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MARILYN WANTS TO KNOW

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After High School What?

Women's Bureau Leaflet 8

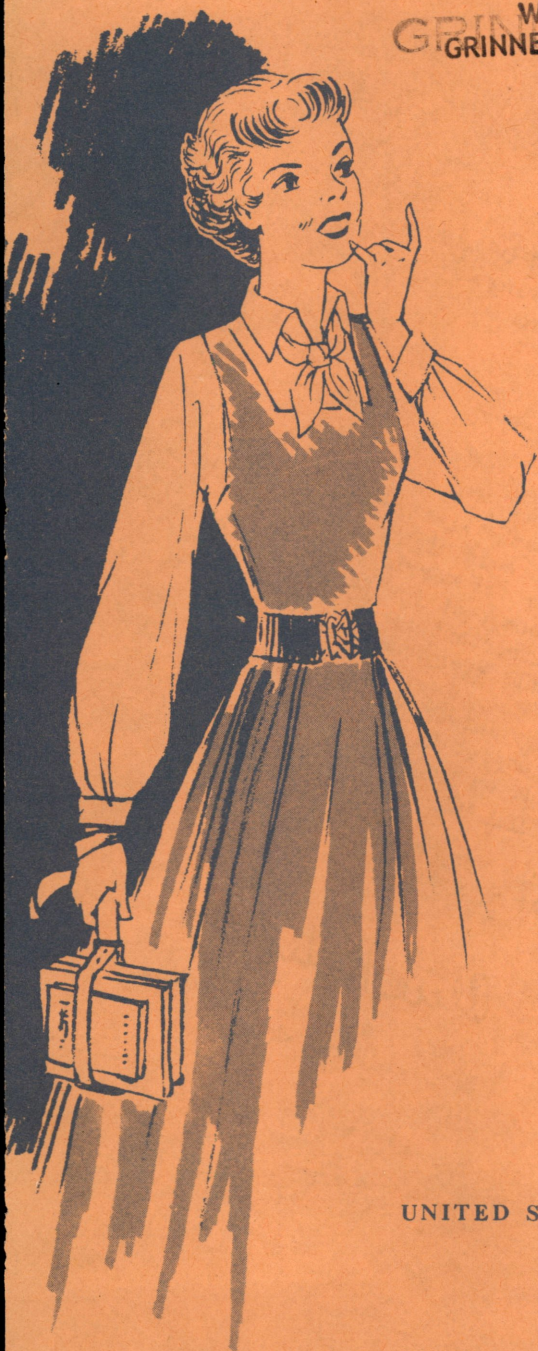
1954

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

James P. Mitchell, *Secretary*

WOMEN'S BUREAU

Mrs. Alice K. Leopold, *Director*



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
WOMEN'S BUREAU
WASHINGTON 25

Dear Marilyn:

Your letter asks whether you should prepare in high school for a job or for marriage. The questions that you raise are very important for high-school girls everywhere.

Here is my answer. I hope it will be useful in helping you to decide on your job future after high school.

With the very best wishes of the Women's Bureau,

Yours sincerely,

Alice K. Leopold

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Director

PAY ENVELOPE OR WEDDING BELLS?



I am a girl in high school. Of course I hope to be married some day and have a home of my own. So—why should I bother about earning a living? Why not prepare now for marriage and homemaking?

Prepare for both a job and marriage!

You are right in thinking you will probably marry. Most girls now in high school or vocational school can expect to marry. In the United States, four of every five women and girls who are 14 or older are married, or have been married.

The chances are that you will also be employed—before marriage and perhaps for a few years afterward. Nowadays, more and more married women continue with their jobs or return to work when their children are old enough.

Women make up nearly a third of the Nation's workers. The jobs they do are vital to the national economy. Study after study has shown that in most cases women work for much the same reasons that men work: To support themselves and to help support the family.

So it is important for you to prepare for a job, even if you expect to marry soon.

CHOOSING A CAREER

*How can I decide what
kind of job would be best
for me?*



What kind of work to choose is a big question, and you should not expect to reach a final decision at once. But here are some practical ways to start thinking seriously about it now:

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- b. student activity
(such as music club, dramatics, school paper, student government, ballet dancing)

at home? Write down your chosen

- a. responsibility
(such as care of younger children, cooking, making your own clothes)
- b. hobby
(such as photography, stamps, handcrafts, reading)

in the community? Mention whatever you enjoy most in the way of

- a. club
(such as Girl Scouts, 4-H, church groups)
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2. What can you do best? Make a new list, and include anything in which you are really tops (whether you have already listed it or not):

in school -----
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3. What job experience have you had? List work of any kind, whether paid or unpaid. Don't forget to include babysitting, farmwork, assisting in the school office or cafeteria.

Second, you will need to get some idea of what various JOBS are like. So how about

reading books that describe how an occupation reached its present stage, its probable future, its importance to humanity and to the national welfare, and what part women play in it.

scanning a few trade journals, to get the feel of the occupation, and absorb some shoptalk.

talking with women you know who are successfully employed in the type of work that interests you. Perhaps you can start a down-to-earth discussion of its advantages and disadvantages as a career.

Third, you can ask for some expert advice from

your parents. They have known you a long time; they have a vital interest in your future; and probably they have personal experience with employment conditions in the place where you live.

your teachers and counselors. They know something of your capabilities, and a great deal about the job situation in general and various occupations in particular.

Specifically, you may want to ask about

job prospects for girls in the field that interests you:

Are there many job openings?

What pay can you expect?

Are the working conditions good?

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training needed for the kind of work you want:

How long does the training take?

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Where is the nearest approved school?

Suppose you enjoy chemistry or physics and plan to work in a medical laboratory after graduation. You would probably start as a *laboratory assistant*, spending most of your time on chores such as washing test tubes. But if you decide to spend 3 or 4 years after high school in getting technical training, you would be prepared for a research job as *medical technologist*.

The counselor will know what kinds of work call for additional training beyond high school, and where to get that training. She can help select a school or college where the course you want is approved by the State accrediting body or by the national professional association in that field.

financial aid. If the training you need seems out of reach financially, ask your school counselor or principal about—

Scholarships.

Cooperative programs that alternate school with paid employment.

Training or apprentice programs where a student can work her way.

Free public vocational courses (day or evening).

Other sources of aid from civic, community, or church groups.

aptitude tests. Perhaps the counselor will suggest that you take the general aptitude tests which your own school may have, or which may be obtained through the State Employment Service. These tests bring to light hidden talents and aptitudes and may help you decide among several fields. If you have no school counselor, you can go to the nearest office of the State Employment Service and request a counselor's help.

WHY FINISH HIGH SCHOOL?



*I have the offer of a job right now;
and I am old enough to leave school.
What use would a high-school diploma
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No matter what kind of work you plan to do, a high-school education will pay off in the long run. Studies have shown that earning capacity later in life is greater among high-school graduates than among those who have less schooling. A good educational background enriches your life in many other ways—as a voter and citizen, as a member of the community, as a parent, and as an individual.

The United States is one of the few countries in the world where all girls are entitled to education through high school free of cost.

To get the greatest advantage from your years in high school, look for courses and activities that offer

LIFETIME VALUES

- a broad background for the work you want to do.
- an introduction to new interests you can develop later in life.
- a practice field for committee work and group projects.
- preparation for the responsibilities of citizenship and home-making.
- procedures for reaching decisions and solving problems.
- insight into national and world events, past and present.

MARKETABLE SKILLS

"getting it across." Skill in using English as a tool is a must if you want to advance very far in any field of work. Communication depends on your ability to understand others and make them understand you—in speech and in writing.

typing. Even if you do not plan to do office work you will find typing useful, in college, at home, and in almost any type of employment.

operating some special business machine or equipment, such as an adding machine, a mimeograph machine, a telephone switchboard.

keeping accounts. Ability to figure, keep track of money spent, write checks, and estimate costs is needed in many jobs in offices, stores, and restaurants, in small businesses of any kind, and in managing your own household.

driving a car. This is important in selling real estate or insurance and in many other kinds of work.

Any basic, marketable skill that you can learn, either through your school courses or (if you are not underage) through suitable vacation work, will improve your prospects for a good job after graduation.

Basic skills can be used in many jobs and also at home or in community service. They are sometimes called "cushion" skills because you can fall back on them when jobs in your preferred field are scarce! They also enable you to qualify for a wider variety of jobs, and give you a definite advantage in case you apply for a job where they may be useful.

HOW ABOUT WORK EXPERIENCE?



Do you think girls should work while they are in high school? Two of my friends plan to take part-time jobs during their senior year. Joan says she wants some work experience; Bettie needs the extra money.

For older girls, who are at least 16, a summer vacation job may be a good way to get work experience. Unless a girl is strong and well and handles her courses with ease, a Saturday job or an after-school job may take too much energy or time. A full-time vacation job is less likely to interfere with school progress, and usually offers a better chance to acquire sound work habits.

The school counselor could help girls like Joan and Bettie find suitable jobs, if employment is really the answer to their problems. And she can help a girl who has her doubts—as Marilyn apparently has—weigh the pros and cons.

Another thing: When a student takes a job, it must conform with the child-labor laws set up for the protection of young people. The counselor will know what the requirements are in your State and where to go for a work permit if one is needed.

When jobs are scarce—or money is not too important—worthwhile experience can be gained from unpaid vacation work for relatives, on the home farm, or as a volunteer worker in a community agency.

More than one woman who has made a lifelong career of social service first became interested through doing volunteer work for a

community center
child-welfare agency
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hospital.

Girls who are under 16 (and many who are older) will do well to postpone the matter of job experience. It can be acquired when needed, after graduation.

Until then,

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LOOKING FOR A JOB



*Can you tell me how to find a job
when I am ready for one? I don't
know where to start.*

There are many ways of finding a suitable job. Here are some that have helped other girls:

Your own school may have a placement service. If so, this is the first thing to try. The *school placement service* specializes in jobs for beginners, and the counselor will know what training you have.

There is also likely to be a local office of the *State Employment Service* in your town, or in a nearby city. The State Employment Office will refer you to any job opening they know of, for which you are qualified. All their services are free, including counseling and aptitude tests if needed.

You can apply direct to an *employer*. This works especially well in a small community where the employer may know you or your family personally; also in the case of a large company which has its own employment office.

If you have *relatives* or *friends* employed in the company where you want to work, ask them to let you know when there is a vacancy, so you can apply.

A quick way of checking on the kind of job openings and the rates of pay in your locality is to run through the "help wanted" advertisements in the *daily newspaper*.

If your first job has no relation to your long-term plans, do not be discouraged. You may like it better than you think. At the very least it will supply job experience which will help you when you find the opening you want.

Be sure that you meet the requirements of your State as to a **WORK PERMIT** or **AGE CERTIFICATE** for employment, if you go to work before you are 18.

HOW MORE EDUCATION CAN HELP



I am 16 and have one more year of high school. Will you please tell me what kind of job I could expect to get—if I left school now?—after graduation?—with a year or more of special training after high school?

You can get a general idea of the amount of education and training required for a few types of work from the following list of so-called "entry jobs." Ask your school counselor or the local office of the State Employment Service about specific requirements.

The Women's Bureau has published reports describing job opportunities for women and training requirements in the broad fields of health service and social work, food service management, engineering, and some other occupations.

However, there is no hard and fast rule about the training required for most jobs. When vacancies are plentiful and applicants scarce, a girl may get a chance to try a job that ordinarily calls for more training than she has had. But when employers can pick and choose among well-qualified applicants, the amount of training may be the deciding factor.

With less than 4 years of high school, a girl must expect to begin work in an entry job where no special skill is re-

quired, or where training is given on the job. She may take an entry job in a factory, store, restaurant, or hospital, or do private household work.

As she gains experience and skill she may be able to qualify for more responsible and better-paid jobs. Skilled factory operatives often earn more than women in some clerical and professional occupations.

The graduate of a *general* or *commercial high-school course* may be able to find a position as

bank teller (trainee)	photographer's helper in ad-
cashier in a store, restaurant,	vertising or in newspaper or
office	magazine work
clerk (billing, cost, payroll,	receptionist
posting, time clerk)	
"copy boy" on local newspaper	salesgirl in a department or
	other retail store
laboratory assistant in a hos-	telephone operator (must be at
pital or a drug or cosmetics	least 18 years)
firm	
library attendant or helper	typist

NOTE: If she is 18 years or over and in good health, a high-school graduate is eligible for enlistment in the Armed Forces.

A girl who has completed a *vocational course* at the high-school level may find a beginning position where she can use her training as

baker (assistant) in a bread and	electronics assembler (semi-
cake factory	skilled) in radio or television
	manufacture
beauty-service operator	gardener or landscaper's assist-
	ant
commercial artist (beginner	practical nurse
doing copy work, lettering,	
stencils, model making) in a	sewing-machine operator in a
department store or adver-	factory
tising agency	
cook (assistant) in restaurant	welder in an aircraft factory

With 1 to 3 years of specialized training beyond high school, a girl can qualify for many skilled or semi-skilled jobs, such as

assistant, dentist's or doctor's office (1 to 2 years)	medical laboratory technician (3 years)
bookkeeper assistant	medical records technician in a hospital
dental hygienist (1 to 2 years)	medical X-ray technician (1 to 2 years)
draftsman	registered nurse, hospital school (3 years)
fashion designer (beginner, 3 years)	stenographer (business, legal, medical)
illustrator of catalogs or magazines	

Four years or more in a college, university, or professional school, with specialization in the field selected, is the standard preparation for a professional or technical career, especially for a girl who hopes to advance to a position of greater responsibility. This applies in the practice of medicine, dentistry, law, or theology, and also for a woman planning to be an

accountant (professional)	librarian
biologist	medical technologist
chemist	nurse, college trained
college instructor	occupational therapist
dietitian or nutritionist	optometrist
engineer	pharmacist
dairy bacteriologist	physicist
floriculturist	physical therapist
food-service manager	plant nursery specialist
high-school teacher	recreation or group worker
home economist	religious worker
journalist or editorial worker	social worker
kindergarten teacher	veterinarian



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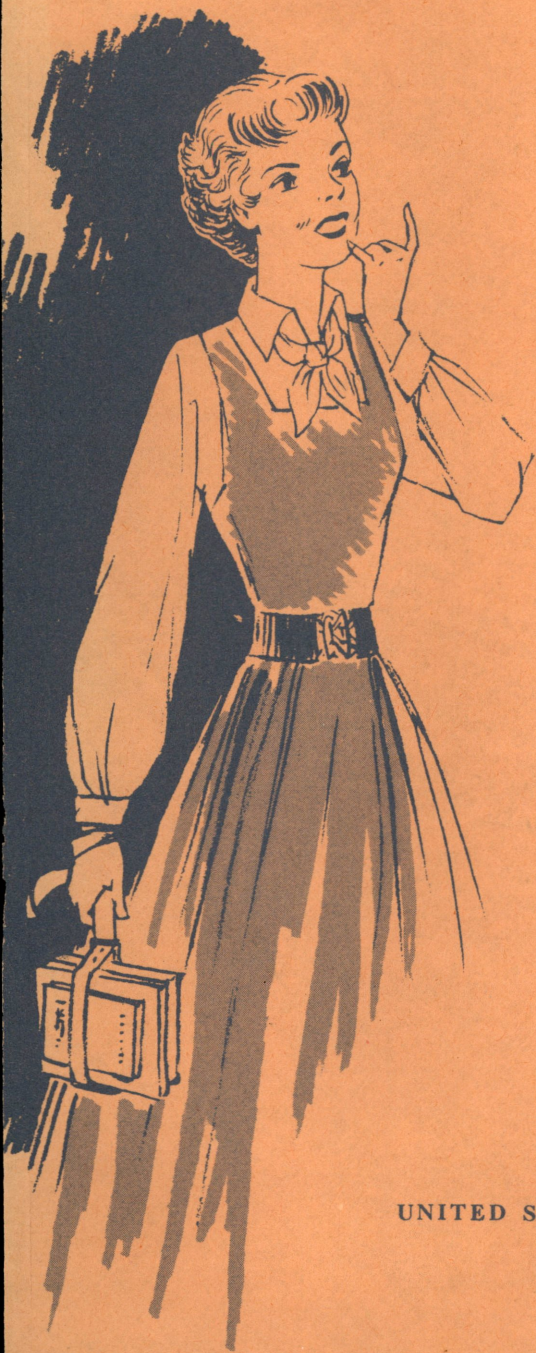
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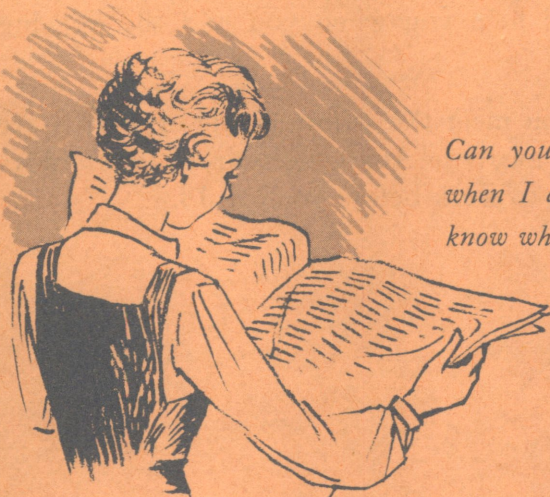
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NOTE: If she is 18 years or over and in good health, a high-school graduate is eligible for enlistment in the Armed Forces.

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beauty-service operator	manufacture
commercial artist (beginner	gardener or landscaper's assist-
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cook (assistant) in restaurant	welder in an aircraft factory

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bookkeeper assistant	medical records technician in a hospital
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fashion designer (beginner, 3 years)	stenographer (business, legal, medical)
illustrator of catalogs or magazines	

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accountant (professional)	librarian
biologist	medical technologist
chemist	nurse, college trained
college instructor	occupational therapist
dietitian or nutritionist	optometrist
engineer	pharmacist
dairy bacteriologist	physicist
floriculturist	physical therapist
food-service manager	plant nursery specialist
high-school teacher	recreation or group worker
home economist	religious worker
journalist or editorial worker	social worker
kindergarten teacher	veterinarian

