



ILLUSTRATIONS BY DOUGLAS FRASER

also be due to a search for something more meaningful than Yupward mobility. The students of the '60s found their faith in the quasi-religions of the youth movement and antiwar activism; in the '70s self-development was often a fixation. Today there are few unifying causes—and rebellion for its own sake can seem dated or downright silly. And so those who seek something other than success to worship say they are, increasingly, looking to God.

The impact of today's fervor varies from campus to campus. For most students, religion remains a personal matter. "It gives me peace of mind," says Northwestern freshman Joellen Ruvoli, who attends a weekly Bible-study group. "It's like a rock that helps me escape all the craziness here at school." For a minority of others, however, religion is a militant calling that demands that skeptics be compelled to see the light. "To put it bluntly," says Dana Strong, a UT junior who heads the evangelical Longhorn

**Going back to the fold:**

*Many faiths meet (and sometimes do battle) within the marketplace of ideas that academia traditionally provides*

CARLOS MORENO



Christian Fellowship, "we seek to interrupt their lives. [Students protest that] religion is an individual thing and [say.] 'What right do you have to tell me how to live?' They're offended by what we do, but we want to confront some of [the values] that they brought from a materialistic, hedonistic society."

Some students and professors see a dark side to this devoutness, fearing that it will lead to intolerance and confrontation. In particular they worry that fundamentalists may begin to clamor for the teaching of what they regard as the literal Truth. So far, such pressures have come not from students but from the religious establishment. As examples, critics cite the effort of the Southern Baptist Convention to impose its fundamentalist views on the curriculum of Baylor University (page 17) and the Vatican's silencing of Catholic University theology Prof. Charles Curran, who had alarmed the church with his dissident views on sexual morality (page 18). It may be only a matter of time, however, before some religious students adopt the tactics of Accuracy in Academia, the conservative political group that monitors professors for deviations from right-wing orthodoxy. "Some fundamentalist people are looking for quick, easy cookbook answers," complains the Rev. David Turner, a priest at St. John's Catholic Chapel at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. "[There's a] sense of accepting a very simplistic kind of solution and teaching. They don't want to *think* as they do with academic subjects."

**Big questions:** To be sure, religion has always provided a palliative for the normal anxieties of students. "When you're at college, you're struggling with some of the most profound questions humans can ask," says USC's chaplain Alvin Rudisill, who has helped coordinate the campus religious community for 25 years. "I think young people today—along with the rest of society—are stymied by life's big questions. It's almost as if they're hedging their bets for the future, which is very uncertain." And as piety becomes more acceptable, students feel more comfortable about seeking out its solace. "It's hard to live in this crazy world where some people say you're weird when you're religious," says Duke sophomore Elizabeth Sanford, who belongs to the Duke Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. "It's good to come here and have others say, 'Yeah, you're doing the right thing'."

Some find religion fosters a sense of ethnic identity. "For us Islam was not just a religion, it was a way of life," says Washington University senior Mohammed A. R. Khan, a founder of the school's Islamic Society. "We wanted to bring that knowledge to students on campus who hardly knew anything about Islam." At Brown this fall, eight Jewish students have congregated in one section of a dormitory, calling it Hebrew



**Those who are seeking meaning beyond the spoils of success are increasingly turning to God**