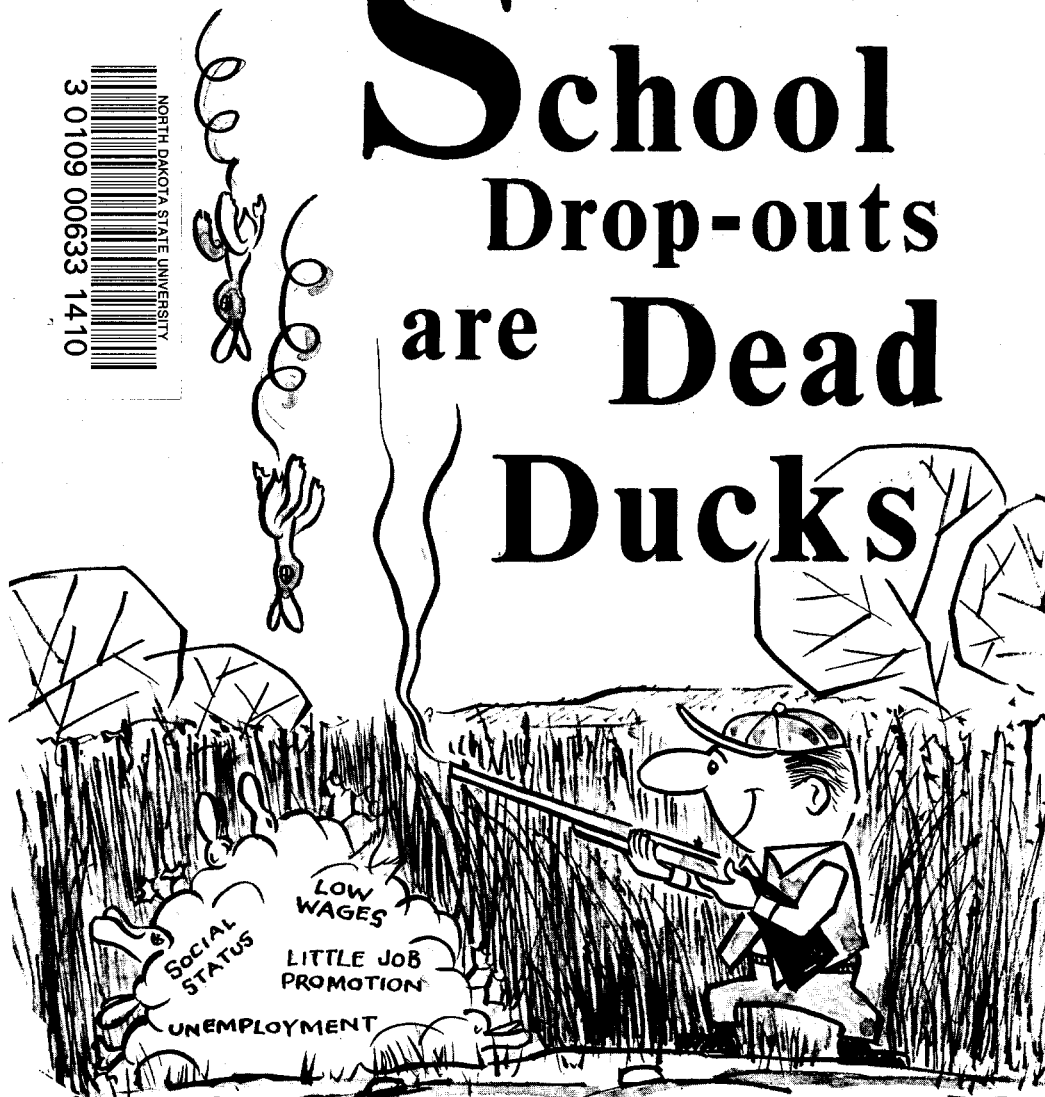


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NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

School Drop-outs are Dead Ducks



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EXTENSION SERVICE

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY
FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA 58103

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Let me speak bluntly to parents and teenagers alike. As bluntly as the bark of a shotgun in a North Dakota fall sky.

DROP-OUTS ARE DEAD DUCKS!

Sure, a drop-out can get a fair paying job which will support a car to get him to the places he wants to go. (In the pinches, for a burned out transmission, Mom and Dad will always pitch in.)

BUT BROTHER, from then on he's a dead duck. Lady Fate declares open season on him a few years later:

1. His job disappears in a "poof" because a machine or someone with more education can do his job cheaper, better. It may take a few years on your job but eventually . . .

2. It'll be hard to find another job. If it's available, it's likely to be only a seasonal position or have a pretty low salary. Even farmers can no longer trust their \$5,000 to \$10,000 machines to "just anybody".

3. Out of a job, he'll get help from Lady Fate in turning to juvenile delinquency to support that Belchfire 8 standing in the driveway.

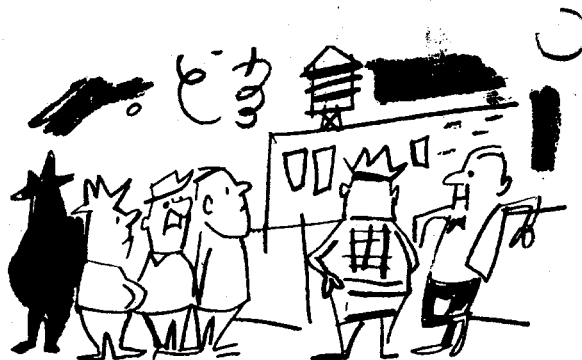
4. Sure, it was easy to get married when you had that first good job. Now, there isn't enough money for the kids, the wife.. the bowling. Divorce haunts drop-outs with ferocity.

5. After the drop-out finds he made a mistake he'll be so involved with his family, his job, his debts that there'll be little chance to go back and get the education he now realizes he should have accepted when Mom and Dad were paying the bills.



ARE DROP-OUTS REALLY A PROBLEM IN NORTH DAKOTA?

While North Dakota residents have toiled diligently to conserve the soil, the human erosion that is the school drop-out has swept 2/5 of the state's youth resources.



NORTH DAKOTA HAS A PRETTY GOOD RECORD, AT THAT

Only 10 per cent of high school freshmen in North Dakota don't finish as graduating seniors in the state. North Dakota is 10th highest in the nation in the number of students who do finish high school.

But Statistics Can Hide the Real Story:

In 1960 there were 16,354 North Dakotans between the ages of 12 and 24 who hadn't finished high school and who were not enrolled in school. They are still living in the state. That's enough people to populate a city the size of Jamestown, with enough left to replace all the residents of Wishek as well!

That's 16,354 persons who tragically face a lifetime of low income, little job promotion, higher divorce rates and more unhappiness...because now it's too late, they think, to go back and get that education they need so badly in today's automated, technical world.



WHAT A NORTH DAKOTA YOUTH SURVEY FOUND:

The N.D. State Employment Service, to whom most of the unskilled, untrained drop-outs turn for jobs, conducted a youth survey.

They found the state needs 7,000 new jobs annually to employ youth and others who enter the labor market each year. And, as the state loses its unskilled work opportunities because of mechanization of farms and industry, automation, improved transportation, improved communication; the employees and unemployed hardest hit are the unskilled and semi-skilled worker groups.

After reviewing the drop-out situation in North Dakota, the State Employment Service concluded:

1. The drop-out rate and school leavers in North Dakota are high in the light of opportunities available.
2. The youth of the state are in dire need of both training (with emphasis on vocational training) and vocational guidance.
3. Temporary programs of relief and stop-gap assistance are not enough to appreciably affect the problem. The youth who is down at the bottom--no money, no job, no good clothes--can't suddenly climb to an acceptable level in the eyes of an employer.

WHAT HAPPENS TO DROP-OUTS?

- In a recent survey, only 3/4 of the boy drop-outs were working a year after leaving school. But 9/10 of the high school graduates found jobs after finishing school.

- The unemployment rate among drop-outs is twice that of the general population. The nongraduate tends to change jobs more frequently too.

- Drop-outs are not only more often unemployed, but are out of work for longer periods of time.

- Most businesses today specify, "Only high school graduates need apply". Many are asking for only college graduates. They want starting employees who can later be trained for executive positions, increasing responsibility and higher salaries. Only education can provide these. As high as 80 to 90 per cent of relief rolls are made up of clients who have not completed high school.

- A drop-out is a poor business or industry risk. Employers reason, "If this kid didn't finish high school, something's wrong. Why should I take on his troubles when there are plenty of other better-risk employees available? Besides, who wants to gamble on a quitter?"



WHAT MAKES A DROP-OUT?

People who have studied the problem say these factors are high on the list:

1. Lack of success in school work.
2. Little or no participation in extra-curricular activities.
3. Not accepted by fellow students because of personal problems, clothes or social reasons.
4. Lack of understanding of problems and little encouragement by parents and teachers.
5. Early marriage.
6. Lack of money.

Poor work and poor grades don't necessarily mean the student isn't capable of doing school work. Maybe he can't see or hear well, or an unhappy home life may be the root of poor school work. A World War II IQ test found that a fourth of the truck drivers tested scored higher than a fourth of the executives in business.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

PTA's, Homemaker groups, other civic organizations could sponsor child development study groups for the entire community, open to all, with special emphasis on parents of potential drop-outs. They can help parents understand what children need, how they grow, how they act at certain ages.

These groups might sponsor out-of-school tutoring for lagging students, provide suitable clothing, school lunches, financial aid or counseling programs headed by experts in the field. A unified program through pastors, teachers, employers, employment groups could coordinate an attack on the problem.

WHAT CAN INDIVIDUAL PARENTS DO?

- Try to provide a calm atmosphere at home. Don't substitute screeching for firm, calm "Yes" and "No". Once a decision is made, stick to it.
- See that children are physically fit. The school nurse or family doctor or free clinics can provide advice here.

- Show an interest in the children's school work and activities.
- Get acquainted with the child's teachers, school officials.
- Consult your pastor, priest or rabbi for advice or other person whose advice you value and respect.
- Take part in PTA, study and other groups to find out more about the inner workings of your child.
- Read to children at an early age. Provide good books as they learn to read for themselves later.
- Participate in other activities with them. Visit parks, libraries, points of interest in the area.
- See that children have a chance to play with other children.
- Respect children's feelings, ideas, property and time. Realize that each child is different.

WHAT TO AVOID:

When you can see trouble on your child's horizon, it may be due to:

- Conflict between that child and yourself. Seek the advice of experts on what to do.
- Too much pressure put on them to make good in school. It may be more important that a child be happy, well-balanced than a top student.
- Granting or withholding love as punishment for poor school work. Find other means of punishment such as removal of some favorite activity or material thing. Never withhold love as punishment.
- Comparing a child unfavorably with other family members or with other boys and girls. Each child is an individual. Respect him for it. Praise what he does best.
- Constant fault finding. "A pinch of sugar will go a heap farther than a pint of vinegar."
- Overindulgence. Giving the child just about everything he wants. In the long run, you do your child harm with overindulgence. Discipline is needed to relieve feelings of guilt, to teach responsibility and to show him the way to self-respect and self-reliance.
- Trying to re-live your own childhood again or to make up for your own frustrations through your own children.

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