

# Attention!!

## A hard question

As a student, one of the most frequently asked questions I face after "What's your major?" is "Well, what do you plan to do with that?"

That's a tough question. It goes far beyond academics; it entails my life's goals. I must ask myself what is most vital and of real lasting value. Moreover, I must ask myself how I can pursue that, make it part of my life, and still leave behind some of that which is important to me when I'm no longer here. These are the questions I must face every time I hear the question.

For a woman, I believe this decision is especially difficult. The popular propoganda of the day dictates that a woman should have a taxable income, for if she does not, she is seen as "less" of a person.

How many times have you heard:

"Where does Mary work?"

"Oh, she doesn't. She's got two kids — she's just a housewife."

Or, writing a check at the grocery store, the checkers in most towns ask women for a work number. When the reply is "I don't have one," the woman is often met with a puzzled

look and then, "Oh, (pause) you don't?" which can certainly make a woman feel lowly.

Who are these women made to feel insecure and "less than successful?" They are the strong, noble women who have chosen to put first in their lives that which truly is most vital and of real lasting value. They are the women who put aside the material things which eventually crumble to dust and are blown away by the wind. They are our mothers. And it is about time this nation woke up to the value of motherhood and the tremendous amount of time, effort, responsibility and strength it takes to raise a child with values, integrity and self-esteem.

How many children today are victims of day-care centers before the age of two because Mom's job comes first? I don't care how good some day-care centers or babysitters may be, they can never take the place of a parent. When a child is thrown into a situation in which he is a number and no longer an individual, where there is little or no bonding between parent and child, where he is made to feel second-best because deep down he

knows that Mom's and Dad's jobs come first, that child is no less than a victim of his parents' selfishness.

I'm not attacking parents who must have two incomes to survive. I'm talking about families who pay anywhere from eight to 13 thousand dollars a year in child care alone so that both parents can work. Maybe they break even, maybe they don't. I'm talking about women who believe it should be their choice alone whether they send their children to daycare or take care of themselves.

How can a child be expected to grow up with confidence and self-esteem if he is one in a crowd at a day-care center? How can a child NOT bond with his toys (materialistic at a very young age) when those toys are all he has to bond with?

Our children are our only hope for the future, and the only legacy we leave behind us when we're gone. Any couple who does not want the responsibility of raising their children has absolutely no business having children. Anyone can have a baby. But it takes time, effort, patience and a lot of love to raise children with values and self-confidence.

There's a lot of talk these days about women's lib and women's rights. But the truth is, women have been free for a long time. Only in the past 30 years have they become slaves to the propoganda that they must have a taxable income to be a "productive member of society."

You may call me a bit too "old-fashioned" and my ideals "archaic."

You may say that I'm missing out on a lot and that I slept through the sexual revolution (which, incidentally, nobody won). I say to you that any woman can be anything she wants to be. But if you're going to do something, do it right. Be prepared to give it all you've got, or think again about doing it. If you're going to have

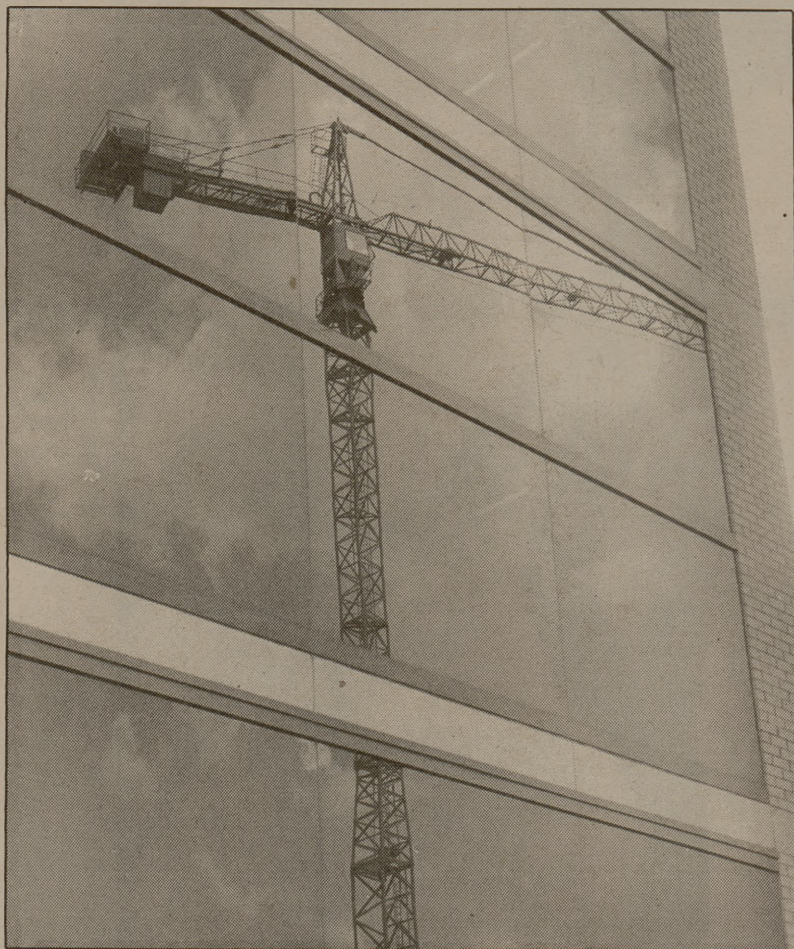


Photo by Kathy Haveman

**Laura Gilliland, a senior Russian language major, wrote this week's Attention!! column.**

a family, you'd better realize your responsibility as a parent. Once you've accepted that responsibility, hold your head high, honey, because you are one of a kind, you are golden, and you are in the process of shaping the future. No one can ever take that away from you.

My major is Russian language. It has taught me a lot about the world around me. Maybe one of these days after grad school I'll teach at a university, maybe I never will. But what really matters will be my family. I pray to God that I won't have to leave my kids and go to work. Because just like my Mom, my kids and my husband are going to come second only to God. I never thought I would hear myself say this, but proudly I tell you that, one day, I'm going to be housewife and a mother. I only hope I can be the kind of parent that my parents were to me.



Senior journalism major Elva Nolan took this week's Attention!! photo.

Editor's Note: This Attention!! page will be used each week as a forum for you, our readers. We encourage you to submit any original work that would be suitable for publication in *At Ease*.

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Pictures for the Attention!! page should be black-and-white shots that are unique either in content, angle or technique. Columns, essays or poems should be no longer than 500 words and should be either printed or typed.

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