

'Moods and experiences of a generation'

Symposium focuses on generation gap as participants agree on many points

By BOB ASILEY

The major impact of the postwar generation has been a very real generation gap, four of the five speakers at last night's opening Symposium session agreed.

Beyond that, their agreement faded into varying degrees of what the postwar generation has done with its problems. More importantly for the future of the symposium perhaps, they dwelt upon the effects which the generation may have upon its problems—and here, too there were shades of disagreement.

The major opposition to the generation gap theory came from the non-impaired speaker—Dr. Douglas Knight, University President making his first public appearance after three-month illness.

While sympathizing with the current university generation for their views and their problems, and admitting his generation too, faced immense problems, Knight's speech belittled the actual presence of such a gap.

The Symposium participants then applied themselves to the gap's existence—and emerging was a confused picture of several gaps.

Dr. Seymour Halkoff, Student Health

psychiatrist at the University of Wisconsin, insisted that there is a rapid rate of change. This rapid rate, he asserted, results in equally rapid out-molding of generations.

Jack Newfield, an assistant editor of the Village Voice and the only panel participant under the famous age of 30, presented the most radical attack on society.

Citing the fact that "75 per cent of today's college students are interested in only fraternities and football," he evoked memories of charges here that a minority of the student body runs student government.

Lacing his opening statement with humorous lines which brought appreciative laughter from a long-sitting audience, Dr. Halkoff both acknowledged and to some extent deplored the gap.

Speaking from his vantage point as a psychiatrist, he acknowledged that today's generation was more troubled than any other. He projected what appeared to be on his way to a major emphasis in this forum with that point and with the fear that the generations had become irreconcilable.

Dr. Edgar Z. Friedenberg, sociology

professor at the State University of New York, proved himself more liberal than his pro-Symposium buildup indicated. He urged "doing your own thing" and agreed on one point of Dr. Knight's that the other participants denied.

Both Knight and Friedenberg maintained that there is no "Establishment." While Knight emphasized this as essentially a defense of the generation over 30, Friedenberg used a different perspective.

He viewed the lack with as much horror as the other panelists viewed the presence of such an establishment, and the mistakes it makes. "Nobody's in charge here," he observed—and probably set the stage for another major Symposium debate.

Dr. Seymour Lipset emerged as the most conservative voice—using the term in a very relative sense—of the four. He is professor of social relations and government at Harvard.

To Lipset, youth today are "involved in terms of the ethic of absolute ends"—they take an image of what is good in society and base their behavior on it.



The mood of the generation—in the audience

—Photo by Casey Causey

Dr. Knight discusses 'temper of the times'

By MIKE VEATCH

"Thank you for letting me come back to life. I find that I like it. I rejoice in the chance of being off my desert island."

Dr. Douglas M. Knight, president of the University, expressed his emotions concerning his first public speech since his serious illness at the opening session of Symposium '67 last night.

The topic of Dr. Knight's keynote address, "The Temper of the Times for All of Us" was "the impossible job of introducing in 20 or 30 minutes a question as complex as you, yourselves, and the whole generation that you represent," he said.

Dr. Knight spoke about the similarities of the "postwar" generation and his own "over 20" generation and of the "concerns with which all of us are involved, even though they may have a special focus for those of you who are under 30."

A major question today, according to Knight, is that of "the power of the individual on the one hand and the question of what enduring creative action is, on the other." The understanding of them was termed "crucial" to the success of the postwar generation.

Knight described a major factor of the unrest and concern of the youth today is described by Knight as "the presence of paradox in the texture of the way we live." He finds that society is "almost burdened with paradox at the moment." Knight mentioned the paradoxes of "wealth and starvation," of "wearing a uniform to be an individual," of the tie between "pacifism and violence" and of the "dream of progress... in an actuality of confusion, uncertainty, and often bewilderment."

A solution to these paradoxes must come through a "reckoning with organized power on the one hand, and with creative and enduring action." Dr. Knight expressed the need for this "enduring action" for "change must have the quality of endurance if it is to mean anything."

A clear distinction between action and activism was given: "The difference, as I see it, is that action endures, and that endurance is ultimately truly important to each one of us." The currently popular activist movement was described by Knight as "an attempt to resolve now the evils that beset us." He expressed some feeling of the shortcomings of the activists: "I can't see the evidence for feeling that one resolves it now; one begins to resolve."

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Symposium schedule

MONDAY

1:45—Open Forum, Main Quad, all participants.
3:45—Informal reception for participants and students, FF Lounge.
8 p.m.—"The Impact of American Society on Postwar Youth," Drs. Halkoff and Lipset, Page Auditorium. Panel discussions, all participants, moderated by Dr. John Strange. Reception following in Flowers Lounge.

TUESDAY

11 a.m.—Seminar, Alumni Lounge, Dr. Halkoff.
2:30 p.m.—Seminar "Ordinary People, A Particular War, and an Absurd Time," Newfield, Celestial Omnibus.
3:30 p.m.—Seminar, "Liberty, Equality and Fraternities," Dr. Friedenberg, Alumni Lounge.
8 p.m.—"The Impact of Postwar Youth on American Society," Dr. Friedenberg and Newfield, Panel Discussion, moderated by Dr. Richard White.

Speakers attack society

By NANCY PROTHRO

"The politics of resistance and the art of the absurd" are, according to Jack Newfield, "the two most important moods of the generation still under 30."

Each Symposium speaker was asked to describe the moods of the younger generation and the impact of society upon this generation.

Newfield said Tom Hayden, "the George Washington of the New Left," and Bob Dylan are "the contemporary analogues of Marx, the Utopian revolutionaries, and De Sade, the nihilist poet-linked by a common outrage against what is but evaded by contradictory visions of how to forge what might be."

Hayden stands for the New Left, according to Newfield, which "has much to teach its elders." It knows, among other things, "that if the Vietnam War isn't wrong, then nothing is wrong." While acknowledging also the faults of the New Left, Newfield repeated that there is no excuse for refusing to realize its "impact, relevance and potential for hope."

According to Newfield, 75 percent of this generation cares only about fraternities and football. But, he added, all generations are defined by their prophetic minorities who see the vision of

"come-apocalyptic absurdity and chaos."

Dr. Edgar Friedenberg began his introductory statement by voicing his concurrence with Newfield on the "representative poets and prophets" of this generation.

He went on to point out the "absurdity" in the very situation in which the Symposium speakers were placed to criticize a generation group which perhaps is altogether desirable.

Friedenberg praised the hippies for their "devotion and commitment" and their fidelity toward "doing your own thing." In the same light, he feels personal "effectiveness" is the issue in question and the response from society is secondary. "You can be moved by a sense of moral outrage" at what your society does, "without worrying about your legitimacy" because, according to Friedenberg, "the primary moral basis has got to be emotional."

The evils of today are characterized by the quiet language in which they are described. This, according to Friedenberg, is the "banality of evil." Although he is a man opposed to violence, Friedenberg said "it's rather feel my way among angry and, if necessary, even on occasion violent people" than endure "passive hostility."

The third speaker, Dr. Seymour Halkoff, focused on the psychological effects that modern, technological society has on the student generation. He said that "youth are deeply troubled." "What is new," he added, "is that they're troubled and the amount of despair that a psychiatrist, for example, sees on a campus is incredible and is growing."

Halkoff recounted a "fantasy" about spending spring vacation in Florida during the influx of students into the beach town of Clearwater. As more students arrived, he said, "the level of paranoia on the parts of adults was really extreme."

"People may not only be trustworthy over 30, they may be washed up," Halkoff said. "It's quite conceivable that maybe by 50 people would be superfluous, and there would be new kinds of final solutions." "I submit this to you as a sick thought," he added.

Dr. Seymour Lipset, the final speaker, said that "each generation not only has its own evils, but I think I can argue that the evils my generation faced when we were your age were far greater. We experienced a contemporary evil, the evil of Nazism."

Four on panel debate establishment, youth

By CLAY STEINMAN

"There is an establishment, but it is there as Dean Rusk and Nelson Rockefeller are in it."

This statement by Jack Newfield started the panel discussion segment of Symposium last night.

Dr. Seymour Lipset, augmented Newfield's thought by saying that "as individuals would like to believe that there is an organized establishment." He noted that it is hard to conceive of a system that can run itself without a controlling force. "It is easy to think of an establishment so that there is something at which one can hurt his attacks. However, this way of thinking can lead to inaction rather than action."

Concerning this feeling of frustration that may result from conceptualizing an "Establishment," Dr. Lipset asserted that there are "attainable goals and unattainable goals. He noted that the Civil Rights Movement was effective while past activist movements, such as the World War II Pacifists or the Depression Socialists, were not. He felt that the anti-Vietnam War movement has accomplished more than any student movement in the past.

Dr. Seymour Halkoff, disagreed with Dr. Lipset. While stating that student efforts for Civil Rights and against the war in Vietnam are to be commended, they have really been ineffective. He reminded the audience that there are more soldiers dying in Vietnam and more Negroes going to segregated schools than when the movements in the sixties began.

Newfield was then asked why he supported Malcolm X but does not support H. Rap Brown. The editor replied that at the end of his life Malcolm X was an integrationist and that the late Martin Luther King and acted out of an "inner pain." Brown, Newfield charged, is a "put on." However, Newfield was quick to add that he "would not tell the Black man in the ghetto not to use violence." His objection to Brown is that his object is separatism and not integration. Newfield concluded "that the French

could be driven even Algeria, the Belgians from the Congo, but Brown can't drive the Americans from the United States."

Newfield also addressed himself to the term "generation gap." "It seems that there is a new generation in America every three years. For example, I was once told by some one twenty-three year old that since I was for legalization of marijuana and supported Malcolm X and Robert Kennedy but not LSD, H. Rap Brown, and Robert Scheer, I am part of the 'Old New Left.'"

Dr. Lipset agreed that experiences cause the gap. He also added that the gap is not expressed in political views. This, he felt, is proven by the resistance of some Duke students to the Segregated Facilities Bill.

Dr. Lipset added that five years ago the young Americans for Freedom were extremely powerful and still have not diminished in numbers significantly. He then introduced a comparison of today's youth with a past generation. "In 1919, Lenin lamented the drug-taking, sexual promiscuity, and unconventional activism of the youth of his time." Lipset noted that this is not dissimilar to a common cry heard in San Francisco.

Dr. Halkoff augmented this discussion by stating that what is true for someone thirty years will never be true for the twenty-year old of the present. "There is a great constant technological and social change."

In summary of the night's discussion, Dr. Edgar Z. Friedberg said that it is quite obvious that there is a lethal hate on the part of many older people to the turned-on segment of youth. Dr. Halkoff said that one reason for this is a type of jealousy. Hostilities are polarizing and revealing that there are great conflicts of interest. He expressed the hope that the Symposium will begin to reconsider the final assumption of democracy vs. liberty. Friedenberg reiterated that the problem is much more serious than a generation gap. It involves a social conflict, says Friedenberg.



Dr. Edgar Friedenberg

Jack Newfield

Dr. Seymour Lipset

Dr. Seymour Halkoff

Photos by Casey Causey

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