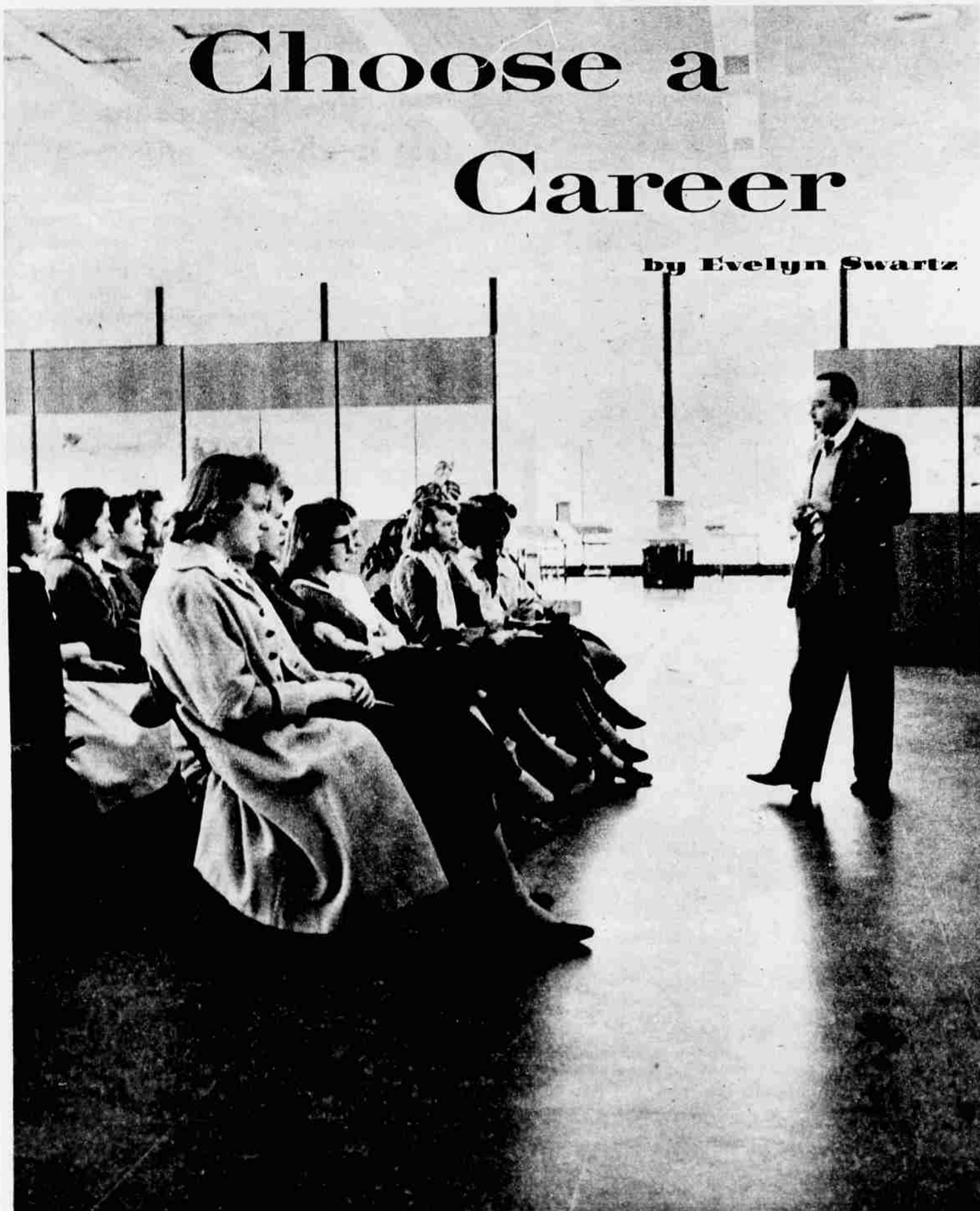


Help Your Child

Choose a Career

by Evelyn Swartz



*The ultimate decision
must be his,
but here's how
you can aid him
in making the wisest
possible choice.*

DON MILLER's young shoulders sagged as he faced his high-school vocational counselor for the first time. Spread on the desk were the baffling results of his freshman aptitude tests. "My father wants me to be a doctor," the boy said, "but I don't know for sure what I want to be."

The plight of the Miller boy is a familiar one to guidance experts across the nation. Starting this month, they will help more than a million high-school enrollees face bewildering new decisions in an adult world.

When *should* a young person decide on his future career?

"There is no specific age at which a youth should know definitely what vocation he wants to follow," says Dr. Donald E. Super, guidance supervisor at Teachers' College, Columbia University. "Some know at age 10 and never change. Others can't make their choice until they are well into their 30s. Yet both groups can be successful."

The high-school boy who knows what he wants because he has a special talent or interest has no trouble making a decision. It may lead him to a college education, and if it does, he can direct his studies wholeheartedly toward that goal. If not, he may seek vocational training, then start reaping the benefits and security that usually come with service and experience on the job. Either way, he is likely to pick a life-long vocation and get ahead faster than if he tried one job after another without purpose or inner satisfaction.

"The people who face real danger and unhappiness," warns Dr. Super, "are those who possess conflicting talents or aptitudes and who are pressured into making too early a decision by well-meaning parents or friends."

"As early as the freshman year, young people should be advised to 'keep all possible doors open.' They should investigate thoroughly college entrance requirements and map their courses in such a way that they will not find pathways closed to them on graduation day."

WHAT CAN parents do to help beginning high-schoolers plan intelligently for their careers? Dr. Peter Sammartino, president of Fairleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey, where more than 30 career-goal specializations at-

A growing number of communities now set aside specific business, industry, and the various professions outline opportunities in their fields, take students on guided tours.