

What Is Teenager's Chief Task -- Driving a Car or School Studies?

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My parents are quite sensible in most matters but have some funny ideas about the use of a car. Dad admits I can handle a car as well as he can, and they know that I don't try to show off the way some of the kids do, yet that doesn't seem to help. I'm going to be a senior in high school this fall. They don't want me to drive the car to school, and I know from past experience I'll seldom get it for dates. This doesn't make sense. Some of the kids in my class even have their own cars. Aren't my parents unreasonable in being so strict?



It doesn't take much of a stretch of imagination — or memory — to understand how you feel about a car, Jim. A car is more than a means of transportation.

Having the use of a car is a kind of mark of maturity, it offers a man the chance to show he has a sense of responsibility and can be trusted. It gives him standing with his age-group, it's convenient, and it's mighty handy on a date. You wouldn't be normal, Jim, if you didn't want a car, or the frequent use of one, at your age.

But your parents don't seem to share this view. However, since you admit they are quite sensible in other matters, let's begin by seeing if we can discover what sound reasons they might have for maintaining their peculiar stand.

Whether we agree with them or not, we must assume that they have made up their minds on the basis of some facts. What might these be?

One of the facts your parents probably have in mind is that teen-agers tend to have many more highway accidents than mature drivers. According to one national report, forty per cent of the country's young drivers are involved in an accident in a given year. Automobile insurance rates reflect this fact clearly, since in most of our major cities they tend to be around \$200 more per year when an unmarried male under 25 drives a car.

There are several reasons for this high incidence of accidents among young drivers. According to one national poll, four out of five high school students agree that most teen-agers show off when driving. A speeding car gives a youngster an exaggerated sense of power, of achieving something, of being in command at a stage in his development that is frequently a little dull, unexciting and unrewarding.

Although your parents know that you can handle a car well, they are necessarily concerned about your ability to withstand the unwise pressure and influence of companions. As you have probably learned, it is much more difficult to maintain a sense of responsibility when one is with the gang than when alone or with one's parents.

There is a more significant fact that doubtless bothers your parents. A whole series of recent surveys show that studies and cars don't mix in high school. For example, a summary of the 4-

year grade averages of a representative high school senior class reveals that no straight "A" student had the use of a car, only 15 per cent of the "B" students drove a car to school, while 41 per cent of the "C" students, 71 per cent of the "D" students, and 83 per cent of the "E" students brought cars to school.

It was also discovered that the acquisition of a car resulted in a serious drop in grades among students who had previously done very well in school. As we would expect, extensive use of the car for social activities during the week is highly detrimental to scholarship. It is estimated that a student using the car frequently on evenings during the school week is 20 times more likely to get "F" grades than to be a "A" student.

Your parents must also have another fact in mind. They cannot be unaware that the use of cars for dating becomes the source of serious moral problems for high school students. Cars render parental guidance or supervision practically impossible, while the proper use of the almost unlimited freedom they provide demands more moral and emotional maturity than most high school students possess.

I have not gone out of my way to make out a strong case for your parents' position, Jim, yet considering the rather obvious facts that I have mentioned above, what other sound could we expect them to take? If they have any concern for your future happiness and success, they will stick to their decision, no matter what driving privileges other parents may decide to grant.

Perhaps it will help you maintain proper perspective in dealing with this problem if you keep the answer to one simple question clearly in mind: What is the most important work I have to accomplish at this particular stage in my development?

You're no longer a child, Jim. You're engaged in the very serious business of preparing for life, and in our society, this means that most of your energy and time must be focused on your studies.

Of course you may presently get by with a minimum of effort, but where will this leave you five, ten, fifteen years from now? The kind of preparation you receive now will determine your whole future, and it's primarily up to you. Why not give yourself a break by using your time and energy in a way that will really count?

Blind Child Has 'A' Record 'I Want To Teach Braille'

Chicago — (NC) — There is a special youngster who will enter the eighth grade at St. Clare de Montefalco school this fall and continue her way of bringing home report cards loaded with A's and B's.

What makes fair-haired Barbara Gulch so special?

She is blind. Barbara, 12, is the only blind pupil at the school. She lost her sight four years ago, when a tumor was removed from her brain.

THIS AFFLICTION has not deterred the happy child of Mr. and Mrs. Constant Gulch from any normal activity. She excels in her studies, joins in the children's games and gets around the school by herself, except when it's too crowded. Then, Barbara said, she gets a little assistance from her friends.

When interviewed, Barbara was excitedly preparing for her trip to Rosholt, Wis., where she will vacation for one week at the Wisconsin Lions Camp for Visually Handicapped Children.

Barbara is one of eight boys and girls sent to this camp under the sponsorship of the Southwest Lions Club. This camp is completely owned and supported by the Lions Club

of Wisconsin, but accepts children from Illinois.

"I want to be a Sister, and teach braille to the blind," said Barbara when asked what plans she is making for the future. This ambition was aroused by her devotion to Sister Liguoria of the Holy Cross Order, who brought Barbara back to the world by means of braille.

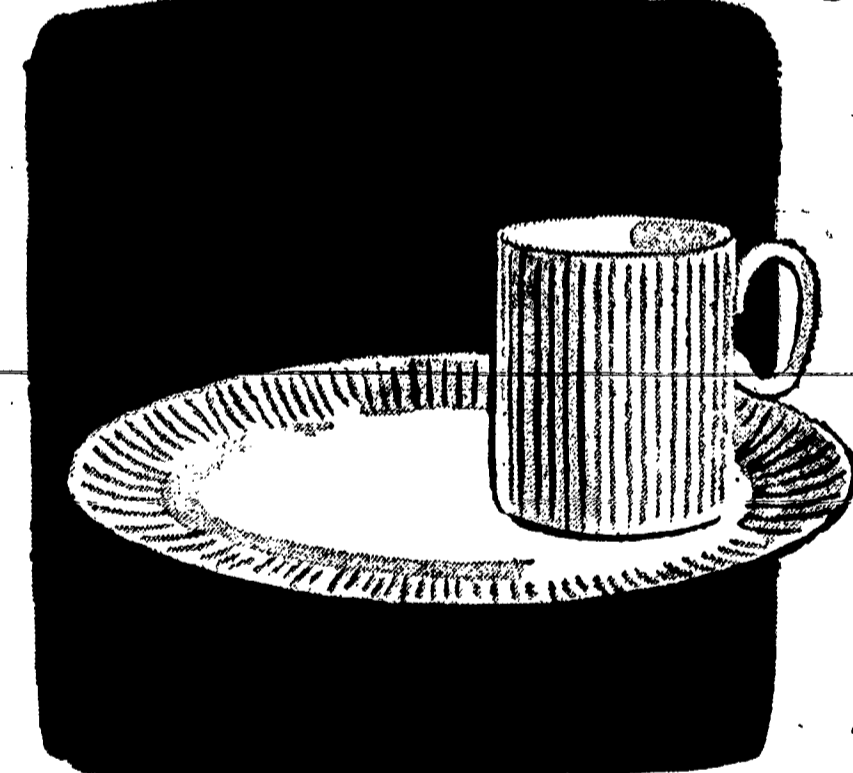
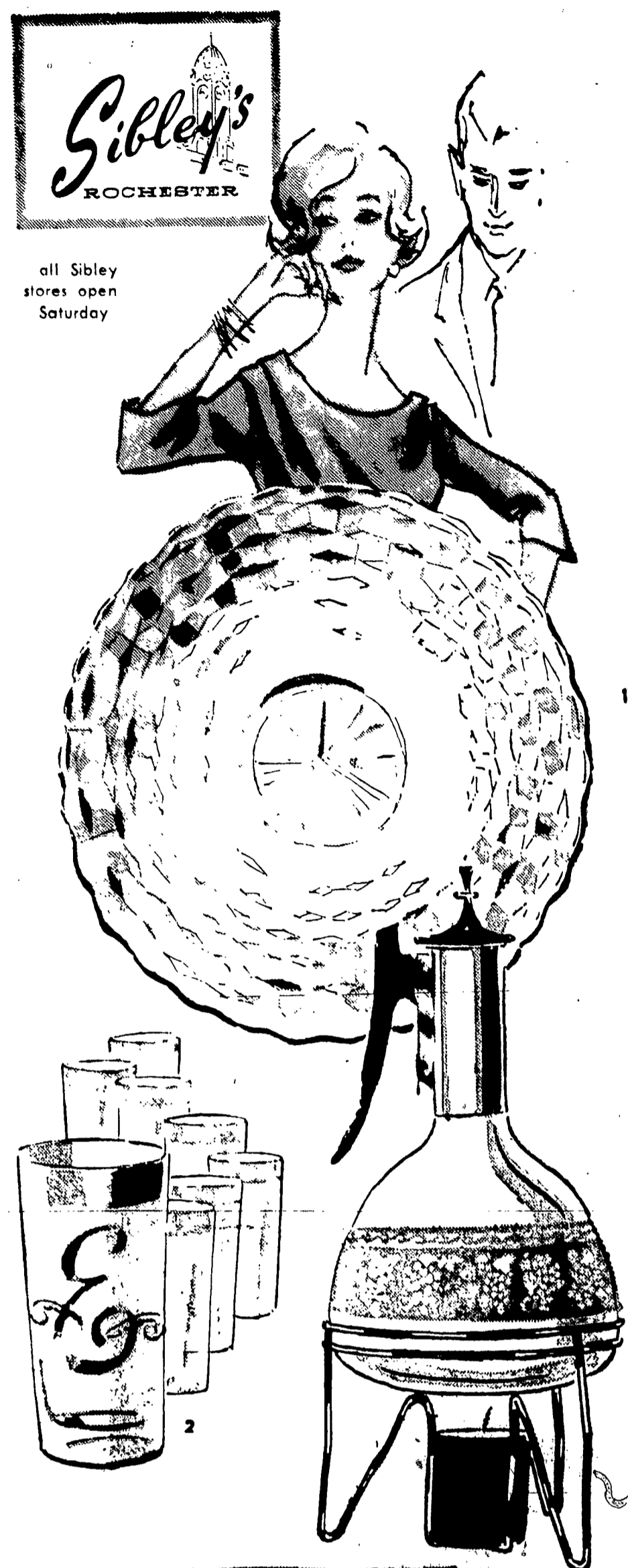
After a year in special classes at Holy Redeemer and St. Raphael's schools, Barbara last year returned to St. Clare de Montefalco to resume her seventh grade studies with the companions she had left in third grade.

She takes homework assignments on a braille typewriter, then transcribes it on a normal typewriter. She can also write longhand, guiding her right hand with the left to keep the writing line even.

Mrs. Gulch takes her daughter back and forth to school. But from there on she is on her own and does very well, her mother said.

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Israel Elects Christians, Nazareth Votes Red

Jerusalem — (RNS) — The three Arab Christian members of the 120-man Israeli parliament were re-elected in the general election of Aug. 15.

One was Elias Nakleh, Eastern Rite Catholic, a member of Premier David Ben-Gurion's Mapai Party who had the endorsement of the official monthly organ of the Haifa diocese headed by Melkite Rite Archbishop George Hakim of Galilee.

The others were Youssef Khamis, a Protestant Episcopalian, who is a member of the leftist Mapam Party, and Tewfik Toubi, a Greek Orthodox, who was a member of the Committee on Interior Affairs of the previous parliament.

The polling day witnessed a violent clash between some Moslem and Greek Orthodox vigilantes in Galilee, apparently

Malta Cross For Layman

Geneva — (NC) — Marcus Daly, director of the 30-nation Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM), has been awarded the Grand Cross of Merit of the Sovereign Military Order of Knights of Malta.

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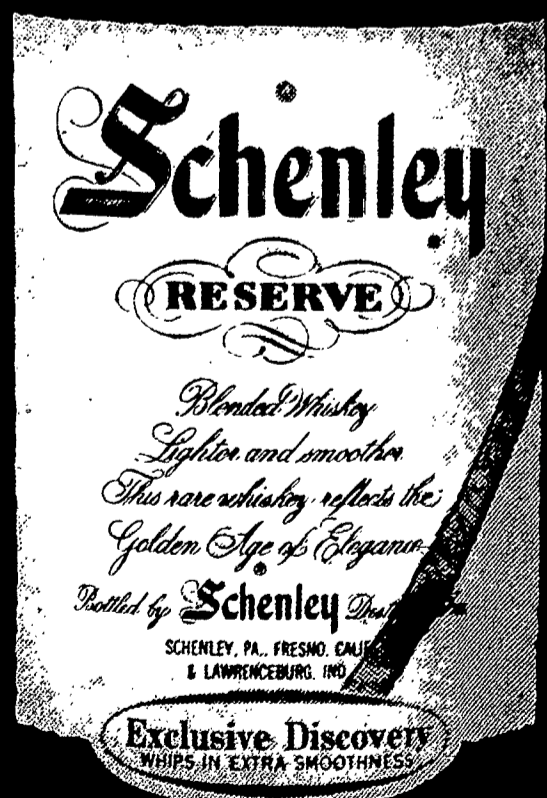
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