



IDIOSYNCRASIES

## McCALLMANACK

### Something to Think About When Choosing a Dog, or Not

In my house we all seem to want a different dog. My daughter Amber likes long, sausage-type dogs, dachshunds and basset hounds. Son Tim likes hunting dogs, Labs and retrievers. My wife fancies poodles. Personally, I like boxers or Rhodesian Ridgebacks, something big and strong that pulls and tugs, that lets you know it's there on the other end of the leash. Not one of those high-strung, shivering toy breeds that make you feel as though you're walking a squirrel. They just quiver and shake. The vibrating drives you crazy. In fact, when they are frightened they shake so fast they become blurry. What fun is a dog you can't see clearly?

Which reminds me of Weimaraners and Dobermans. These dogs resemble Stealth airplanes. They are colored in such a way that you almost don't see them coming, especially at night. And they move quickly and quietly. Before you know it the Doberman is by your side looking up at your throat as if it's a bacon cheeseburger with grilled onions. Where did he come from? Go 'way, doggie. Weimaraners, for their part, slip around you and into the park without your even seeing them. Known as gray ghosts, they take the gray ghost thing very seriously.

And what about the king of dogs, the giant Great Dane? This majestic animal is your size, and by nature has big and long, low-flapping ears, very much like your grandfather. Luckily your grandfather is toilet-trained, unlike the Great Dane. Ever try to mop up Lake Erie? Danes do everything in a big way.

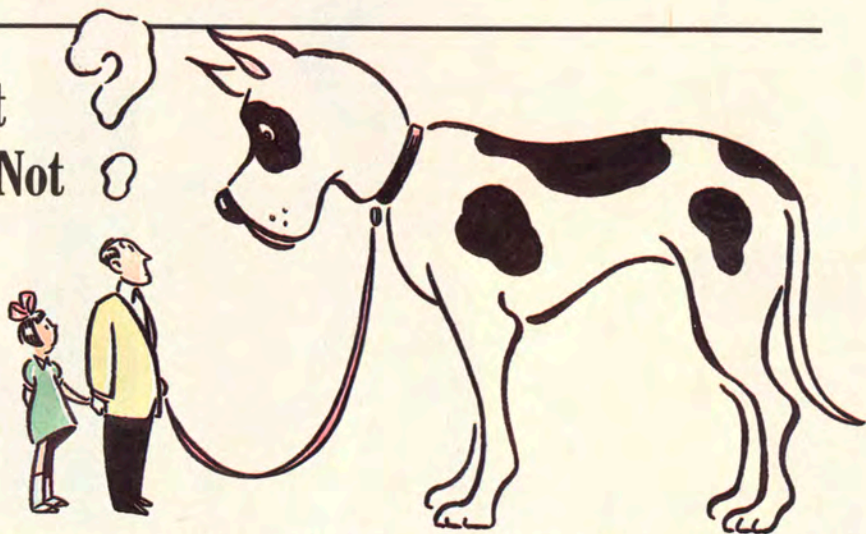
My daughter Amber loves any dog as long as it is a puppy. Puppies are *sooo* cute. Amber doesn't realize that in a few blinks, the Dane puppy grows up into a big, loud, frisky adult dog, the size of a horse, that jumps up on your chest and licks your nose when you least expect it, like now. "Down, Blitzen, down, boy!"

Amber also likes any dog that waddles, or has sad eyes. Thus, cocker spaniels, basset hounds and misformed beagles often catch her eye.

"He's *sooo* cute, Dad. Let's get him."

"But that's a pit bull, Amber—he's trained to do war tricks like finishing off a battalion."

"Look, Dad, he's smiling at us."



"Sharks look like they're smiling too, Amber."

"No, Dad, Butcho wants us to take him home."

Curiously, Butcho's teeth are six times the size of his body; our canine adviser informs us he uses them as a tool to open cans of food. Butcho is better equipped, I think, to chew tanks or go after hardened criminals. Butcho's role model/mentor at the kennel was a crocodile.

When selecting a dog, consider also that your dog will tend to attract other leashed dogs and their masters when you walk him. So if you want to be alone, choose a wolf. People will avoid you. But if you wish to invite the opposite sex, because you are single, let us say, or adventurous, choose a gregarious dog of some indistinguishable breed. A mutt.

This will force the other owner to inquire as to what kind of dog you have. The rest is up to you.

Also, remember how dogs look like their masters. Thus, athletic types own sporting dogs; beautiful women, Afghans; and princes, Borzois. If you are a wimp, try to choose a dog that will change your image, not encourage it, and stay away from Chihuahuas and Pomeranians. Even a six-foot-seven, 260-pound nose tackle for the Steelers looks ridiculous walking a Pomeranian named Killer.

If you're having a hard time making up your mind, or if the members of your family can't agree, maybe you'll discover that the dog of your dreams is just that. After all, the dog of your dreams won't leave any signature on the carpets of your reality. —Lewis Burke Frumkes

ILLUSTRATION BY ROLLIN MCGRAIL

#### EDUCATION

### Encouraging Girls to Pursue Math and Science Careers

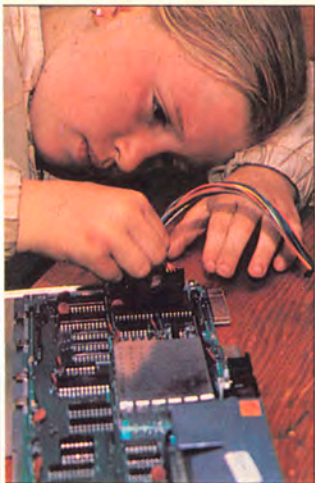
In choosing classes and extracurricular activities, many girls just say no to math and science. "They're living up to the expectations of parents, teachers, peers and the media," says Marsha Lakes Matyas, Ph.D., project director of the Women in Science program at the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Washington, D.C.

To combat these negative attitudes, local and national programs are working to interest elementary through high school-age girls in math and science. The programs also show teachers and parents why math and science education now leads to increased employment and earning potential later.

"Girls will be interested in science if they see people like them involved in it," says Suzette Hunt, career facilitator of Project Link, a school program in suburban Minneapolis. The program matches fourth to sixth graders with 200 women in math- and science-related careers, including doctors, geologists, engineers and even an airline pilot. For the past four years, architect Rosemary McMonigal has worked with fifth-grade classes in drawing up plans for a summer camp. "They see that graphs and fractions aren't just something they're forced to study in school," Hunt says, "and there's a use for them in the real world."

Project Link isn't limited only to





**Girls involved in Operation SMART explore the inner workings of frogs and machinery.**

girls. "Boys need to see women in these roles too, to learn to support women in their choice of work," Hunt says. Included in the program are discussions of traditional family stereotypes and expectations, and attitudes that affect career choices.

Teachers trained in the University of California at Berkeley's EQUALS program use games to make math interest-

ing and relevant for girls in grades K through 12. The game Odds on You alerts students to how math and science education affects job prospects and salaries for men and women. In another activity, teams of students vie to build the highest tower using paper, paper clips and scissors, and in the process practice spatial visualization and cooperative problem solving. Developed at the university's Lawrence Hall of Science, EQUALS workshops have trained 30,000 teachers in ten states.

The Lawrence Hall of Science also offers workshops that train teachers, parents, retired people and community workers to run a program called Family Math. Currently available in 27 states, Family Math runs four to six weeks in schools, churches or community centers and gives parents and children ideas for problem solving, strategy games and other math activities they can do together.

Girls Clubs of America members get

hands-on science experience through the organization's Operation SMART (science, math and relevant technology). The 100,000, mostly low-income girls who take part in Operation SMART may take apart and reassemble radios, work with computers or build lemonade stands.

Girls are taught to be neat, quiet and obedient and not take intellectual risks, says Operation SMART director Ellen Wahl. "It's not seen as acceptable to pursue a goal obsessively to the exclusion of other things, as is needed to pursue science," she says. "We encourage girls to get messy, analyze things, make mistakes and try again."

—Celia Slom

*For more information on science and math programs for girls, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Department M, Room 1005, American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1333 H St. N.W., Washington, DC 20005.*