

# Morals: Religion and Students

(Continued from page two)

we're in today . . . And, too, I haven't noticed any change in moral attitudes."

At Sarah Lawrence College, one of the history instructors observed "a notable re-awakening of religious interest. There is much greater awareness of religious affiliation than in past years. Students are finding out the origin of their ancestral beliefs in a desire to identify themselves, to attach themselves to something. It might be a vogue, but I think it's much more. It's an effort in a chaotic world at reaching some kind of security."

And Dean Esther Raushenbush of Sarah Lawrence confirmed this. "I find an intensified interest in religion, completely different from the devil-may-care materialism that was so characteristic of the Twenties. I find a real concern for classifying values, and one of the ways is religion. It is not an institutionalized religion. It is a search for values, not dogma. I think it is also an indication that what sometimes looks like loose moral behavior is part of the serious quest for something to cling to."

There can be little question that over the course of the past four or five generations—roughly 75 or 100 years—there has been an erosion of religious beliefs and practices in America. You have only to read Alexis de Tocqueville's great study, "Democracy in America," written a little over a century ago, to find an account of how deep and crucial a role religion played in American life at that time; and compare it with recent questionnaire studies (there was one in the Ladies' Home Journal and one in Fortune in 1948) to get a sense of the distance we have traveled.

Many commentators have taken a dark view of this trend and its effect on morals. As Professor Stace has put it, "The religious basis of ideals active Protestants, the religiously inactive Jews and Protestants, and the non-churchgoing Catholics as the most active sexually."

For the college age-groups of 16 to 20, the ranking was somewhat different. The orthodox Jews were still at the bottom, followed still by the devout Catholics and the religiously active Protestants. But the non-churchgoing Catholics came next followed by the religiously inactive Protestants, with the inactive Jews as the most active sexually.

With some slight variations, the sequence was not much different on non-marital intercourse and on petting-to-climax among students. On both it was the same sequence except that the non-churchgoing Catholics were in the highest frequency group.

If the figures are valid they confirm the traditional view that religion acts to some degree as a control over moral behavior. But there is this qualification: it must be not just formal membership in a religious group, but some kind of religious commitment, whether active church attendance or devoutness of belief. What must further be pointed out is that the degree to which religion acts as a control is not as great as some have claimed or hoped.

To take, for example, the rather crucial question of petting-to-climax: the percentage of students who have engaged in it by the end of their college years is 39.6 per cent for the religiously active Protestants, as against 50 per cent for the non-churchgoing Catholics. The en-

tire spread from one extreme to the other is a little more than ten per cent. This is the basis for Kinsey's statement that "religious backgrounds seem to have had little to do with the individual's acceptance or rejection of such activity."

I turn to a study of a very different kind, "The Religious Beliefs of Youth," by Murray G. Ross (Association Press) published last May. It is based on a questionnaire filled out by 1,935 young people who have taken part in YMCA activities, along with intensive interviews with 100 of them. This group with which Ross worked, both non-college and college, numbered almost 80 per cent churchmembers. While he did not make a detailed statistical breakdown on sexual behavior, Ross says cautiously that his "general impression, however, is that some of Dr. Kinsey's findings would not be inapplicable to this group."

What is important about the Ross study, however, is quite another aspect. It is the most careful large-scale study we have had that tries to get into the religious attitudes of American youth to see what they mean in terms of DEPTH of belief.

As I have noted, about 80 per cent of the Ross sample were church-goers, either frequent or infrequent. More than that percentage prayed, either daily or frequently or occasionally. Yet what is striking is that for most of this group, religion was not an active part of their daily life or their thoughts. "Less than 20 per cent find in religion a basis or compelling guide for their everyday behavior. For the others . . . religion has almost ceased to provide a significant or lofty ideal which gives life purpose and direction."

In other words, if we use the test of a genuine religious commitment, which is not a matter of lip-service of hand-me-down dogmas but of daily thought and behavior, the picture Ross gives is a startling one.

"Only about 16 per cent of the total respondents possess that combination of firm belief, zest for life, and sense of security which have been here accepted as the characteristics of the religious person." I should add that the sample included all three of the great religious faiths, and that about only one in 10 was a disbeliever, or cynical about religion.

And for our purpose, one of the striking facts is that Ross found the college graduates less religious than those of the lower educational levels.

Thus if it is true that there is a return to religion on the campus, as my opening quotes would indicate, it is a very new development which had not yet had a chance to be reflected in the studies made, and which may in the future have some sort of effect on morals.

(TOMORROW: Sex Education and Morals)

## Ad Staff 'Helpless;' Manager Asks Aid

The Emerald advertising department will interview students interested in working in advertising this afternoon between 1 and 4, according to Don Thompson, business manager.

Interest is the only requirement, Thompson said, although some advertising experience would be helpful.

Positions are open for a layout manager and staff, day manager and staff, zone manager and staff, and for general layout work.

## SU Committees Now Accepting Student Petitions

Petitions for 69 openings on seven Student Union standing committees are being accepted until 1 p.m. Tuesday in either the program director's office in the SU or by Bill Carey, chairman of the Interview and Referral committee.

Recent authorization by the SU board of four new committees will require 25 members to bring them to full strength. At present the four committees—concert, dance, movie, and workshop—are functioning with former members of the now defunct ballroom committee.

In addition, three other committees—publicity, house, and cultural—will take on 44 new members. The cultural committee tops the quota request with 28.

Petitions may be obtained in the program director's third floor office. Grade eligibility certificates are available in the Office of Student Affairs.

Carey said that students should include their address and phone number on their petitions so that the Interview and Referral committee can contact them for interviews, set for the night of Jan. 18.

## Board Petitions Deadline Today

Petitions to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Student Union Board member Carol Udy are due in the office of the program director, third floor of the SU, by 5 this afternoon.

Juniors in the School of Education who can fulfill the scholastic requirements of the University are eligible for the position.

Appointment of a new member will come through a majority vote of board members. It will be effective until the end of the school year.

Petitioners will be interviewed by the board Tuesday night in the SU. Announcement of the appointment will probably be made that night.

## Meeting to Explain Rushing Procedure

Sorority rushing procedure for winter term will be explained at 4 p.m. today in the Student Union, Joan White, Panhellenic president, has announced.

The 66 women who have signed up for rushing are asked to attend this meeting, Miss White stated. Rushing begins Tuesday, with bids to be given Jan. 29.

Written invitations extended through Panhellenic will be used for rushing dates this term, she said.

## Senior Ball Petitions Due

Petitions for Senior Ball chairmanships are due at 5 p.m. today. They may be submitted to Steve Church at Theta Chi, or Flo Hansen at Alpha Omicron Pi.

### 11 a.m. 'Shadows of Significant Signs'

KASH Broadcast

9:45 a.m.—Bible School

6:30—Fellowship

### "THE JEW, TODAY AND TOMORROW"

Bdwy. at High

Dr. Vance H. Webster, Pastor

### FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

HEAR DR. J. EDWIN ORR—JAN. 21-FEB. 2



## Drill Night

From a point high on the campus, a radar beam searches the sky. Lights burn in classrooms. Khaki replaces tweed and covert for the night as college men assigned to Reserve units study the machines and methods of defense.

Preparedness is the order of the day.

And the Bell System stands prepared. In five busy years, we have added more than 12,500,000 telephones. Many improvements have been made in the quality and speed of service. Our force of highly skilled, experienced men and women has been greatly enlarged—and now numbers more than 600,000.

A nation in a hurry goes by telephone. This country has the best telephone service in the world.

BELL TELEPHONE SYSTEM

