

Sports Mirror by
JOHN MOONEY
Tribune Sports Editor

The "invasion" or "encroachment" of females into the domain of males may be desired by the various Women's Lib splinter groups and those seeking equality in the Health, Education, and Welfare Department.

But an outspoken and respected educator, Dr. S. I. Hayakawa, feels males are surrounded too much by female influence already.

Dale Brown, former Utah Aggie assistant and now basketball coach at Louisiana State, sends a Hayakawa column along, and his thought raises some interesting conjectures.

"Never has it been so difficult for boys to grow up into men," Dr. Hayakawa states.

"Becoming a man is not a matter of chronology. It is a matter of proof. Throughout the history of mankind, boys have had to prove themselves men. . . .

" . . . To become a man it has always been necessary for boys to associate with men, as helpers on father's farm, as apprentices to craftsmen, as squires to knights, as water boys to baseball teams.

"Through such associations they learned the secrets of adult culture: What rituals to observe, how to care for equipment, how to drink and curse and fight, perhaps, how to earn and maintain the respect of other men in a society of men.

"But today, most boys are separated from the lives of men. Men leave for the factory or the office early in the morning,

commuting many miles to work. They do not return until evening. Boys are brought up by mothers and school teachers. Boys do not have an idea what a man does that makes him a man.

Surrounded by Women

"Unless a boy is good enough to make the varsity squad, unless he joins a street gang or the armed forces or goes to engineering school, he is likely to spend his entire life with women around

" . . . The experience of being a man in a society of men becomes rarer and rarer. It's fine to prove to women that you are a man, but the final proof is when you prove it to other men, "Dr. Hayakawa argues.

"What young men profoundly need as they grow up, says David Riesman, is to be extended to the limit of their powers. They have to experience situations in which they have to do more than their best in order to escape death, capture, defeat, or failure."

Dr. Hayakawa explains that athletic teams in high school provide some challenges, but what of the other students?

"High school is no challenge. In most communities if you don't learn enough to advance to the next grade they pass you anyway. For many the curriculum is so slow and repetitive that it is a bore. For others, it is simply meaningless.

"Furthermore, the challenge of work on the outside is denied to the boy by exclusionary union rules, by child labor laws, minimum wage laws and pressures that keep

him in school, whether he wants to be there or not.

“So the vast majority of boys are excluded from the world of men and denied a chance to exercise their powers, physical or intellectual. Is there any wonder there is a youth problem?”

Need Challenges

Dr. Hayakawa continues, “Boys need challenges. Their whole being cries out for them. To face starvation, the possibility of death at enemy hands, the risks of failure in school or work or business, and then to triumph over these dangers — these are the stuff of human growth, of maturity.

“If the affluent society does not provide boys with challenges, they are compelled by inner necessity to improvise their own. Is this not one of the reasons gangs of youths try to provoke authorities into confrontations?”

“What about drugs and the young? If challenge and risk are what so many youths need and are not getting, is it not likely that drug warnings and their dangers simply make them more attractive?”

“. . . That’s what the generation gap is about. Fathers away from home, for whatever reason, are therefore unavailable to their sons as models of male adulthood. The boys are forced to improvise their own subculture, unguided by adult knowledge or experience.

“That’s the problem for fathers. Isn’t there something we can learn from the Pueblo Indians about passing on a culture? How can we bring our sons into our lives?”

“It takes men to develop men. Mothers cannot do it by themselves. Neither can high schools. Nor colleges,” Dr. Hayakawa challenges.

There is some thought in this logic and it wouldn’t hurt for the dads to read it over again. I’m afraid a lot of us are there when the honors are handed out, when the awards are given our boys and girls, but many of us are too busy, too tired, too involved at the office or the club, to participate in the development of those kids.