

## STUDENT MISSION FIELD: A Selected Portrait

"By the age of sixteen, the typical youngster has watched 12,000 to 15,000 hours of television, the equivalent of 16 to 20 months of television viewing, 24 hours a day. Since the 1960's, average viewing time has increased by about an hour a day, so that television now occupies more time in children's lives than their parents or friends."

"When student leaders were asked to name the major issues of concern to undergraduates today, security and parking were at the top of their lists."

"Research indicates that liquor is the number-one drug problem on campus today, arising from a combination of the need for release from academic pressures and an epidemic of despair sweeping the nation's young people. Pressure and despair—the environment could not be more supportive of alcoholism if we had planned it."

"Today nearly one in three college freshmen describes himself or herself as a reborn Christian."

"The growing volume of escapist literature—science fiction, fantasy, drug and celebrity magazines, film and the like—satisfies a deep hunger on college and university campuses across the country. One senses that many students are searching, in some cases rather desperately, for something to hold on to, some thing to believe in."

"There is a sense among today's undergraduates that they are passengers on a sinking ship, a Titanic if you will, called the United States or the world. Perhaps it is part of the reason why suicide has become the second leading cause of death among students in the 1970's, exceeded only by accidents. Be that as it may, today's fatalism fuels a spirit of justified hedonism. There is a growing belief among college students that, if they are doomed to ride on the Titanic, they ought at least to make the trip as pleasant—make that as lavish—as possible and go first class, for they assume there is nothing better."

"When asked about future plans, women would occasionally say, much in the way of an afterthought, that they certainly did not want children. What was startling was the anger and vehemence of these women, most of whom seemed quite apolitical. Behind their statements was the potential of being victimized—victimized by men who would not share even half the responsibility for raising children, victimized by a society so evil as to make it undesirable to bring children into this world, and victimized by the children themselves who would halt their mother's careers and put a serious crimp in their social lives."

Quotes taken from When Dreams and Heroes Died: A Portrait of Today's College Student, Arthur Levine, Jossey-Bass, 1981, assorted pages.