reason for this could be the fact that most men don't show all their emotions. Stress or depression can be harmful when kept inside." (female, age 17)

"A woman can go with her emotions, if she wants to cry she can. And if she wants to laugh she can do that too. If a man cries he's a sissy." (Age 14)

"Probably the biggest advantage would be in being able to express my emotions in public. Do you often see men crying in the movie theater or greeting another male friend with a hug and kiss? If a man like that is there, there will be another man there to point this demonstrative man out. Women are able to do these things without being scrutinized." (Age 16)

"I have found girls to be more open in their relationships. They feel free to express their emotions with friends while guys keep theirs locked up inside themselves. Because of this, girls have more true relationships while guys relationships are often fake because they are always trying to be the better man." (Age 15)

"Society (sad to say) has stereotyped men to be a macho, prove yourself, nothing-affects-me person. He should not walk away from a fight and if he gets beaten to a pulp, bleed silently to death while saying to his friends in a John Wayne sort of manner, 'It's only a flesh wound.' Men can't cry, share a deep fear or feeling with a friend, or admit out loud about a weakness. And if they do, they are automatically looked upon as a weakling, or even worse, a homosexual." (Age 16)

"Statistics show that women live longer than men. One reason for this could be the fact that most men don't show all their emotions. Stress or depression can be harmful when kept inside. Part of the fact that men hide their emotions should be blamed on society. The man is stereotyped as the rock you can lean on. He's never supposed to break down. He should always stand firm when the going gets tough. I don't agree with this." (Age 17)

Essays by males did not stress emotional well-being as clearly as girls' essays did, but they alluded to the idea. Frequently psychological health was discussed as strength and the ability to handle stressful situations and control things. For boys, emotional health was derived from performing admirable and important tasks, rather than from being happy or contented.

"I would be the boss and wouldn't want to hear babies crying all day. I would like to take my son to football games and make him be proud of me. I would be a doctor and tell my kids about it." (Age 10)

"One good thing about being in the armed forces is the pride you can get out of it." (Age 14)

"Being dominant the man has developed a stronger will and is better prepared to handle crises than is the woman." (Age 15)

"Men are independent of outside influences. There are three groups that give women a lot of pressure. They are parents, husbands or boyfriends, and children . . . Parents are always after their daughters to marry a good man, have kids, treat them right. Husbands and boyfriends are always trying to run a woman's life. Lastly are the children who are always trying to cause a hard time. You see, women are having life made miserable from influences, where a man would ignore it." (Age 17)

DISCRIMINATION

More females (17%) than males (7%) identified sex discrimination as a key factor in their choice of being male or female. For some young women, the promise of increased equality was attractive, but more commonly they believe that their opportunities would be greatly enhanced if they were men.

"One reason is that many people still believe that men are a superior sex . . . Another reason is that men can get good jobs easier than women can . . . Men also get more respect than the women do . . . We women have come a long way in all these years. But there are still many old-world beliefs around that we must first abolish before we can become equals in today's world." (Age 14)

"If I had to chose to become a man or a woman, I would become a man. I would become a man because men aren't discriminated against. Men are hired for their skill not their looks. A man gets paid more than a woman for doing the exact same job. A man gets promoted faster than a woman." (Age 13)

"I would rather be a man even if they are male chauvinist pigs. One of the advantages of being a man is you don't have to worry about job discrimination or sex discrimination . . . as a woman you can be discriminated against in a lot of different ways, such as in the home, on the job, or through television programs . . . There are now laws that are slowly being made that will hopefully change the way America (and the rest of the world for that matter) think, of today's women." (Age 14)

Discrimination was also recognized by young men but less frequently. A number mentioned the term "male chauvinist" in writing about their own gender, but most went on to say that this is how society is, for better or for worse.

"Men are chauvinistic pigs They are in almost total control of the world. The greatest thinkers have been men. Even with this almost complete control over power and knowledge, men

still elect to discriminate against women. These are just a few reasons why I'm glad I'm a man rather than a woman." (Age 15)

"Most importantly, we are still living in a male dominated world. The men have most of the power, and it is easier to succeed in the business world if you are a man. It is too bad, but women are still discriminated against in almost every phase of modern life." (Age 16)

"By discrimination, I mean all this talk about equal rights, but to me, that's just balderdash. If women want equal rights so much, what happens to those rights when it comes time for the draft?" (Age 17)

"Due to the prevailing values of today's society, I would prefer to be a male. Males, especially white males, are not troubled by the hurdle of discrimination in the race for success. In fact, compared to females, the drawbacks a male has are minimal. Despite attempts to avoid it, discrimination still occurs: trying to fight it singlehandedly is more than a lifetime job." (Age 15)

"Most importantly, we are still living in a male dominated world. The men have most of the power, and it is easier to succeed in the business world if you are a man. It is too bad, but women are still discriminated against in almost every phase of modern life." (male, age 16)

For some girls, the promise of equal rights makes adult life as a woman attractive.

"But the real reason that I'm glad I'm a woman is for the excitement, the talk about women's lib, the rallies and speeches. To show the American male that we are equal; we can do everything they can, if they'd only give us a chance." (Age 15)

". . . They can both be parents, leaders, and workers. But I would rather be a woman because it is part of who I am and I want to help keep changing things for women's rights and for human rights." (Age 11)

"Now, because of a desperate struggle which led to victory, a woman can obtain almost any job if qualified. In fact it is not unusual today that a woman beat out a man for the same job." (Age 16)

"I would like to be a woman because now women's rights are being drastically expanded. We are being allowed to do things that in the past women never dreamed of." (Age 13)

LIFE STYLE

While young men and women disagreed on many things, they did agree that men have an easier life. The potential for the "good life" was very attractive to the young women who indicated a preference for being male. Even the young women who preferred to remain female said men had it easier—fewer responsibilities, more freedom, and fewer demands.

Domestic tasks played an important role in deciding on gender preference. Young boys didn't like the idea of household responsibilities, particularly the cooking and cleaning they associated with women's work. They pointed out the difficulty inherent in accomplishing all the tasks required of women while maintaining some leisure time.

"A woman's life seems so complicated to me—with jobs, trying to run a home, raise kids, feed the family, do cleaning and ironing and washing and . . . with all the beautifying products they're bombarded with." (Age 16)

"I would rather be a man because being a woman is hard. You have to take care of the kids and the house at the same time . . . men don't have to worry about coming home to a messy house or to a yard with no green grass on it, because women take care of those things. All men have to do when they get home is eat, relax, and enjoy." (Age 13)

"Men usually don't have to do the housework. Instead they can go jogging and have more fun during their leisure time." (Age 13)

"Another reason I would like to be a man is that women take too much 'guff' from everyone. I don't think I could take that. They catch flack from their bosses on the job, then they come home and listen to the problems of their kids and husbands. That's where I like being a man, you just come home and kick off your shoes and relax with the television." (Age 17)

Young women who found the idea of being male appealing wrote:

"I know I'd rather be a man. I would get more respect. I would also get more money in jobs. And not have to be home on time to cook meals and clean house. I would have the easy jobs to do." (Age 11)

"Women always have to stay home and clean the house, they always have to have a smile on their faces when their hubby gets home. Women have to be sweet, look pretty, and have supper cooked on time. The only drastic thing men have to do is to impress women and that mustn't be too hard." (Age 14)

"Both will come home exhausted from a long day at the office and yet it will be my friend's mother who is expected to make dinner, wash clothes, run errands, etc., while her father can spend that time relaxing, watching television, or reading the newspaper." (Age 15)

"The second thing is men don't even have to know what it's like to be pregnant for 9 months and then come home and take care of them for the next 18 years. The man of the house sits around drinking and watching football all day." (Age 14)

For other women, the issue of an easier life was appealing, but not a significant reason for wanting to change their gender:

"It is Sunday morning; everyone is up preparing for another two hour homily from Father Johnson. The 'man of the house' has been gone since six o'clock at his own church: the golf course. Returning home, the buttery smell of freshly popped popcorn fills your senses. He's back from his 'church' and is now relaxing to the football game, with of course, his popcorn and glass of Miller beer. Men, they work nine to five, Monday through Friday, and then on weekends they enjoy being the dictator, making sure we're all busy." (Age 16)

"As long as society focuses around men, allowing them first chance at higher education and preference in the job market, this situation will continue, and I will continue to perceive men's lives as being easier than women's."(Age 15)

"I would rather be a man because being a woman is hard. You have to take care of the kids and the house at the same time. All men have to do when they get home is eat, relax, and enjoy." (male, age 13)

Included in "lifestyle" is a smaller subcategory we call the "challenge" of being male or female. The girls viewed the "challenge" as proving to the world that one could succeed and even find happiness despite the handicaps imposed on women in this society.

"If you get everything handed to you, you may end up taking it for granted and it doesn't mean as much. Being a woman can be tough, but I consider it a worthwhile challenge, worth the fight." (Age 16)

"A woman's life is somewhat like a game, to see how much of a challenge you can get, but then again men have an easier game to play." (Age 15)

Young men described the challenge in terms of the work and responsibilities they anticipated.

"It is better to be a male because so much is expected from a man. Males, from birth, are expected to go to the right school, to get a good job, to make a million, and to be happy. I enjoy this because it puts a challenge before a man that he should accomplish and then get the satisfaction of saying 'I did it.' Many men, like the early pioneers, have done this. They accept a challenge that contained many hardships. Then they overcame these problems and were finally victorious. I feel that this challenge must be attacked." (Age 16)

"Men pay taxes, which is a challenge to fill out the forms—and I like challenges." (Age 11)

SEX-SPECIFIC ISSUES

While most of the categories were addressed by both male and female essayists (often from opposite perspectives), a few sex-specific issues emerged. The idea of being in control was embedded in the male essayists' interest in leadership and power. Young men talked about being elected to public office and about "male superiority" and dominance. These were powerful attractions for young males; nearly 10% mentioned these in their essays.

"Men have also been the world's greatest heroes. Biblical heroes such as Jesus, David, Moses, Noah, and John have had a profound effect on the ways in which we all live. Many men have led great nations and empires, such as Charlemagne, Napoleon, and Churchill." (Age 14)

"To begin with, men just plain and simply have the domination in our society, even in this day and age. There aren't very many women in our nation's government . . . It took till 1980 to get a woman on the Supreme Court." (Age 14)

"Men lead the world. Still widely accepted is the traditional role of the eldest man of the house being the one who makes decisions on the problems of the family. Nearly all corporation presidents and chief executives are continuing this trend." (Age 16)

SUMMARY

The essays reveal that the vast majority of both young men and young women were satisfied with their own gender and sex roles. However, there were significant differences between the youngest essayists (10- to 12-year-olds) and the oldest (15- to 18-year-olds) in the examples cited and the rationales used. The responses generally follow developmental trends in cognitive and social development. The youngest rely almost exclusively on extremely concrete examples and rigid sex role stereotypes about domestic chores (cooking, cleaning, changing diapers); appearance; and the process of having and raising children. The examples of positive and negative features in these domains were those that a child could see, hear, and feel about male and female roles. In contrast, the older adolescents focused much more on complex and abstract issues such as occupational opportunity, emotional and psychological health, sex discrimination, and inequality of responsibilities between men and women. Ideas and thoughts, rather than concrete events, are the hallmarks of the older adolescent's concerns.

While both sexes focused on the same issues for constructing their rationales for gender preference, they discussed these issues from very different perspectives—often from diametrically opposing points of view. For example, the many options and wide variety of choice regarding clothing, hair style, and appearance open to young women was viewed as a key advantage by them and a silly waste of time by young men. Serving as the primary caretaker of a child was seen as offering great joy and personal accomplishment by young women but as an unrelenting burden by young men. In regard to work and careers, boys were elated that they did not have to worry about balancing home, family, and job, while girls were delighted that they did not have to sacrifice family life for a career.

Finally, we saw young women celebrating the choices and options they currently see available to themselves while young men seemed to be quite satisfied with traditional male opportunities, roles, and advantages. The theme of choice for girls came through in their discussion of nontraditional job opportunities, a wider range of clothing and appearance options, the chance to have both a family and career, and a broader spectrum of emotions, lifestyles, and relationships to experience. New choices didn't have as much meaning to the boys, perhaps because they are satisfied with opportunities that have been and still remain open to men.

Just as in the earlier section of this poll on success and failure in adulthood, here girls and boys defined success and happiness in different ways. While girls saw new choices and options as critical to their happiness, boys did not. For girls, choices decreased the likelihood of being trapped or frustrated. For boys, who did not share this fear of being limited and constrained, new options seemed unnecessary.

Section VI:

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

PLANS AND PREPARATION FOR CAREERS

Girls have higher career aspirations than boys; 63% of girls chose professional work, in contrast to 39% of the boys. Girls also were more likely than boys to aspire to jobs at the lowest end of the occupational scale. Only 2% of girls expected to be homemakers by age 30.

About 25% of the girls said they would work throughout their adulthood, while 63% said they would not work outside the home when they were pregnant or had young children. In contrast, 75% of males indicated they would remain in the work force until they retired.

Males overwhelmingly (93%) chose typical male occupations, while females were far less stereotyped in their career aspirations, with 43% choosing typical women's jobs, 46% choosing typical male jobs, and 11% choosing neutral occupations. Young people believed that their parents held rather similar views as they did on this issue, with male students stating that 80% of their parents wanted them to choose "male" jobs, and female students saying that their parents were rather evenly split on advocating "male" and "female" jobs for them.

The jobs that teenagers in Minnesota hold are overwhelmingly in the service sector—babysitting; working in restaurants, service stations, grocery stores; cleaning houses; performing janitorial service; and doing yard work. Males hold a substantially wider range of jobs than do females. More than half indicated that the jobs they held as teenagers had little positive influence on their future career plans. About one-fourth of respondents did see some relationship between their "youth" jobs and their future careers in that they were learning basic job/work skills and exploring their interests.

A significant relationship was found between the kind of work young persons choose and their father's occupation, but this was not the case for mother's occupation. Overall, both males and females aspire to higher status occupations than those held by their parents.

Almost half the respondents did not know what occupations their parents expected them to choose. The exception was that about 70% of the girls did know their mother's expectations, which usually were similar to their own.

Girls were more likely to see more barriers to achieving their career goals than did males. The greatest barriers for females were the size and shape of the job market, lack of money, not having the necessary skills, not knowing the right people, lack

of knowledge of career possibilities, and discrimination because of gender, race, and social class. For males, the most serious barriers were money, the job market, and inadequate knowledge about career options.

SUCCESS AND FAILURE IN ADULT LIFE

Young women defined success in adulthood more in terms of psychological, philosophical attributes such as happiness, both in general terms and in relationships; while the males were more likely to see success in concrete material forms, such as wealth and high-quality consumer items. Job satisfaction was cited more frequently as a sign of success and happiness for females than for males.

Young women feel more adequately prepared to take on adult responsibilities in the noncareer domain than do young men. Both males and females feel least prepared to be involved in public affairs, manage their finances, provide volunteer service, and raise children effectively. Both sexes feel very well prepared to stay healthy, prevent pregnancy, use their leisure time effectively, and maintain friendships.

FAMILY AND SCHOOL INFLUENCE ON FUTURE ROLES

Almost all respondents reported that girls are protected and sheltered far more than males in the family.

Half the females and two-thirds of the males thought males and females were treated differently in school, with the males charging that girls get preferential treatment. Girls thought that teachers had higher expectations of them.

There were minimal differences between males and females in their interest in taking courses in advanced math, advanced science, computers, and typing. More than three-fourths of all respondents expressed a desire to enroll in such courses. Males were more likely to opt for vocational-technical courses. Females showed more interest in foreign languages.

Almost all the respondents thought the differential treatment afforded to males and females at home and school had a negative impact on girls and a positive impact on boys. They agreed that young women were socialized to be less assertive, less aggressive, and more dependent than young men. They argued that the girls' confidence and competence were eroded by being sheltered and protected. Also, girls grew up without understanding that they would have to be responsible for supporting themselves.

MYTHS AND STEREOTYPES ABOUT SEX ROLES

Two-thirds of both males and females accepted the assumptions of the Cinderella myth, that most young women want to marry successful, handsome men who will take care of them for the rest of their lives so they won't have to work. About one-fifth of the respondents totally endorsed the concept. Another half offered more qualified agreement, noting that there weren't enough princes to go around and it's a good, but not dependable, idea because death or divorce might happen. Those who rejected Cinderella said that women need to work and be successful as much as men do and that a woman should first find a "sense of herself," then find the prince (or husband). The strong degree of acceptance of this myth seems to contradict the conceptions the young women had of happiness, success, and their career aspirations, described above.

A majority of both males and females also endorsed a slightly different version of the Cinderella idea, but this time from the point of view of the male. We asked them if they believed that a successful man makes enough money so his wife doesn't have to work, and most agreed. The girls' responses revealed a belief that work might be important to them, but they felt they ought to seek permission to do so. Both males and females often saw the woman's income as supplemental.

Seventy percent of males and 60% of females approved and endorsed the Supermom model: successful in career, childrearing, homemaking, community affairs, and in keeping her husband happy. About one-fifth aspired to be or to marry a Supermom. Those who offered qualified endorsement often lamented their scarcity. Approximately one-fourth rejected the concept of Supermom on the following grounds: it was a fantasy—perfect families do not exist, Supermom must be miserable if the rest of the family is leading such a charmed life, and it is possible to achieve happiness without being married or without being "superhuman."

There were clear gender differences on whether homemakers were entitled to Social Security benefits. Three-fourths of young women thought they were; less than half of the young men agreed. Those who supported the current policy of not providing benefits to homemakers built their case strictly on economic reasons. In contrast, those who disagreed with the current policy did so on higher principles—the dignity and value of all work and that all Americans are entitled to a decent standard of living in old age.

Both males and females defined the healthy adult as far more similar to stereotypical male characteristics than female ones. The healthy person was described as very aggressive, extemely independent, neither emotional nor unemotional, very competitive, very adventurous, a strong leader, not very concerned about appearance. These characteristics seem to be in conflict with what is now defined as the "female voice," calling for interdependence, connectedness, caring, and nurturing.

BEING MALE AND FEMALE

In response to the question, "Would you rather be male or female?" a clear majority of the 10-18 year olds indicated a preference for their own gender. Girls were more willing to consider switching to being male (16%) than were boys willing to become female (1%).

There were significant developmental differences between the youngest essayists (10- to 12-year-olds) and the oldest (15- to 18-year-olds) in the rationales used for their choices. The youngest relied almost exclusively on extremely concrete examples and rigid sex role stereotypes about domestic chores, appearance, and childrearing, while the older adolescents focused more on complex and abstract issues such as occupational opportunity, emotional and psychological health, sex discrimination, and inequality of responsibilities between men and women.

Young women argued that the new and wider choices and options currently available to themselves made it advantageous to be a female, while young men asserted that traditional male opportunities and roles were the key benefits of being a male.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

A pattern of contradiction and conflict about aspirations and expectations permeates the responses of the young Minnesotans in our study. Their visions of future work and family roles are

both "contemporary" and "traditional" without recognizing the inherent inconsistencies. Both sexes send out a series of mixed messages that say, "We can do it all; we want to have it both ways." Many appear to have mastered the rhetoric of the women's movement and of sexual equality, yet they fall back on traditional sex roles and relationships when they describe concrete expectations for their own futures.

Young men, for example, recognize the inequities women face in the job market, seem to value an income-producing partner, and feel that girls would benefit from more risk-taking and less protection in the school and home environment. Yet, at the same time, many believe women are incapable of taking on "men's work," think that women work to "make a little extra money," and feel justified in giving or withholding permission to their prospective wives to take on new roles.

Most young women hold high career goals and a commitment to work throughout their adult lives, yet plan to have and maintain these high-status, high-paying careers while taking time out of the labor market to stay home with their children. Most young women define adult success as the achievement of independence and competence in a chosen career, yet still yearn to find the Prince Charming who will relieve them of the burden of having to work and take care of themselves. Most girls desire equality in the division of labor in their marriage, yet strive to be Supermom, that dynamo who single-handedly manages her house, husband, job, and children with stunning success.

While both sexes reflect these contradictions, they are not as blatant for males as for females. It appears that boys recognize the significant social changes that have occurred but do not feel strongly affected by them. They seem to believe that life will go on pretty much as it always has in terms of education, career preparation, job opportunities, and family life. Girls, on the other hand, seem to have simultaneously incorporated both the old myths that women should be passive, obedient, seductive, and dependent as well as the new ones about the importance of economic independence, self-actualization, and equality without realizing that both sets of myths (or values) cannot comfortably co-exist within one female psyche.

While the students have a difficult time seeing their own inconsistent attitudes, they are far more attuned to the ambivalent messages that their parents and teachers give about equality between the sexes. Both males and females agree that girls are limited in the amount of risk-taking and initiative allowed at home and at school. This over-protection, they charge, robs girls of the very skills that they will need as adults—assertiveness, independence, and a spirit of adventure. Girls, in particular, express resentment about these practices, and urge their parents and teachers to find some resolution.

For most young women, the strategies for achieving their dreams seem fuzzy at best. Few seem to recognize and comprehend the many ways in which their dreams may be derailed. Almost no one expressed an awareness of the harsh realities that many adult women face as the heads of poverty-level households and as the sole support, economically and emotionally, for their children. Few seemed to know that the majority of women in the labor market are not in the professional, high-skilled careers to which they aspire, but are clustered in the low-paying service occupations. Young women need to have accurate information upon which to base their decisions about the future. A young woman needs to know that current projections indicate that she will be a worker, wife, and mother—in that order—with an increased life expectancy and a 47% chance of divorce.

But it is not only young women who must be better informed about what the future holds, but young men as well. Ultimately, in their partnerships and relationships, both young men and women will have to find ways to resolve their conflicting expectations of one another. While young men during high school seem to be little affected by changing female expectations, they cannot avoid their implications when marriage and childrearing arrive in just a few years. According to a 1984 report of the Women, Public Policy and Development Project of the Humphrey Institute, University of Minnesota: "The model for the future is that the lives of women and men will be similar. Both will be workers for a majority of their adult lives. Both will be parents." The challenge for today's adolescent is to figure out ways to make this new model work effectively for *both* young men and young women.

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Appendix A:

INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Sex: Male _____ Female _____

Age: 13___ 14___ 15___ 16___ 17___ 18___

Zip Code: _____

Would you describe yourself as:

Black _____ Asian _____ White _____

Hispanic _____ American Indian _____

1. What kind of work do you expect or plan to be doing when you are 30 years old? Even if you are not sure, give us your best guess.

_____

2. What does your mother expect you will be doing when you are 30 years old?

_____

3. What does your father expect you will be doing when you are 30 years old?

_____

4. Do you think there will be times when you will not work outside the home? When do you think those will be?

_____

5. Which of the following courses have you taken or plan to take during high school? (Check all that apply.)

	Am now or have already taken	*Plan to take*
Advanced math (for example, geometry, algebra, calculus, trigonometry)	_____	_____
Advanced science (for example, physics, chemistry, physiology)	_____	_____
Vocational-technical courses (for example, auto mechanics, drafting, office occupations, food service, agriculture, etc.)	_____	_____
Typing	_____	_____
Computers	_____	_____
Foreign languages	_____	_____
Advanced placement courses	_____	_____

6. Did your mother (stepmother or female guardian) usually work outside of the home during the following times in your life?

	Did not work	*Worked part-time*	*Worked full-time*
a. Before you went to elementary school	_____	_____	_____
b. While you were in elementary school	_____	_____	_____
c. While you were in junior and senior high	_____	_____	_____

7. What kind of work or job has your father (stepfather or male guardian) done most recently?

_____

8. What kind of work or job has your mother (stepmother or female guardian) done most recently?

_____

9. Which of the following people live in the same household with you?

I live alone _____

father _____

stepfather or foster father _____

mother _____

stepmother or foster mother _____

brothers/sisters _____

my child/children _____

grandparents _____

10. What do the following people think you ought to do right after you leave high school?

	go to college	*get a full-time job*	*go to vocational school*	*enter military*	*don't know*	*other (please list)*
your father	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
your mother	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
your guidance counselor	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
your best friend	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
you	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

11. You are asked to give your ideas about typical characteristics of MALES, FEMALES, AND HEALTHY ADULTS. There are seven positions between each pair of words. If you feel that the typical male is best described by the characteristic at one end of the scale, place your check mark next to that word:
(e.g., kind __X__ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ mean.) If you feel that the typicial male is closely, but not extremely related to one end of the scale, place your check mark as follows:
(kind _____ __X__ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ mean.) If the typical male seems only slightly related to one side or the other but not really neutral, place your check mark as follows:
(kind _____ _____ __X__ _____ _____ _____ _____ mean.) Use the center space if you are completely neutral or evenly divided. Now for each word, *Male, Female,* and *Healthy Adult,* give your reactions as to the typical characteristics of each.

Male

Aggressive	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Non-Aggressive
Independent	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Dependent
Emotional	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unemotional
Competitive	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Non-Competitive
Adventurous	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Cautious
Leader	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Follower
Non Appearance Oriented	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Appearance Oriented
Selfish	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unselfish

Female

Aggressive	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Non-Aggressive
Independent	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Dependent
Emotional	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unemotional
Competitive	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Non-Competitive
Adventurous	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Cautious
Leader	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Follower
Non Appearance Oriented	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Appearance Oriented
Selfish	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unselfish

Healthy Person

Aggressive	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Non-Aggressive
Independent	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Dependent
Emotional	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unemotional
Competitive	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Non-Competitive
Adventurous	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Cautious
Leader	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Follower
Non Appearance Oriented	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Appearance Oriented
Selfish	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unselfish

12. To what extent do you think the things listed below will prevent you from getting the kind of work that you would like?

	Not at all	*Somewhat*	*A lot*	*Don't know*
lack of money	____	____	____	____
parents/family disapprove	____	____	____	____
family or home responsibilities	____	____	____	____
not enough motivation to succeed	____	____	____	____
sex	____	____	____	____
didn't take enough hard academic courses in school	____	____	____	____
lack of knowledge about career possibilities	____	____	____	____
don't have necessary skills	____	____	____	____
lack of intelligence	____	____	____	____
not knowing the right people	____	____	____	____
not wanting hard work	____	____	____	____
unrealistic expectations	____	____	____	____
job market/economic outlook	____	____	____	____

13. Think about kinds of responsibilities you will have in your adult life in addition to your job or career. How well prepared do you think you are in the following areas:

	Extremely prepared	*Fairly prepared*	*Somewhat unprepared*	*Very unprepared*	*Don't know*
running a household	____	____	____	____	____
maintaining a long-term, intimate relationship	____	____	____	____	____
raising children effectively	____	____	____	____	____
staying healthy	____	____	____	____	____
managing finances	____	____	____	____	____
maintaining good friendships	____	____	____	____	____
using leisure time enjoyably	____	____	____	____	____
being involved in public affairs (voting, working for a political party)	____	____	____	____	____
providing volunteer service in the community	____	____	____	____	____
being able to suppport myself adequately	____	____	____	____	____
understanding how to prevent pregnancy	____	____	____	____	____
balancing work and home responsibilities	____	____	____	____	____

14. Which of the following best describes your grades so far in high school?

Mostly A's ____
Half A's, half B's ____
Mostly B's ____
Half B's, half C's ____
Mostly C's ____
Half C's, half D's ____
Mostly D's ____
Below D's ____

GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE

Page 1:

1) Do you think parents treat daughters differently than sons? In what ways?
2) Do you think girls are treated differently from boys in school? In what ways?
3) If girls and boys are treated differently in school and at home, how does this affect their future plans and aspirations?

Page 2:

1) Many young women hope to marry successful, handsome men who will take care of them for the rest of their lives so they won't have to work. What's your reaction to this statement?
2) A successful man makes enough money to support his wife and family so she won't have to work. What is your reaction to this statement?
3) To whom do you talk about your plans for what you will be doing 5 or 10 years from now?

Page 3:

1) Some women are "Supermoms." They have good jobs; nice, clean houses; 2 or 3 happy, smart children, and contented husbands. What's your reaction to this idea?
2) What kind of things would you consider to be signs of success in adult life?
3) What would you consider to be happiness in adult life?
4) What does it mean to be a failure when you are 30 to 40 years old? Would this be the same for men and women?

Page 4:

1) Do you think there are some jobs that women can't do? If yes, please list them and why women can't do them.
2) Are there some jobs that men can't do? If so, please list them and why men can't do them.
3) Does TV create new options or reinforce stereotypes about what you can be and do in the future?

Page 5:

1) America has been thought of as the land of unlimited opportunity where anyone can become successful. What is your reaction to this statement?
2) If there are things which keep people from reaching their goals, what are they?
3) Are the obstacles that prevent people from achieving their goals different for young men than for young women?

Page 6:

1) As it is now, women who work in the home taking care of their families do not receive Social Security benefits when they turn 65. Only people who work outside the home receive them. What is your reaction to this?
2) What kinds of jobs have you had?
3) How have these jobs influenced your future career plans?