

BOOK REVIEWS

WHEN I GROW UP A Young Person's Guide to Interesting and Unusual Occupations

The Well-Read Child

<http://wellreadchild.blogspot.com/2008/08/when-i-grow-up-young-persons-guide-to.html>

Choosing a career path is quite a daunting task. Some people know from childhood what they want to do, but I think most people really don't know until later in life. Regardless of whether you know "what you want to be when you grow up" or not, it's always very interesting to learn about different jobs. Look at the success of *Deadliest Catch* and *Dirty Jobs*, two shows that fascinate me. I'm a little too squeamish to actually be a crab fisherman, or one of the professionals on *Dirty Jobs*, but I'm interested in learning more about them, nonetheless.

Now, Jessica Loy has written a book that features people who have very interesting and unusual occupations. We meet the following people:

- Entomologist
- Alpaca Farmer
- Archeologist
- Master Cheese Maker
- Research Biologist
- Game Designer
- Chocolatier

Each career gets its own two-page spread that features quotes from a professional in the field, full-color photographs, and lots of interesting information about the career. For example, we meet Jamie Miller, a master cheese maker. He works on a farm in Vermont that produces cheddar cheese, and the book covers the 12 steps in the cheese-making process, from cow to packaging.

We also meet Andrea Lain, an archaeologist, who knew at the age of eight that she wanted to dedicate her life to studying the past. Her spread features a number of photographs of artifacts, including a deer jaw, a fragment from a 17th century chamber pot, and burned bone fragments found in a fireplace site.

I like this book because it introduces careers that appeal to kids who are creative, and it may inspire them to nurture that creativity within them. The language in the book is easy to read and would make a good choice for reluctant readers. It's a definite must-have for libraries.

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A Children's Book-of-the-Month Club Selection
A Book Sense "Children's Pick"
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School Library Journal

“A wonderful, informative book . . . There is a wealth of material packed into these attractive pages . . . An enjoyable read as well as a learning experience.”

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Booklist

“This kid-friendly guide to camping and hiking is loaded with information. Bright, busy pages, [and] colorful photo-collages and drawings.”

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excerpt from review by The BookWorm, Terri Schlichenmeyer

“From indoors to outside, hand-crafted art to food-as-art, this book will give you lots of ideas for a future that’s interesting and fun.”

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PlanetEsme:

The Best New Children’s Books from Esme’s Shelf

<http://planetesme.blogspot.com/2009/03/when-i-grow-up-nonfiction.html>

March 13, 2009.

WHEN I GROW UP: A YOUNG PERSON’S GUIDE TO INTERESTING AND UNUSUAL OCCUPATIONS by Jessica Loy (Henry Holt)

The intermediate years in a child’s life are a time when children are striving to be industrious, and discovering what they feel “good” at. It’s a time when the topic of what you want to be when you grow up takes on a new timbre of real possibility. Especially in these days of standardized testing (and over-testing), it’s so encouraging—and exciting—for children to remember again that there is a life outside of school and grades number-2 pencils, and a time when they will contribute meaningfully to the world through the work that they do. This book is a developmentally appropriate tool for such imaginings; fun jobs like game designer, master cheese maker, pet photographer, kite designer, chocolatier, percussionist, alpaca farmer, entomologist and more are each explored with a brief explanation and several annotated photographs describing the nature or process of the job. There is enough text so older children will not feel scandalized by reading it, but brief enough to feel engaging and varied. An unusually helpful section of resources awaits at the back of the book, including a list of occupational summer camps (very cool adventures like the National Geographic Photo Camp and the welcoming Kids Culinary Camp of Vermont, as well as opportunities to explore law enforcement, work with the Humane Society, attend robot camp or sports camp or performing arts camp, be first mate on a boat or fly high with an opportunity through the Organization of Black Airline Pilots). When children want to grow up to be “rich” or “famous” and grown-ups around them may be discouraged about jobs, a title like this serves as a reminder that work can reflect personal passions and be a pleasure instead of a chore, and inspire readers to think more specifically, hopefully, and outside the box about the future. (8 and up)