

The Problems Facing a Course in Marriage

JUST at present the movement to offer a course in marriage relationships seems to be at a standstill. There have been few reports of progress since the flurry of interest and activity caused by the visit of Dr. Paul Popenoe to the campus as an assembly speaker and as one of the authorities on the annual series of marriage lectures.

The need for such a course at this and other universities is obvious. As an institution, marriage is faced with the problem of adjustment to new economic, moral, and social standards since the era of the industrial revolution and its attendant sweeping social changes.

Experts have exclaimed over the increasing number of divorcees, the reduction in average number of children to the family, and the fact that the "educated" classes—if such a distinction can be permitted in democratic America—do not reproduce as rapidly as do their poorer compatriots. They have frowned upon the "cheapening" of marriage as an institution and have predicted dire consequences for people so degenerate and for nations with receding birth rates.

It would not be sound reasoning to attribute these conditions and trends which the sociologists have discovered to universities or to any other single group. Universities and colleges do, however, provide an opportunity for considering and combating these tendencies, which have recently become so obvious. And colleges do have some problems, important problems, in this field which cannot much longer be ignored.

The love and marriage lecture series has done the pioneer work in this field as far as Oregon is concerned. Its main value has been in paving the way for a sounder, more thorough study of marriage. It is the pioneer, the breaker-down of taboos.

But the work of the lecture series has now been done. Students, faculty, and others have been brought to the realization of the problem. Having accomplished its primary purpose, the series should now be discarded for a better method of bringing marriage education to undergraduates, for as an educational medium the lecture series is probably at present accomplishing little and may be doing more harm than good.

In the Home Stretch

(The Stanford Daily)

LAST November well over 100 students registered in a University experiment now popularly known as "sex" or "marriage."

Limited facilities necessitated cutting the number of applicants who could enroll and next week 56 of the senior class will finish Social Science 120 with a somewhat adequate knowledge of the trials and triumphs of married life.

Agitation for such a course started during the administration of A.S.S.U. President Jim Reynolds. Rather feeble embers were fanned into existence by the editorial insistence of Gordy Frost until a committee of Miss Doyle and Professors Hilgard, Fagan, and Reynolds was appointed to investigate needs and possibilities.

Finding both, and the consent of Dr. Wilbur, the committee organized the course to include the physiological and psychological aspects of marriage, vocational considerations, legal aspects of the family, budgeting, consumer education, and parental education and care of offspring.

Panels on controversial issues such as birth control and the place of women have been held by the class itself, and the various members of the faculty have provided the lectures.

Yesterday committee members Doyle, Hilgard, Fagan, and Reynolds gathered at Lagunita to discuss more needs and possibilities. That is, should the course be continued.

Deciding to give students a voice, the committee will hand out next Friday forms on which the class may rate the course.

Early next quarter when grades are in and when students can look at the course in perspective, a bull session will be held to further determine their feelings.

This much is obvious. The course will not be repeated in the spring quarter. Next winter perhaps if student interest warrants it, if the report of the faculty is favorable, and if financial backing is assured, the course will continue.

Well planned, well organized, and well directed, the course has been successful from all standpoints. Already a lap ahead of most universities, Stanford should maintain the lead it has taken.

By all standards, Social Science 120 should be taken out of the experimental stage and made a definite part of the school curriculum.

—C. C.

BEFORE any course, lecture series, or other method of instruction can accomplish its purpose, the attitude of those offering the work and of the students taking it must be right.

There can be no half-truths, no concealment, no slighting of certain phases, for if there is the student will be further handicapped rather than helped by his study.

The material the course presents must be rounded and complete. At present, a goodly share of the courses the University offers, including all those in biology and sociology, touch upon some phase of the problem of marriage and sex relationships. From such sources the student gleans true but incomplete knowledge of these important topics. More often than not the case for marriage as a social institution and an influence in after-college life is but scantily presented, if it is presented at all.

THAT is what Dr. Popenoe was referring to when he confirmed recent remarks of Dr. Cary, a New York physician and authority on marriage, that college women of today are prone to "experiment" in such matters.

Dr. Popenoe's statement was the strongest possible argument against the existing methods which spread dangerous half-knowledge. It indicates undeniably the need for planned and complete education, through a course, perhaps, which tells the whole story of marital relationships—from courting to old age.

The Emerald printed Dr. Popenoe's remarks. Through indirect channels the information has been advanced that University authorities were shocked by such brazen treatment of such a delicate subject. So shocked, in fact, that the proposed course may be abandoned.

It is obvious that the best possible thing to do under such conditions is to abandon the course. Nothing valuable can possibly be gained from

material presented on such propagandistic, narrow, and mid-Victorian basis. The only result would be the increased dissemination of curiosity-arousing half-truths.

BUT it is unfortunate if this must be done. The postponement of actual constructive work in this line means that all the work of ground-clearing done by the lecture series not only goes for naught but becomes a positive evil.

The taboos surrounding the subject have been broken down. If students are permitted and encouraged to continue to make their decisions in matters pertaining to marriage on the basis of hints and pseudo-truths, those decisions are bound to be faulty and conduct based upon them can lead only to misfortune.

It has not been too many years since these topics and others, such as venereal disease, were considered unmentionable. Society prides itself upon having dispelled the taboos surrounding these personal matters. Science, sociology, and philosophy claim to have made important advances in such fields through the new liberty.

Society and science cannot stop now. Having shattered taboos which served fairly well in the absence of knowledge, the next step must be taken. Knowledge must be advanced to replace the taboos.

KNOWLEDGE and truth cannot do this if those who control their dissemination still hold to antiquated concepts in an age which has brushed the taboos accompanying and justifying those concepts to one side.

The fact that sex or venereal disease are no longer horrid words does not necessarily solve the problems arising from them. It rather increases those problems because it causes injudicious action on false bases.

The evil has already been done. Good can only be salvaged from the wreckage of reticence and "holy" marriage if the new problems can be studied thoroughly and calmly. Stanford has made a beginning and is now reckoning the results. Oregon has pioneered in the early stages of this work. It would be too bad if those who have inherited the job of extending the work until it is actually of value are not broad enough to realize the necessity for straight-forward effort in the task.

Preparing the Student for the Better Life--and a Paying Position

UNCERTAINTY about the future must have filled the minds of more than a few of the several hundred Oregon seniors who laid their coins on the counter at registration last week. Apprehensive, those seniors might also have felt some doubt as to what extent four years at Oregon have prepared them to cope with future problems.

They should entertain such doubt. When the senior shoved the money for his last-term fees over the counter, the University's responsibility for his destiny was nearing an end. Yet the institution's task—preparing the student for a fuller life—will not have been satisfactorily completed, for in many cases the graduate will find himself only half equipped to meet demands of prospective employers.

NOT long ago Karl W. Outhank told an Emerald reporter that his work as dean of personnel administration he is constantly coming in contact with employers, seeking graduates with one or two

years' experience in the business world. The fact that employers are clamoring for university-educated employees should gladden the hearts of graduates, for it portends palmier days.

But the employer asks more of the prospective employee than graduation. He wants men and women with "one or two years' experience."

Where in the college curricula could the student have gained such experience in any line of business? Acquainting the student with actual working conditions has been undertaken by several departments but such training does not satisfy the stipulations of the employer.

THE University has long held that it is fulfilling its purpose when it prepares the student for a "fuller" life. In that field it has gained an ample degree of success. It has prepared him to observe the world around him with greater understanding, to have a broadened interest in its events. Preparing the student for sustaining that life should,

however, be one of its objectives.

A number of American colleges and universities are attempting to do this. At Columbia and New York universities the course of study includes work in business firms. For this work the student is paid, and his work-hours are accredited to the fulfillment of degree requirements. Courses offering a study of theory integrated with actual business experience are being worked out elsewhere.

Although these programs of student training are still in the experimental stage, they have been hailed by many educators as a necessary part in progressive education. Granting that Oregon's location does not lend itself to extensive local training courses, as does that of a metropolitan college, the fact still remains that Oregon is not capitalizing on the opportunities available.

All concerned in an "on the job" training program would profit. The graduate would have his training rounded and strengthened without

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