

casserole

a supplement section of the gateway

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Here once again with yet another carefully selected collection of magnificent madness is your weekly scandal sheet.

Centre spread this week concerns itself with the strange customs of an ethnic group which is situated right on this continent, yet manages to keep an air of mysticism around its daily rituals. A prominent anthropologist, formerly of the University of Michigan and now at the University of Morocco, Horace Miner has written a highly perceptive article about Nacerima body ritual and the puzzling preoccupation these people have with the care of nature's endowments.

Yizhar Eylon of the psychology department, submitted one of one briefs due to come up before the university senate today. C-2 and C-3 feature a resume of the brief, containing Yizhar's suggestions—towards the re-humanization of the university.

The birth control methods chart first appeared in SAIT's Emery Weal.

Honourable mention due to arduous labour goes this week to Dan Carroll, make-up man, and our long suffering photo editor, B.S.P. Bayer—ingenuous instigator of the enigmatic cover photo—for meritorious action above and beyond the call of beauty.

Re-humanization — a proposed reform

BY YIZHAR EYLON

Two features characterize uniquely the present mutation of social standards: the coupling of social and technological change and the rapidity of their spread. Another characteristic of the current process is a characteristic of form rather than of content—never before in history so many changes of values have occurred within so short a period of time without bloodshed and violence, revolutionary overthrow of the existing elite.

This swift transition, creating almost an anomic situation, is particularly difficult for the young.

When they were brought up their parents were already confused by the world surrounding them. The world of their childhood was not a stable one, but threatened by the prospect of the nuclear holocaust. There were wars and riots and violence in the past, but it was the television that drove home vividly the fact that this is an uncertain and frequently sick world. If the message is repeated with sufficient frequency, then it is a fact of life.

And while their parents struggled to provide them with guidelines for the future, they were bombarded with adverse gospel by advertisers, promoters, and salesmen. In the background there is the rootlessness of the middle class youth, caused by frequent migrations of their families from community to community. This generation has been entering adulthood without a crystallized set of norms of behavior, without a feeling of belongingness, without a sense of identity.

What is it then that is peculiar to the universities and turns them into focal points of ferment and turmoil?

The most obvious fact is that the young, who are the most alienated group in the society, are concentrated on campus in huge numbers. Their sheer quantity makes the situation potentially explosive.

The second fact is the paradox of the divergent trends in the surrounding society and on campus.

While the North American variety of capitalism is becoming more and more relaxed and the laissez faire system is gradually being transformed into welfare state which attempts to guarantee everybody's right to decent living, the competition on campus has become intensified a hundredfold since the Second World War.

The student bears the brunt of the stress without any redeeming features, he lets the dirty end of the stick without any embellishments. He has not made it yet, and to get somewhere, to realize his life-goals, he must engage in a cutthroat competition. From his first day at the university he is made aware that he and his fellow students are graded on a normal curve.

The logical conclusion is that the student does not have to be a good one, it is enough if he is better than his class mates. To maintain, however, his relative position, he can not help others, nay, it would be equivalent to suicide. So instead of co-operation there is competition, instead of friendship—suspicion and hostility.

The student is alone— and his potential friends are also his worst enemies.

This forced enmity creates tension, but tension alone does not dehumanize the university. Yet of all the accusations levelled against higher education this is the most bitter, most frequent and most persistent. There is a major aspect of the educational process which gives rise to this outcry—the complete absence of primary groups in the educational process (primary groups means here a relatively small group, whose members know each other personally and their interaction is in face-to-face situations). The student is surrounded by an anonymous human conglomerate that changes its composition from class to class; foes in the competition for grades



A QUESTION ...

... any answers?

and the anonymity of the enemy makes him more anxiety-provoking and dangerous.

Some critics of higher education called the universities "diploma factories". This is a misleading cliché. In a factory the worker belongs to a fairly stable primary group, which is a production team and a cohesive social unit. There may be thousands of workers in the same factory, but they do not constitute a social frame of reference; for the individual worker, only his own outfit counts. Furthermore, the worker has only one potential enemy—the management—and knows that he will be supported in his struggle by fellow workers. The student is alone and his potential friends are also his worst enemies.

The growing alienation of the university undergraduate brought about student rebellion and its two-pronged attack on the ills of the world. The major part of the programme demands a total over-

haul of the society and its institutions, at the same time this is postponed for the more distant future. The close-range goal of the radicals is change in the university structure.

Toward this, they demand power for the students, firmly believing that if students and faculty will run the university, somehow the educational process will be improved. This expectation of instant solution has never been supported by a concrete plan of educational reform. To be sure, some proposals, like the suggestion to abolish the grade system or the demand for more relevant course material, have been advanced; but they were always of secondary importance when compared with the ever-present bid for power.

The administrators countered these demands with offers of seats on boards of governors, faculty councils, and other policy-making

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