



Conventional sociology for students revamped

Fiction often uses the episode in which a missionary or doctor from civilization works among a primitive people. His efforts to apply scientific methods to their habits of living usually meet with distrust and suspicion. Then the local princess gets sick. Witch doctors are of no avail. As a last hope, the tribe turns to the strange man with the strange methods. If he heals her, the superiority of his "magic" is proved and his mission has a chance of success. If he doesn't he is taken to the stake or to the cooking pot.

The sociologist in America often considers himself as being in the same position. He is regarded with distrust and suspicion. Any success he may have in chaotic situations paves the way for the pursuit of his mission, the scientific study of human relations. Failures win him the figurative cooking pot and ridicule of his ideas.

This situation has tended to make the sociologist feel constantly in need of "proving" his theories workable. The distrustful attitude of the world has forced him to neglect teaching elementary facts about sociology as they are known and has discouraged basic sociological research.

Happily, this role is becoming obsolete. At Illinois Tech, I have not found it necessary to "sell" sociology at all. Students and faculty, generally, realize that one can be scientific about anything, including society and personality. They are keenly aware of the growing gap between mechanical changes and the social adjustments that must be made to such changes. They know that the social sciences have to offer some of the knowledge and technique that will help narrow this gap. The Techawk doesn't have to be "sold" on social science. He looks to social science courses, rather for the vitally important facts about the social worlds in which he lives and for the effective ways of understanding and dealing with these facts.

The political and social science staff of IIT has lately revised the sociology curriculum; abandoning some of the conventional courses which gained a foothold in sociology curricula during the years when sociology was trying

to "sell" itself. They have been replaced by courses designed to fill the particular needs of Tech students for training in sociology. The revised sociology curriculum at IIT includes 13 courses. Seven of these relate to specific problem areas with which Tech students are likely to be confronted in the course of their specific careers. The other six courses are of more general relevance, since whatever their careers, all Tech students will be confronted with the problem of dealing intelligently with human relationships.

A. Biderman

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Cooperate in job programs for students

Placement is still a problem at Illinois Tech. It is not the same problem that it was a year ago or even at the beginning of this term. Since lethargy has been replaced by accelerated interest in placement, two new difficulties have developed.

First, placement as such has become confused with vocational guidance work. In their efforts to do something, many have delved beyond the realm of what is strictly placement. That is, many organizations are going beyond the scope of employment problems but are actually investigating vocational guidance fields. Underclassmen who could well benefit by whatever guidance resources are made available, lose out because guidance programs are labelled "placement." Placement and underclassmen are seldom considered in the same breath.

Second, more difficulties occur when separate groups are in unknowing competition. It has already happened that an honorary and a professional society have been in the unpleasant situation where both had planned and invested in the same literature distribution campaign.

What I mean to do is to throw a challenge to the student government and/or the administration. Some responsible party should step up and coordinate all the scattered placement programs.

Furthermore, they should clearly define placement as compared to vocational guidance. Underclassmen should be included in what is now a senior activity. The senior year is too late to improve a poor college record. They should know the score from the start.

Above all, there is a definite need to replace competition by cooperation. The honoraries, professional societies, and class committees all have good ideas. Why shouldn't they share them and pull together? Let's stop competition among ourselves.

Hal Bergen

as I see IT

By ED MICHELIC

A BACKWARD GLANCE at a dozen editorials still leaves me apprehensive before sitting down to write my opinions. Bacon once said "Writing maketh an exact man." It may not be true that one becomes exact, but he certainly tends to become more careful. If he isn't careful, someone better informed than he is may be likely to rudely enlighten him.

I felt I did a particularly good job of editorializing one week trying to get



engineers to work on social problems. Evidently, I oversimplified things and discredited present attempts at social progress, for a sarcastic reply came back from a reader at the University of Chicago. He flung some of my very phrases back in my face, inviting be to unsheathe my slide rule and grind out a few dog formulas to solve the race problem he was interested in. I'm sorry I didn't print it now, both you and I would have benefited by his discussion. Anyway, I sent him a Christmas card.

Whenever I feel the least bit dogmatic, now, I yank out this fellow's letter and wonder how deep in a groove my thinking has become. I am better aware now that social principles are not just "ground out." More difficult than even considering principles is coming to terms; look how the definition of "democracy" is handled nowadays, just for an example.

Perhaps courses like sociology will allow us to approach some of these problems in a general way. I offer as a number one rule of thumb the following sociological proposition: People tend to read and listen to argument and facts that reinforce the particular prejudices they have and not to hear contrary arguments or facts that may change their opinions. This I offer from my own experience.

Slipstick

A medical student who had been at a big party until 5 a.m. sat in class trying to pass an exam. He had a tough time with the first question: "Name five reasons why mother's milk is better than cow's milk." After much thought he wrote:

1. It's fresher.
2. It's cleaner.
3. The cats can't get to it.
4. It's easier to take on a picnic.
5. It comes in such cute containers.

Woman: "Desk Clerk, there's a rat in my room."

Hotel Desk Clerk: "Make him come down and register."

"It must be awful to live the lonely life of a bachelor."

"You said it. There's only one thing worse than being a bachelor, and that's being a bachelor's son."

A prominent bishop sat in a box in the opera house awaiting the curtain and watching the fair ladies in low-cut gowns being ushered to their seats. After looking around the house with opera glasses, one of the ladies in the party said, "Honestly, bishop, did you ever see anything like it in your life?" "Never," gravely replied the bishop, "never, since I was weaned."

"Well, my little man, do you have a fairy godfather?" "No, but I have an uncle of whom we're a little suspicious."

Then there was the Chinese boy who had a Yen for it.

"Do you like bathing beauties?" "I don't know, I've never bathed one."

Little Ann, whose father was absent from home most of the time for business reasons, naturally became very much attached to her mother. When an aunt tried to encourage the child to show more affection for her father Ann explained, "Well, I am related to mama by birth and to daddy just by marriage."

He: "You look like a million dollars."
She: "Yes, and I'm just as hard to make."

From the Chemistry department comes the word that the first alcohol was distilled in Arabia—which might partially explain those nights.

"They must have a girl's ball team in the harem."

"What makes you think so?" "I just heard one of the girls ask the Sultan if she was in tomorrow's lineup."

Mother, are there any skyscrapers in heaven?

No, son, Civils build skyscrapers.

Nowadays the last thing a girl bothers to hide is her hide."

When a guy claims his gal is cold, he should remember so is dynamite until you start fooling around.

Carbolic Gussie