

## Phobia threatens school children

United Press International

BOSTON — One young student said he was afraid the school's boiler would explode. A slow-to-develop adolescent complained she was forced to undress for gym class. And a popular teen suddenly developed an irrational fear of failure.

These children are victims of school phobia. Most often the child's anxieties show themselves as real physical problems.

"I had a friend with a real in the first grade who said his teeth hurt and then his arms and legs began to hurt," said Harper. "So she took the child to her pediatrician, who must have been very wise, because he said, 'Too many symptoms, someone doesn't want to go to school.'"

As in the case of the child who was scared of the boiler, school phobia does not always manifest itself in aches and pains. The symptoms may be very subtle and difficult to diagnose.

"The first step is to ferret out the emotional problem, which doesn't usually present itself on the surface. Few children come in and say they are afraid of going to school," said Gordon.

Cases of adolescent school phobia tend to be more rare, but also far more difficult to diagnose and treat.

"These kids are usually deeply disturbed and the place it usually shows up is in school refusal," he said. "The psychological disturbances can often be quite elusive."

"For instance, a boy I've been working with is a freshman in high school. He insists that he doesn't want to go to school, not that he's afraid to go to school. He wasn't aware of his fear and therefore he couldn't come to grips with it."

Sometimes the student may be afraid of one specific thing in school. Gym class is a common case, as is math. Children are highly conscious of their physical appearance and those who may be obese or have not reached puberty are very embarrassed.

"Sometimes it is very inhuman how children are treated in school,"

said Dr. Melvin D. Levine, chief of ambulatory pediatrics at Childrens Hospital in Boston. "It is extremely important to children that they avoid humiliation at all costs. No adult would be forced to expose a part of their body they are most insecure about."

These cases can often be solved by changing some small aspect of the school environment. As academic and extracurricular obligations grow heavier, the teen may develop a fear of failure that keeps him or her from school. Ironically, this most often happens to the best students.

"It's usually the high achieving, high flying kid. Out of the blue they refuse to go to school and don't know why. We find out often the kid has hyperinflated expectations and things are going so well they develop an inordinate fear the bubble is going to burst."

A study conducted by Dr. John C. Collidge, a senior psychiatrist at the Judge Baker Guidance Center, found children with school phobia often run into psychological problems later in life, despite having been treated for the school phobia.

The study found that of 45 young adults who had school phobia 10 years earlier, 13 showed no emotional limitations; 20 had moderate emotional limitations, such as trouble moving away from home; and 14 had severe emotional problems such as great difficulty leaving home.

The children of parents who had school phobia also tended to have problems. Collidge said he is just beginning to see the children of people he treated when they were children, but there seems to be a very strong connection. He said he has found one family with instances of school phobia and separation anxiety that extend back 76 years.

Experts seem to agree the problem is best treated when caught early. Parents should be aware of increasing anxiety in their child and frequent trips to the nurse. Parents who suspect a problem should consult with school officials.

## Demand for food needs solutions

United Press International

PULLMAN, Wash. — Technology is available to produce the staggering amount of food the world will need by the year 2050, but a microbiologist says it will take closer international cooperation to do it.

Dr. William Davis of Washington State University said the most amount of food ever produced around the world was 3.3 billion metric tons in 1975. He estimated in the next 80 years that figure will have to be doubled to feed the globe's people.

"The demand is going to be there before the solution if we continue at the pace we are going now," Davis said.

He said solutions are "available but not being applied" and proposed an international food research network to tackle the problem immediately.

"There is a tremendous amount of research on food production going on in the world today, but the efforts of scientists are not well coordinated so that one discovery can build on another and all research can benefit from unique resources," Davis said.

As a first step toward international cooperation, Davis — through the WSU College of Veterinary Medicine — played host to a confer-

ence of American and Australian researchers recently in Hawaii.

Canadian and African scientists also appeared at the five-day brainstorming session.

The focus was the genetic manipulation of the immune systems in cattle to breed in resistance to disease.

Davis said the recently developed techniques for locating the exact gene that resists a particular disease have opened the possibility that herds might be developed with built-in immunities to illness.

He said the framework for such coordination was set at the Hawaii meeting, but more money and cooperation are needed to achieve better, cheaper, more efficient food animal production.

"In this country it is hard to conceive of a person not being able to buy a good steak when he wants one. It's always been there," he said.

"But the cost of food animal production is increasing. Developed countries can overproduce right now, so we're in the position of improving efficiency of breeding rather than more animals at the present time."

"Right now, we're in a transition period," Davis said. "We can afford, say, a 20 percent loss of calves through various diseases, but the time will come when we cannot."

## Image upgrading at J.C. Penney Co.

United Press International

DALLAS — J.C. Penney Co. has been trying — with designer labels, store modernization and art shows — to shed its solid but stodgy image of the place where you buy inexpensive work pants for dad and house-dresses for mom.

It seems to be succeeding. There's a new look developing — a look designed to attract upscale customers with money to spend for top-of-the-line products — a look that says the competition is Bloomingdale's more than Sears.

The company still sells bib overalls to farmers, especially in its small-town stores, but it is much more interested in talking about its designer label items — and in broadening its market base.

Eliminated last year were its auto service shops and departments that sold large and small household appliances, paint and hardware, lawn and garden goods and fabrics.

From a corporate standpoint, those changes were made smoothly, without a snag in profitability. J.C. Penney's 1983 sales reached \$12 billion, up from \$11.4 billion in 1982, and income rose 8.5 percent to a record \$467 million.

The chain has 2,100 stores in every state of the union, Puerto Rico and Belgium. Catalog sales accounted for \$1.8 billion in 1983.

The modernization program started last year with 40 stores. This year 35 stores are being made over at an average cost of between \$3 million and \$4 million each.

"The ones being done in 1984 are all larger, more productive stores," said Allan L. Carper, manager for the Dallas-Fort Worth District, where five stores are being redone. "After 1984 we'll do about 40 to 60 stores a year."

"One of the toughest jobs will be to get customers who have not shopped us for fashion lines convinced that we have changed and are still changing," Carper said.

To this end, Penney is holding at its remodeled stores series of Art Sundays — benefit extravaganzas featuring various forms of the arts at which the guests can sip champagne and nibble on fancy hors d'oeuvres and, it hopes, notice the brand names: Halston, Jordache, Sasson, Sergio Valente, Ocean Pacific, Lee Wright, Ship 'n Shore, Cos Cob.

Most of the space made available by closing hard goods departments has gone into expanded lines of apparel.

The company's private labels have been upgraded. Shoppers can buy neckties for \$17.50 and beaded wedding gowns for \$750. In fact, Penney's claims to be the No. 1 seller of wedding gowns in the United States.

This fall a "Salute to Italy" promotion will take place in 450 of the chain's largest stores.

"We'll have Italian products and Italian artisans giving demonstrations all through the store," Carper said. "It's a huge, huge undertaking."

"If this complete modernization and reallocation of space is going to work, we think a big part of it is the staffing of the stores, and the retraining of our people," Carper said.

"We kicked off a training program last June, within every store, aimed at providing better customer service. We think the manager, who is in charge of the store, is the only one who can make it work."

The company has increased staffing on the floors of its new-look stores. These salespeople are not rigidly posted behind electronic-mart cash registers waiting for customers to come to them.

They are out in the aisles displaying merchandise, answering customers' questions, helping them locate hard-to-fit sizes and find just the right colors.

They are, in fact, selling.

## Unorthodox cancer treatments still used

United Press International

WASHINGTON — Wheat grass, herbal teas and the laying on of hands are no longer the standard for cancer treatment, but some doctors prescribe them to patients anyway.

A new study from the University of Pennsylvania shows that followers of unconventional or bogus treatments come from all walks of life, and the people who prescribe the ancient nostrums are often legitimate doctors who sincerely believe in what they're doing.

The study also contradicted the stereotypical image that seekers of unorthodox cancer treatments are poorly educated and at the end of their rope, finding instead many patients had college degrees and many were in the early stages of the disease.

The researchers attributed the popularity of what they called unorthodox therapy to the trend toward taking responsibility for one's health and distrust of accepted treatments. Although it is unclear how many people nationwide pursue unorthodox treatments, a congressional investigation found Americans spend \$4 billion to \$5 billion on them annually.

Adherents often believe cancer is a symptom of underlying metabolic imbalance, that it's their fault they contracted the disease and it's up to them to get rid of it through diet, avoidance of pollution, positive thinking or other methods, the Pennsylvania study said.

They like the feeling of control they get from modifying their eating habits or patterns of living and the friendly support they get from the treatment practitioner, which may be more support than they get from other doctors, the study said.

They may also believe conventional treatments weaken the body and inhibit its capacity for cure, the report said.

The unorthodox treatments could not be called worthless, since many patients who took them reported feeling better afterward. Patient mood and attitude are now considered important aspects of recovery from cancer, and emotions are even being considered as a factor in the spread of a few cancers.

Some of the methods, such as pursuing more healthful diets, are beneficial. Others, however, such as huge vitamin doses and powerful enemas, can be harmful or even fatal.

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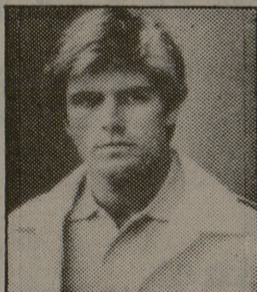
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