

# Account and an institution le shit, that is the bad mot you."

University is really quite cold. Unless you're in a fraternity. I've met a lot of people in hot caf because I account out of my way to meet them. I have much freer on campus than in high school. By sex I mean kissing, eating, and anything farther than that. If you do too much too soon you misuse each other. You'll reveal your reality but you won't reveal your soul to somebody. Sex is one of the biggest questions on campus among my friends. They all wonder just how far they should go. The learning system even sometimes a repetition of high school. Lectures are often a reflection of the professor. I only have one large lecture. There's more interaction in small classes. I'm very fortunate. I've got fabulous professors. But then I go along with just about anybody. I rather write a term paper than write Christmas exams.

Exams make me study. They're good for me. In a way, I was disillusioned after the exams at Christmas. I don't know anything about the student union activities except the dances. There was a lack of communication so I quit.

—1st year U of A co-ed

I don't know what happened. Midway through my junior year I just felt stale. You come to college and think you're on to a whole new thing. You run to your first class in September; Survey of European History. The professor says, "Read these books. Do one ten-page paper and three-page papers by January. Then to English class where it's books and three ten-page papers the same date. And on and on. It's of it ever seems to tie in.

The second semester. First class: six books... "Sooner or later ask yourself, 'Why am I doing this? What does it all mean?'" The Light and Dark Imagery in Lear. The Effect of Peer Group on the Adolescent. James' Definition of Pragmatism. Meanwhile the whole world is moving on, maybe something.

The ultimate ridiculousness occurs a few months into your junior year. Fellowship time. Practice writing. Take the Grad Records, Boards, Medcats. The pressure is unbelievable. Ask yourself why, you've got a big laugh coming. There's no answer.

Four years I took two courses that were worth anything. I was better than most. Anyhow, I spent a lot of my junior and senior years at downtown chugging drafties and getting I was going nowhere. It's hard to explain. I wanted to be motivated. I wanted something to reach and turn me on, but there was nothing there...

—A Holy Cross Graduate

I was sick of feeling that I was motivated for reasons having nothing to do with me, but with the pressure or parent I came from. I was of the idea that you had to be sleep with everyone, and kiss

everybody's royal American to be someone. I only wanted to be myself and that never seemed to be enough.

My parents hounded me about grades to the point where I spent more time worrying than studying. The idea of failure was the worst thing in the world that could happen. There was no chance to begin over; if you failed the first time, that was it. By the time exams came, I was a nervous wreck.

I went home before exams for the weekend. Then it happened, the worst it had ever been. Then came 75 sleeping pills, 125 aspirins, and a razor blade.

—A Wisconsin co-ed



—UPO photo

Do you have to jump off a building to get attention?

It's a damn shame that you have to emphasize suicide in order to dramatize the importance of student emotional problems. Suicide is naturally a problem of student mental health. But suicide isn't the major problem here. There are many nearly as severe.

A lot of us are really hung up over close personal or sexual relationships. I know students here who seek professional help because they are very confused about the future—their majors, their careers, even their reasons for staying in college. A lot of others have pretty deep personal problems which make it difficult to study or to be motivated about anything. Some of my friends really feel the tension and get depressed easily.

All of these are problems which I would call "severe". Sure, they're not a matter of life and death, like suicide, but they are the difference between a life that is happy and worthwhile and one that is not. To me that is pretty important.

There are people here who understand what's going on with us, and they make themselves available. Our problem is that there just aren't enough of them to go around.

—William and Mary College

## Withdrawal: the causes are complex

By A. J. B. HOUGH

Director, Student Counselling Services

By the end of November this session, 210 students had had withdrawal forms signed in the Student Counselling Services. It does not follow that all 210 did actually withdraw, for some change their minds after leaving counselling. Of the foregoing, 26 per cent were from the Faculty of Education, 22 per cent from the Faculty of Arts, 20 per cent from the Faculty of Science, ten per cent from the Faculty of Engineering, and seven per cent from the Faculty of Business Administration and Commerce. The pattern tends to follow the rank-order of the size of the several faculties that have been mentioned. The great majority of the 210 were seen in September and October. There was a typical spurt again in December, but we have not got our figures available at the time of writing. (Editor's note: As of December 31, statistics show 560 students withdrew, from an estimated enrolment of 15,000) Of the 210 approximately 53 per cent were first year students, 31 per cent were in second year, 14 per cent in third, and about three per cent in more senior years or in graduate studies.

It would appear that more than usual cited financial difficulty, and that there was an increase in the number who wanted to get away for a time or who expressed themselves as feeling that the university was not for them. The latter group consists of those who thought that they should seek a less demanding form of training, as well as those who indicated dissatisfaction with the university as an institution.

Across the past decade and more there have been a great many studies of college drop-outs. While, as could be expected, some differences in results do occur with respect to particular variables, there is a remarkable stability in some of the areas that have been investigated. For example, it would appear that, on the average, those who drop out are less intellectually capable than those who remain. This does not mean that all who withdraw are made up of the less intellectually able, but it does indicate that, as could be expected, drop-outs will include a relatively high proportion of those who are likely to have difficulty in coping with university work.

Similarly studies suggest that there will be a fairly large proportion of individuals who, at the time of withdrawal, may not have achieved a sufficient feeling of confidence about themselves as individuals in order to cope in a situation in which so much depends upon what the individual does himself. This does not mean that such individuals have serious psychological hang-ups, for, in general, it is more likely to indicate that with a bit of time and experience the development would be adequate.

Studies also suggest that there are positive relationships with such factors as the socio-economic status of the family, age at the time of admission (in this it would appear that, in general, the younger the better the chances for survival), and so forth.

However, it does seem likely that such studies have been too simplistic in their conceptualization, even if the information obtained does have mean-

ingfulness. For example, much of the impetus behind such studies has had one or both of the following bases. The belief that there was something wrong with students who withdrew. The belief that anyone who has the intellectual ability to handle university work, and does not do so, is both wasting his resources, and is not contributing as he should to society.

It may be possible to be equally simplistic through ascribing the chief cause to the structure of the universities, their increasing size, the lack of involvement, and what have you. While I would think it likely that support for such contentions would be found if careful studies were carried out, I also suspect that one still would not have exhausted the ramifications of the question.

While the information obtained from the studies that have been done is useful, there are aspects of the question that are not being adequately examined, so far as I can tell. One reason for this is that it is unlikely that any single discipline can provide the comprehensive picture that is needed in order to adequately consider the phenomenon.

To illustrate, we live in an age when a greater proportion of the members of society attend university than was the case at any previous time in Western civilization. At the same time we have what I consider to be an inadequate understanding of why people attend universities. Certainly, we are aware of some of the familial, social and other pressures that may encourage university attendance. We even know that in individual instances the pressures can be wrong. However, I wonder if we really have any comprehension of the broad meaning or value of such pressures. In short, it is quite likely that we may need to know which of the pressures should be supported, which redirected, and which should be decried. Here, individual and social values will surely come into focus and will need examination. The answers, so far as it may be possible to determine them, will not be found in the work of any one discipline.

As an implication of the same question, there is the question of the roles of the universities. Without some sort of a comprehensive awareness of the changes and trends within society, universities cannot modify their roles in order to more adequately meet the needs of society itself.

For the present, it is too easy to be simplistic in citing possible causes, such as:

- There is something wrong with those who do withdraw;
- An individual who has the intellectual potential and fails to take advantage of university training wastes his own potential and makes less of a contribution to society than he otherwise would;
- It is the fault of the university.

There are, of course, elements of truth in each statement, at least in some particular instances. Similarly, each one is likely to be fallacious when used as a total explanation. I suspect that even in combination they fail to provide an adequate appraisal of the situation, for the answers are likely to be far more complex and far more inclusive than all that can be gathered under such headings.