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## *Plumbing Student Thinks She's A First*

Linda Skomorowski of Forrest, Man., thinks she's unique — the only woman in Canada taking a pre-apprenticeship plumbing course.

But the 22-year-old student of Assiniboine Community College in Brandon doesn't think her trail-blazing was easy. In a telephone interview she said she met with "discrimination" on the way.

She started post-high school studies on what she now considers the wrong path, two years in a bachelor of arts course at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg.

"I didn't feel I could do anything with a BA," Mrs. Skomorowski said.

Married in July, 1970, to Joseph Skomorowski, now 28 and in his fourth year of a five-year plumbing apprenticeship, Mrs. Skomorowski said the two of them want a business of their own some day in which both could be active.

Mrs. Skomorowski said she attempted to get into an apprenticeship program through the federal manpower department without success.

"It was discrimination" against a woman, she said. She

took her case last March to the Manitoba human rights commission, which told her she was indeed unique. But she gave up the idea of apprenticeship on the job because of "all the trouble."

A spokesman from the Manitoba human rights commission said Mrs. Skomorowski had been accepted by Red River Community College but ran into difficulty in getting approval from Canada Manpower which controlled registration for almost all the course's applicants.

According to a spokesman, a

manpower counsellor asked Mrs. Skomorowski to get a medical examination from a specific doctor although none of the other applicants — all male — had to meet this requirement.

After the commission learned about Mrs. Skomorowski's problem, representatives met with some manpower counsellors who retracted the medical requirement.

Mrs. Skomorowski's name was put on a waiting list for entry into the apprenticeship program but she felt she could begin a similar program sooner by going to Brandon.

Mrs. Skomorowski started the 10-month pre-apprenticeship program at the Brandon college in September.

"It does get rough at times," she said about the attitude of her classmates, all male. They tease her "a great deal," but it's better now than at the beginning, and she is enjoying the course.

Mrs. Skomorowski has heard of a woman plumber in Vancouver and another in Chicago.

She and her husband plan to move soon into a house trailer they have bought in Brandon. He works for a commercial plumbing company in Brandon.