

Changing Youth Values in the 70's

A Study of American Youth

by Daniel Yankelovich

Introduction

This booklet summarizes and analyzes the recent changes, many of them abrupt and dramatic, in the attitudes and values of American youth, as indicated in a broad survey conducted by the organization of Daniel Yankelovich, Inc. and sponsored by the JDR 3rd Fund, Carnegie Corporation of New York, Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, Hazen Foundation and Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

In the survey, a total of 3,522 one-to-two-hour personal interviews were held in the late spring of 1973, covering a cross section of the country's youth population, aged 16 to 25. Two independent samples make up this cross section, one of college youth, the other of noncollege youth. For the first, a total of 1,006 college students from a representative selection of the country's two-year and four-year and university establishments were interviewed. In the second category, 2,516 young people were interviewed in a probability sampling of all American households with members between the ages of 16 and 25. To avoid duplication, everyone in this age group who was living at home but attending college was eliminated from this sample.

The survey summarized here is the fifth in a series of research projects on American youth carried out by the Yankelovich organization since 1967, and in breadth and scope of findings it is by far the most ambitious such study done to date. Previous research--which includes a 1967 study for Fortune magazine, a 1969 study for CBS, a 1971 report for John D. Rockefeller 3rd and the Task Force on Youth and a 1971 survey for The JDR 3rd Fund--concentrated on college youth, with the exception of the 1969 study, which covered noncollege youth as well. The present study concerns itself with college youth, too, but it also includes high school students, blue collar workers, housewives, minority groups, high school dropouts, Vietnam veterans, and all the other heterogeneous groups that make up the full variety of America's youth.

This study also has the advantage of being able to incorporate and compare findings from the earlier studies made in the late 1960's and early 1970's; many of the same questions asked in the earlier studies were repeated in this one, and for the most part earlier sample designs were replicated, too. As a result, trends can be traced in young Americans' attitudes and values, and traced through an era crowded with events that have deeply affected the lives of young people. Though not long by historical standards, this period stretches from the peak of the Vietnam War protest movement to the disappearance of the war as an issue among young people. It is also the period in which the Women's Movement has sought to raise the consciousness of the nation, especially among young people. In this same period, we have seen sweeping changes in sexual morality and work-related values, an emerging climate of mistrust of our basic institutions, and other challenges to traditional beliefs and values. These developments--

some are universal in scope while others affect only small proportions of the population--give us an opportunity to assess the impact of social change on what is probably our most change-sensitive population group--America's young people.

In addition to comparing attitudes of young adults as a whole at different times in recent years, the current study examines the differences and similarities among various groupings within the youth population at the present time. This study also looks at how these groupings--the principal divisions are college and noncollege youth--have changed in comparison to one another over the last few years.

We hope that this will be a useful contribution to the country's understanding of the views, values and perspectives of American youth in a time of ferment.

Turnabout

These first few years of the decade of the 1970's point to vast changes in the complexion and outlook of an entire generation of young people. Indeed, so startling are the shifts in values and beliefs between the late 1960's when our youth studies were first launched and the present time that social historians of the future should have little difficulty in identifying the end of one era and the beginning of a new one. Rarely has a transition between one decade and the next seemed so abrupt and so full of discontinuities. Here in schematic form are almost twenty large scale changes revealed by the research as having occurred between the late 1960's and the early 1970's. (See chart).

Underlying Causes

Changes of this magnitude in so brief a time span are rare, at least since attitudes have been subject to the examinations of behavioral sciences. Also, the many reversals of directions and shifts in values seem so uncharacteristic of the normal orderly processes of human change that one is obliged to look beneath the surface for underlying causes. Our analysis leads us to conclude that this extraordinary pattern of change has been caused by two unrelated factors.

The first is the Vietnam War. The war hit young people with great force, especially on the nation's campuses. It evoked strong passions and extreme forms of behavior that reached their peak at the time of the 1970 research conducted shortly after the Cambodia and Kent State episodes. The findings of the current research indicate that with the passing of the war and the draft that accompanied it, youthful attitudes and values have now reverted to more familiar patterns. The war, then, is one of the keys that unlocks the mystery of the dramatic pattern of changes detected by the research over these past few years.

The other force that underlies these large scale changes is more subtle but also more important because it points toward the future rather than the past. The findings of the current study show in great detail the effects of the diffusion of a set of new

Late 1960's

The campus rebellion is in full flower.

New life styles and radical politics appear together; granny glasses, crunchy granola, commune living, pot smoking and long hair seem inseparable from radical politics, sit-ins, student strikes, protest marches, draft card burnings.

A central theme on campus: the search for self-fulfillment in place of a conventional career.

Growing criticism of America as a "sick society."

The Women's Movement has virtually no impact on youth values and attitudes.

Violence on campus is condoned and romanticized; there are many acts of violence.

The value of education is severely questioned.

A widening "generation gap" appears in values morals and outlook, dividing young people (especially college youth) from their parents.

A sharp split in social and moral values is found within the youth generation, between college students and the non-college majority. The gap within the generation proves to be larger and more severe than the gap between the generations.

The challenge to the traditional work ethic is confined to campus.

A new code of sexual morality centering on greater acceptance of casual premarital sex, abortions homosexuality and extramarital relations is confined to a minority of students.

Early 1970's

The campus rebellion is moribund.

An almost total divorce takes place between radical politics and new life styles.

A central theme on campus: how to find self-fulfillment within a conventional career.

Lessening criticism of America as a "sick society."

Wide and deep penetration of Women's Lib precepts.

Violence-free campuses; the use of violence, even to achieve worthwhile objectives, is rejected.

The value of education is strongly endorsed.

The younger generation and older mainstream America move closer together in values, morals and outlook.

The gap within the generation narrows. Noncollege youth have virtually caught up with college students in adopting the new social and moral norms.

The work ethic appears strengthened on campus, but is growing weaker among noncollege youth.

The new sexual morality spreads both to mainstream college youth and also to mainstream working class youth.

Late 1960's

Harsh criticisms of major institutions, such as political parties, big business, the military, etc., are almost wholly confined to college students.

The universities and the military are major targets of criticism.

The campus is the main locus of youthful discontent; noncollege youth are quiescent.

Much youthful energy and idealism is devoted to concern with minorities, and blacks are considered the most oppressed group.

The political center of gravity of college youth: left/liberal

The New Left is a force on campus: there are growing numbers of radical students.

Concepts of law and order are anathema to college students.

The student mood is angry, embittered and bewildered by public hostility.

Early 1970's

Criticism of some major institutions are tempered on campus but are taken up by working class youth.

Criticisms of universities and the military decrease sharply.

Campuses are quiescent, but many signs of latent discontent appear among working class youth.

Concern with minorities is lower, and American Indians are considered most oppressed.

No clear-cut political center of gravity: pressures in both directions, left and right.

The New Left is a negligible factor on campus: the number of radical students declines sharply.

College students show greater acceptance of law and order requirements.

There are few signs of anger or bitterness, and little overt concern with public attitudes toward students.

values that incubated on the nation's campuses in the 1960's and have now spread out to the entire present youth generation. The New Values (as we shall refer to them) cover a broad range of beliefs. It may be useful here to spell out what we mean by the New Values. We use the term as shorthand for three categories of value change.

The first category refers to new moral norms--beliefs that guide the behavior of people on matters of individual and public morality. The major value changes under this heading are (1) changes in sexual morality in the direction of more liberal sexual mores; (2) changes in relation to the authority of institutions such as the authority of law, the police, the government, the boss in the work situation, etc; the changes here are in the direction of what sociologists call "deauthorization," i.e., a lessening of automatic obedience to, and respect for, established authority; (3) changes in views toward the church and organized religion as a source of guidance for moral behavior; and (4) changes in traditional concepts of patriotism and in automatic allegiance to "my country right or wrong."

The second category of New Values relates to social values, primarily to changing attitudes toward the work ethic, marriage and family, and the role and importance of money in defining the meaning of success.

The third category of New Values concerns the meaning of the vague concept of self-fulfillment. Self-fulfillment is usually defined by people today in opposition to the concern with economic security. Once a person feels that he can take some degree of economic security for granted, he begins to look forward to relief from the discipline of a constant preoccupation with economic security, and he starts to search for forms of self-fulfillment that go beyond the daily routine. Stress on the theme of gratification is the individual's way of saying that there must be something more to life than making a living, struggling to make ends meet, and caring for others. The self-fulfillment concept also implies a greater preoccupation with self at the expense of sacrificing one's self for family, employer and community.

The New Values, then, include three sets of interrelated norms:

Moral Norms concerning sex, authority, religion and obligations to others.

Social Values concerning money, work, family and marriage.

Self-Fulfillment defined in opposition to role obligations to others, and to the nose-to-the-grindstone quest for economic security.

As the New Values spread from a small minority of privileged college students to the mainstream of college youth, and from college youth to the noncollege majority of young workers, housewives, high school students, etc., they raised new questions and posed new dilemmas for each of the various subgroups in the population. (When people's expectations are raised and their values transformed, they seek out new patterns of fulfillment, depending

on their circumstances. The well-educated and well-trained college graduate, for example, finds himself in a better position to gratify his new desires than someone who is less well trained, less well educated and privileged, even though both persons may share similar desires.) If there is any single pattern that underlies the dense variety of findings described in the main body of this report it is the story of the transmission of the New Values from the campus to mainstream American youth, the efforts of both college and noncollege youth to find a satisfactory means of blending the New Values with older, more traditional beliefs, and the search for new modes of adaptation to the highly institutionalized structure of American society.

In the material that follows we first describe the effects of the two forces that have transformed the outlook of American youth--the end of the Vietnam War and the transmission of the New Values from a campus minority to the overall youth population. We then examine the implications of these changes (a) for college and noncollege youth and (b) for substantive issues relating to work and career, politics and the role of women.

The Vietnam War

Some of the changes depicted in this study such as the return of the quiet to the campus and the new seriousness of students in their pursuit of careers may appear, at first glance, to reinforce the widely held view that the 1960's represented an odd aberration in our national history. The 1970's, it is said, have restored "normalcy," linking up a chain of continuity with the 1950's and other more "normal" periods in our national history. Such observations point to the striking parallelism between the "privatism" of the 1950's when young people were preoccupied with their own personal lives and destinies, and the privatism of the 1970's with its similarly strong focus on self.

The findings of the present study suggest that this conclusion is a half truth; that is, it is partly true and partly false. The 1960's were characterized by many unique events which may have momentarily sidetracked the slow, steady continuity of American social history. The short but vivid era of the Kennedy presidency, the rise of the Civil Rights Movement under the leadership of Martin Luther King, the abrupt impact of the inner city riots and burnings swiftly followed by the student riots on campus, the shock of the assassinations of John and Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King--all these events certainly left their mark on the times. The one event which these findings suggest most strongly influenced the values and views of a generation was, of course, the Vietnam War. It is possible to see now, in retrospect, that the spurt of political radicalism on campus was inextricably interrelated with student response to the war in Southeast Asia. The draft forged an intensely personal link between the students and a far off war which inspired loathing, fear and revulsion on campus. The small core of political radicals, never more than 10-15 per cent of the college population, took the lead in interpreting the war in terms that were harshly critical of the United States, its motives, its institutions and its moral impulses. Because they were so disturbed by the radical critique, the great

mass of college students accepted the radical critique and, especially in the Ivy League colleges, joined with the New Left in its attack on the universities and other institutions that were interpreted as being part of the web of immorality and misuse of power that students associated with the war. Inevitably, Vietnam-inspired political radicalism became entangled with the cluster of new life styles and social values that had their genesis in an earlier period.

Once the war passed and the draft ended, the situation changed dramatically. Describing the findings of the 1971 study we concluded: "Radical political values and life styles, values which traveled together since the mid-1960's have, in 1971, begun to go their separate ways. Changing cultural values--relationships to marriage, authority, religion, work, money, career, sexual morality, and other aspects of the puritan ethic--have become more marked and dramatic each year since these measurements began, including 1971, while political beliefs have moved in the opposite direction away from the 1970 peaks... The vast majority of students--the 89 per cent who do not identify with the New Left--have pressed forward in their search for a cultural revolution while taking a step backwards from political revolution." (in Changing Values on Campus, Washington Square Press, 1972, p. 7.)

Now, several years later, this same conclusion is further reinforced by the new study. The recent findings imply that it was the Vietnam War, more than any other single factor, that inspired the wave of political radicalism on campus. Although the war has left a residue of feelings which we will comment on later, it now seems reasonable to conclude that the 1960's were an aberration and a departure from the mainstream of American social history to the extent that youthful values intimately tied to the war and the strong emotions it evoked came and went with the war.

Does this mean that we are back to the status quo ante? Does it imply that we are now picking up the threads of cultural continuity from where they left off in the 1950's, without the 1960's leaving any enduring mark on the present period? The findings of the present study show clearly and vividly that nothing could be further from the truth. Apart from the impact of the war, the 1960's were not an aberration, but a consistent part of our cultural continuity. The war was like having a despised stranger living in your home at the same time that a baby was born to the family. With the departure of the stranger, the situation may at first seem to return to what it was earlier, but it soon becomes apparent that the new baby has created its own pattern of changes in the life of the family. The war was vivid and traumatic while it lasted, but the enduring heritage of the 1960's is the new social values that grew on the nation's campuses during the same fateful period and now have grown stronger and more powerful.

The New Values

The central theme of the present study is the story of how various subgroups in the current generation of youth are now seeking to make an accomodation to the New Values. Perhaps the most lucid way to interpret the dense wealth of findings of this study is to

regard them as a case history of "cultural diffusion." Social science has made us familiar with the process. Social change is often initiated by small extremist groups. The mass of the public reacts initially by rejecting the new ideas, and then begins to consider them with tempered selectivity. The proposals of the extremist groups become, in effect, a vast smorgasbord from which people of more moderate temperament pick and choose those ideas that fit best with their own traditional life styles. The process may be maddening to the purists, but a remarkable amount of social change is eventually effected.

In the mid-1960's we identified a subgroup of college students as "Forerunners." This group--never a majority of the college population--struggled to live by a new set of post-affluent values. We were struck by two motivations that seemed to enjoy exceptional strength among the so-called Forerunner students: one was private, directed at personal self-fulfillment. The other was public, directed toward a vision of what a just and harmonious society might be.

In their struggle to live by the New Values and to establish new institutions more responsive to their needs, students holding the New Values had an unfortunate tendency to demean the old values (due, in part, to an inherent youthful tendency toward moral absolutism). The New Values, therefore, surfaced on the American scene in the form of a counterculture. In the early 1960's, when these values first began to appear, the students who were experimenting with them were, for the most part, reacting against and counter to prevailing traditions. As Kenneth Keniston observed, they represented an antithesis to traditional values, not a synthesis of what is valid in both the old and the new. In the experimental years of the 1960's, the college student minority offended virtually every belief and value cherished by the American public. They downgraded economic well-being rather than regarding it as an indispensable source of the freedom and dignity of the individual. They derided education as the royal road to success and achievement, as defined by the society. They belittled the efforts of the average person to cope with the economic harshness of everyday life and his struggle to stand on his own two feet and retain some measure of autonomy within the complex conditions of modern life. They professed beliefs that seemed to flaunt faith in marriage, work, family, patriotism, the democracy of the two party system, competition, and equality of opportunity. They down-graded traditional aspirations of Americans for more material well-being--more money, more education, more leisure, and more opportunities for oneself and one's children. They challenged established authority in the larger society in every one of its forms--the law, the police, the universities, elected officials, the professions, business, etc. They countered the traditional social institutions of marriage and the church by new styles of communal living and new forms of religious expression. They scrutinized each element of traditional sexual morality for opportunities to try something different. They countered the alcohol culture with the drug culture. They met the older emphasis on private careers with a new craving for community. The list could be continued indefinitely.

Much of the public hostility to the college-based movement of the 1960's was evoked by this compulsive opposition to traditional beliefs as well as by the alien political views of the college minority. Describing the emergence of the New Values in the 1970's, we noted: "Small groups of students take extreme positions on the new values, larger groups take more moderate positions. Gradually, many of the new values will work their way from the Forerunner college group to the career-minded majority of college students and then to other young people, and then to upper middle class older people in urban settings, and then to the mass of the population. At each stage in the process, a synthesis of the old and new will finally be reached although the process may take decades and perhaps generations to complete and may become sidetracked." (Youth and the Establishment, JDR 3rd Fund, Inc., 1971, p. 84). Our prediction that the process of diffusion might take decades and even generations to accomplish has been proven incorrect by the present study. Indeed, we are amazed by the rapidity with which this process is now taking place, by its complexity, and by the problems of adaption it poses to the institutions of the society. The balance of this pamphlet describes the effects of the wider diffusion of the New Values on and off campus.

Cross-Purposes on Campus

Assimilating the New Values

The situation on campus can be summed up as follows: the New Values are now widely diffused throughout the total college population and are no longer confined to a minority. In some categories (e.g., sexual morality) the spread continues unabated. In other categories (e.g., attitudes toward work) there has been a moderate reversal of earlier trends. The overall picture is one of a steady process of dispersion and assimilation of the New Values. The charts that follow provide some illustrations of this steady process.

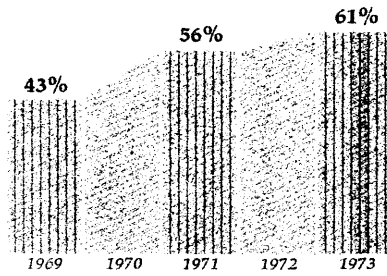
Career Aspirations on Campus

At the same time that the New Values have spread, there has also been a steady increase in traditional career aspirations on campus, such as the desire to get ahead, to find economic security, and to enjoy careers which provide opportunities for both money and greater self-expression and self-fulfillment. The size of the career-minded group of college students, i.e., those young people whose major purpose in going to college is the practical one of training themselves for a career, has steadily grown over the past six years too.

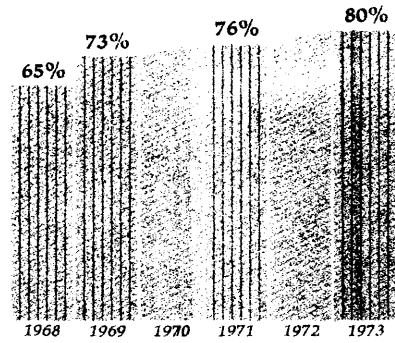
This growth in the proportion of career-minded college students is charted below; at right and on the following page are shown the increasing percentages--in a half dozen major categories--of students who indicate a desire for traditional benefits when asked what they would value most in choosing a career or job.

Trends in College Values and Attitudes

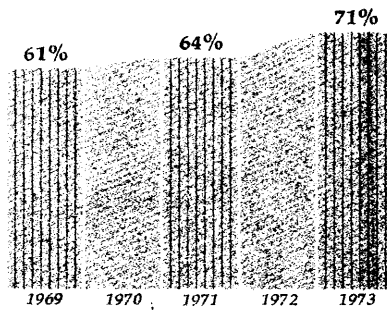
Would welcome more acceptance of sexual freedom



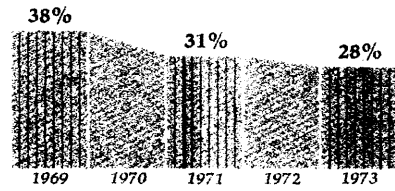
Would welcome less emphasis on money



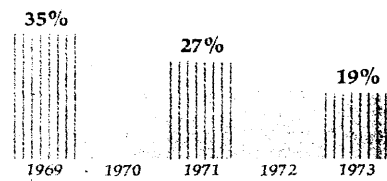
Privacy—a very important value



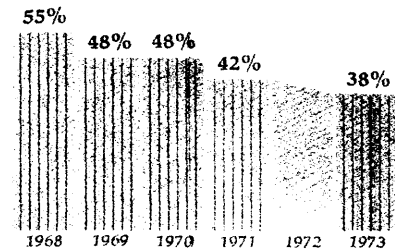
Religion—a very important value



Patriotism—a very important value



Prohibition against marijuana is easily acceptable



The Dilemma

What we see, therefore, is the simultaneous growth of two sets of values that are in conflict with each other at many points. For example, the deemphasis on money grubbing is a cardinal tenet of the New Values. At the same time, however, the opportunity to earn good money is one of the key attractions of a conventional career. The tension created by these two conflicting value systems defines the central problem, or dilemma, that presents itself for solution for today's college youth. Since our college population is large and heterogeneous, we are not surprised to find that more than one pattern of adaptation and synthesis has begun to emerge. One such pattern emphasizes the New Values, pushing conventional career considerations to a side. This pattern is most characteristic of the large group of college students who take affluence for granted; they account for about 34 per cent of all college students.

At the other extreme is a group that stresses the practical and pragmatic side of education and career. The students in this group are mainly concerned with economic security and the extrinsic rewards of a career in the form of money, status, etc. They comprise about 34 per cent of today's total college population.

"Bargain" with Society

The remaining 32 per cent are, in a sense, the most interesting. They are the young people who put a strong emphasis on the intangibles of self-fulfillment and self-actualization and yet, at the same time, their major purpose in going to college is for practical career training. They strike what is perhaps the dominant theme of today's college climate: they are trying to achieve a synthesis between the old and the new values by assuming that it is possible to seek and find self-fulfillment and personal satisfaction in a conventional career, while simultaneously enjoying the kind of financial rewards that will enable them to live full, rich lives outside of their work. The job criteria they stress put equal emphasis on challenging work the ability to express yourself, and free time for outside interests as well as on the money one can earn, economic security and the chance to get ahead.

This effort to integrate new values with traditional ones illustrates one of the central issues in social science. The process of socialization, as it is called, refers to the extraordinarily complex process whereby the individual seeks to adapt himself to the institutions of the society while at the same time hoping to modify those institutions so that they meet his needs more fully. One of the striking differences between the adaptations of college educated young people in the 1950's and college educated young people today is to be seen in the nature of the "bargain" these young people make with the society. In the 1950's, the era of privatism and togetherness, many young people felt that it was necessary to split their lives in two as a means of adjusting to the society. On the job, they placed

their emphasis on getting ahead, making out, and living according to the mores of the corporate structure. (The classic stereotype of this era was the man in the gray flannel suit.) The other side of life came on holidays, weekends and evenings. Then one retreated from the public world into one's private world--to suburbs, home, garden, station wagon, kids and family. A rigid mental wall separated that part of oneself that belonged to the world from the other part of oneself that belonged to family, friends, private life. The purpose of the rigid compartmentalization was to satisfy both the demands of the society and one's own personal cravings. One of the defining characteristics of that earlier era was that young people found it necessary to compartmentalize their lives in order to adjust to the society. In no other way could the individual see how to reconcile the conflicting demands of the society with his own yearnings.

Today, this compartmentalization no longer operates. The nature of the "bargain" these young people make with society does not require them to split themselves down the middle. They do not feel caught up in a sharp dichotomy between private and social values. They do not accept the need to submerge their "real selves" in their work while adopting a completely different set of values in their private lives. This is a change of some importance. It is a change, moreover, that has occurred both in the psychology of college youth and in the psychology of the larger society as well. Increasingly, the older generation has begun to move toward the value structure of young people. There is growing recognition in the business world of the appeal of non-financial rewards, participation in decision making, tolerance of varied styles of dress and outlook, and an effort to make work interesting and meaningful. Even as college students are pausing to consolidate their views and values and to synthesize them with older career goals, they can see evidence all around them that the marriage between the desire for personal self-fulfillment and a successful career need not be incompatible. In the future as a result of this shift we may expect the very concept of career and professionalism to change in meaning in subtle but far-reaching ways.

The picture of college youth in relation to society that emerges from the research is touched with irony. Just a few years ago, the country was reduced to near panic by what seemed to be the wholesale alienation of college youth. Now we find an almost classic pattern of accommodation and adaptation. Most college students accept the necessity for hard work as a fact of life. They do not shirk it or shrink from it. At the same time what they regard as a proper "payoff" for hard work has shifted dramatically.

Students specifically reject a nose-to-the-grindstone philosophy of life. They do not subscribe to the old credo that if they work hard, stay out of trouble, and put their responsibilities to family and others ahead of their own personal satisfactions, then they will be rewarded with a good living, economic security, enough money to buy possessions, a nice place to live, and a good education for their kids. What we see instead is the active

pursuit of a career as a means to self-fulfillment, with money, security and possessions included in the overall scheme, partly taken for granted, partly demanded as a matter of right, but subordinate to the main goal of finding just the right life style for expressing their psychological potential.

Shifting from a psychological to a sociological point of view, we see a growing majority of college trained youth readying themselves for careers in the upper reaches of the social order. The professional, managerial and technical categories are the fastest growing occupational groupings in the country. These prestigious positions will make hard demands on people's trained capabilities, their willingness to respond to challenge, and their ability to adapt to innovation. How convenient it is, therefore, that increasing numbers of young people are heading straight for these upper level niches, their eyes fixed on the goal marked "successful career." Moreover, they are demanding that these careers be meaningful and rewarding in both the psychological and economic senses. Fortunately for them, it appears that there will be an abundance of such careers available. Today's students are training themselves for positions in an elite group which is peculiarly necessary in an advanced industrial society.

From this standpoint, even though these well-educated young adults may be searching for more varied life styles than their parents did, the celebrated generation gap disappears before our eyes in any profound sense. Other Yankelovich research shows that in the country today the most satisfied group--those who are most pleased with their work, gratified with their income, and content with their own personal lives--are the upper middle class families that occupy the leading professional, managerial and technical positions in the society. Looking at the future prospects for this large and growing social class, the "fit" between aspiration and opportunity appears exceptionally good. It is precisely this kind of good fit between values and institutions that makes for institutional legitimacy and stability.

This optimistic view of relationship of college educated youth to their future work dramatizes, by contrast, the plight of the majority of young people who either receive no college education at all, or have one or two years of college and then drop out. This is the situation for three out of four young people, since at the present time only about one out of four persons age 18 to 25 finishes four years of college. It is to this group that we now turn.

The Noncollege Majority

Following the Campus

Perhaps the single most striking finding of the study is the extent to which the gap in values between college and non-college youth has closed over these past six years. What we find

today is an astonishingly swift transmission of values formerly confined to a minority of college youth and now spread throughout the generation. This is not to say that noncollege youth have arrived at precisely the same value orientations as their college peers. What the research does show, to an almost uncanny degree, is that noncollege youth today are just about where the college population was in 1969. (College youth have changed too, but the gap between the two groups has generally narrowed.) Virtually every aspect of the New Values has deeply penetrated noncollege youth. Moral norms have changed dramatically. Social values with regard to money, work and family are slowly being transformed. And the same intangible conflict between self-fulfillment and economic security is spreading throughout every group in the youth population. The charts that follow illustrate this conclusion, in graphically comparing three kinds of findings: (1) how college students felt in 1969, (2) how the noncollege group felt in 1969 and (3) how the noncollege group feels today.

New Attitudes Toward Work

In an earlier section we showed how the New Values spread from a college minority to the career-minded majority of college youth. We described how today's college youth were attempting to find a constructive synthesis between traditional and new values. And we suggested that their efforts were likely to meet with success on the grounds that there appears to be a "good fit" between what these young people want and what the society has to offer its college educated youth. The same conclusion cannot be advanced about the impact of the New Values on noncollege youth. Without the benefits of a college education, the opportunities to find work that is both financially and psychologically rewarding are not very great--and most young people know it.

The noncollege majority recognize that they are less likely than college trained people to find interesting work. In the past, this did not matter too much. Most people looked to work for its extrinsic rewards--good pay, a mounting standard of living, economic security. But gradually, the New Values and a sense of personal entitlement are seeping into the consciousness of all young people, not just college youth. The changing values and attitudes of young working people toward the world of work as revealed by the current research can be summarized in five general statements.

Working youth now stress quality of life.

Traditionally in American life, especially among working people, success has meant money, economic security, status and social mobility for one's children. Today, many noncollege youth, including those working in blue collar jobs, have taken up the quest of their college peers for a new definition of success in which the emphasis is on self-fulfillment and quality of life as well as on money and security. Some indications of the trend:

-While a majority(57%) of noncollege youth state that economic security and providing for their family will come first in planning their future, a substantial minority (42%) agree with the following statement: "In thinking about the future, I'm really not that concerned with economic security. I guess I take it for granted. I'm more concerned with doing things that will give me a sense of self-fulfillment." With the New Values spreading so quickly it is a fair assumption that this 42 per cent is likely to increase, perhaps even to the 56 per cent "self-fulfillment comes first" levels now prevailing among college youth.

-Among young blue collar workers "interesting work" is just as important a desired job attribute as money.

-Today three out of four noncollege youth as well as college youth call for more emphasis on self-expression and self-fulfillment as personal values.

Working youth are less concerned about money.

Certainly there is no indication that young workers are willing to sacrifice economic gains for self-fulfillment. The change that appears to be occurring is the emphasis on rewards that go beyond economic security. For increasing numbers of young workers money by itself is no longer enough of an incentive for hard work.

While economic security continues to dominate their lives, many young people have begun to take it for granted. If they are working, the future prospect that they might be unable to make a living seems curiously unreal. For example, among young people who are now employed, 58 per cent have no doubt about their being able to make as much money as they may want to-- whatever that amount is. Perhaps the energy crisis will temper this confidence down--but the trend appears unlikely to be wiped away by anything short of a radically altered economy.

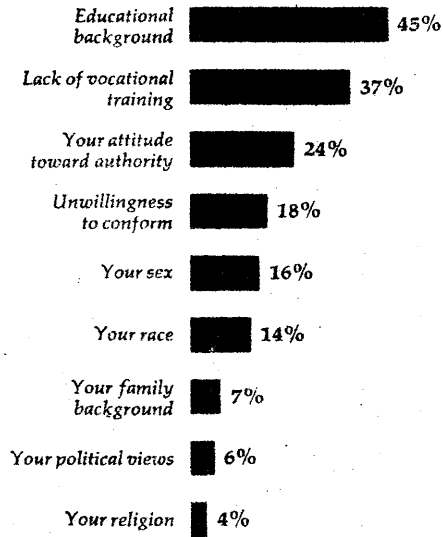
The appeal of a job that is more than just a job can be seen in just two findings of the study:

-Among blue collar workers, job security (51%) is 15 percentage points below interesting work as a job criterion.

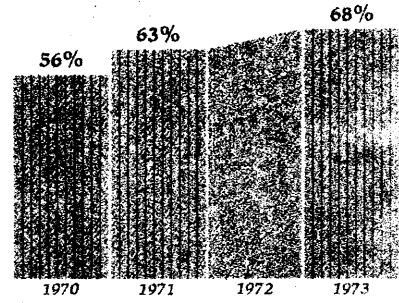
-Out of a list of 35 possible job criteria, the chance to make a lot of money ranks among the bottom of the list.

The job criteria of blue collar workers are remarkably similar to those of the college students and the young college graduates already in the work force. What they want is no longer just satisfactory pay, or job security, but also the opportunity to do self-rewarding and interesting work. The ranking of importance that working youth attach to job attributes is indicated in the following chart (see attached chart).

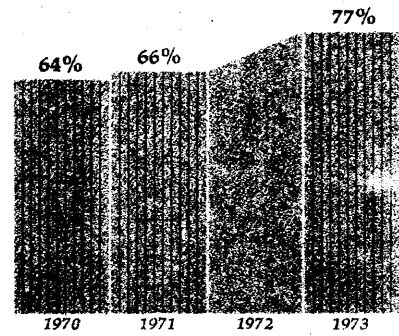
Barriers toward getting kind of job wanted Noncollege -1973



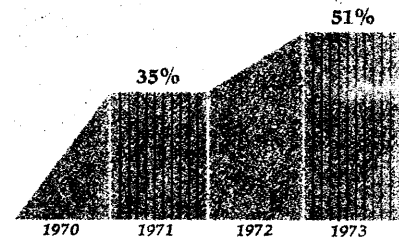
Ability to express yourself



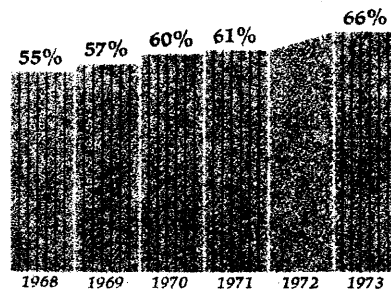
Challenge of the job



Chance to get ahead



Size of the "career-minded" group



Attitudes toward work are positive.

Young working people, regardless of the nature of their work, say they are ready to work hard. They definitely are not looking for work that is not demanding. They do not shirk from physical hard work and they are not worried about being asked to do more than they now do. But the nature of the "payoff" for hard work has changed. In 1969, 79 per cent of the non-college youth believed that "hard work would always pay off," a view held by only 57 per cent of college youth. Now the same traditional felling about hard work as the royal road to success is supported by only 56 per cent of noncollege youth. A note should be made, however, that a strong majority of both college and noncollege youth continue to reject at 1969 levels the idea of less emphasis on working hard. In other words, young people are willing to work hard, but they've lost their confidence that hard work will pay off--in terms of psychological as well as economic rewards.

Job satisfaction is limited.

The difference between the personal rewards and satisfactions found at work by college educated young people and blue collar workers points to one of the major disparities in our society.

The young professional or executive sees his work as providing him with a good future, but also with the opportunity to use his skills and intelligence and to do work that is meaningful and rewarding. The young blue collar worker often brings to the job many of the same desires for rewarding work and for a job that demands the use of his brains, full resources and creativity. In many instances, however, unlike the young executive or professional, he finds only a job that is "just a job"--a way to kill time and make a living.

The stark contrast in job attitudes between blue collar workers and young executives is graphically illustrated by the diagrams attached.

Education is viewed as an answer.

The intensity and universality of the desire for more education and training, undoubtedly one of the key findings of the study, reflect the main strategy expressed by noncollege youth for dealing constructively with their present and future job frustrations, and their readiness to do something positive about it if given the opportunity.

-Forty-five per cent see their educational background as the major barrier toward getting the kind of work wanted.

-Thirty-seven per cent regard their lack of vocational training as an impediment to the kind of job wanted.

-Given the opportunity to get a six month training or education program which would lead to a promotion or better job

elsewhere, 68 per cent say they would welcome the chance even if it meant taking a 20 per cent pay cut while taking the course. It would be naive to take this finding literally as a prediction of future behavior. But the finding is important in what it says about attitudes and values.

Higher Expectations--Lower Opportunities

To sum up this section: work that provides psychological as well as economic benefits is as attractive to the nation's young high school graduates as to its college graduates--but they don't really expect to get it from their jobs. Upward mobility is also important to them, but opportunities for mobility and for job enrichment are often traded away in exchange for economic benefits. At the same time, indications are that opportunities for skilled workers in industrial jobs may be shrinking. Low level service jobs, which are growing in number, often lead to a dead end. Information about good jobs open to the person without a college education is difficult to acquire. The opportunities for training and the acquisition of new skills are sporadic, all too often poorly conceived, and to most young people do not look as if they will produce results.

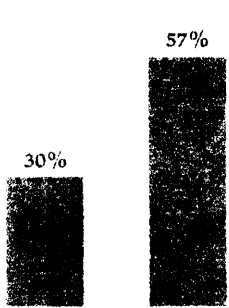
Today's generation of young people are less fearful of economic insecurity than in the past. They want interesting and challenging work but they assume that their employers cannot--or will not--provide it. By their own say-so, they are inclined to take "less crap" than older workers. They are not as automatically loyal to the organization as their fathers, and they are far more cognizant of their own needs and rights. Nor are they as awed by organizational and hierarchical authority. Being less fearful of "discipline" and the threat of losing their jobs, they feel free to express their discontent in myriad ways, from fooling around on the job to sabotage. They are better educated than their parents, even without a degree. They want more freedom and opportunity and will struggle to achieve it.

That the majority of noncollege youth face the prospect of growing difficulties with their jobs must be a matter of serious concern to the society. These young people, after all, represent the great bulk of the new labor force. The problem they face is compounded by the confrontation of higher expectations with lower opportunities: the New Values inevitably clash with the built-in rigidities of the traditional work place.

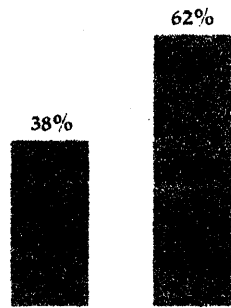
A word of caution is in order here. It is important not to overstate the implications of the research. A disgruntled, discontented work force of high school graduates uninterested in their jobs and eager to cut back on work commitments irrespective of economic rewards, is far from inevitable. Conversely, however, the conventional view of a future work force contented simply because they are making a good living and improving their material standard of life is even more unlikely. We are reaching one of these critical turning-points in our social history where the options of the future and the opportunities to create new institutions are truly open. The die is not yet cast. The majority of young people continue to bring to their

Blue Collar Workers (left side)
 Professional/Managerial (right side)

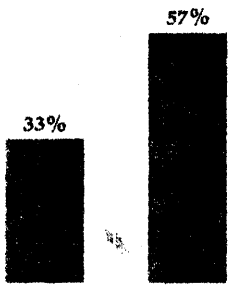
It's a job with a good future



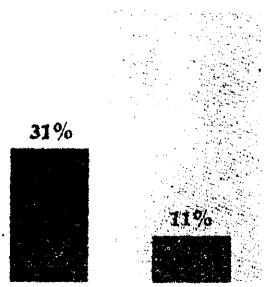
Chance to use my mind



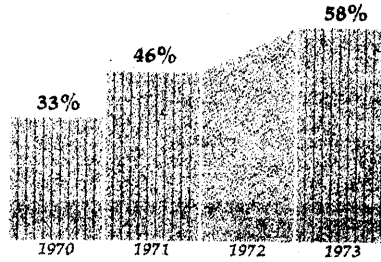
Chance to develop skills and abilities



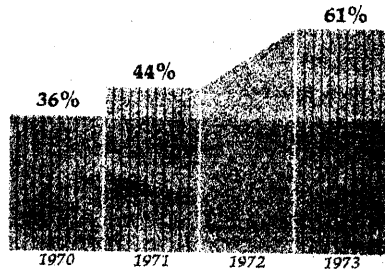
I'm just hanging on until something better comes along



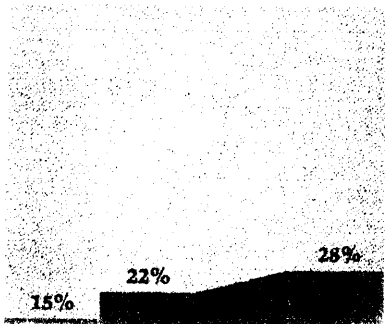
Job security



Money you can earn

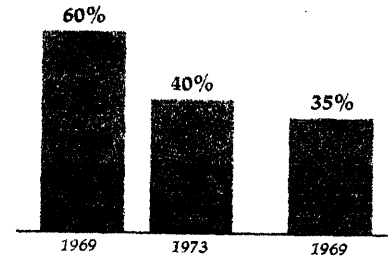


Prestige of the job



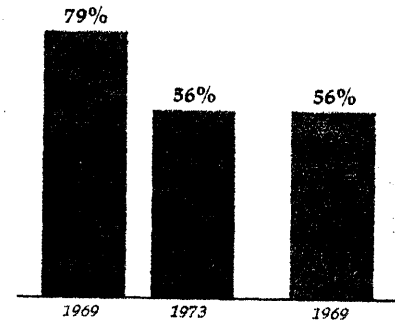
Patriotism is a very important value

Non-College College



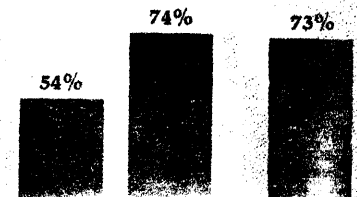
Believe that hard work always pays off

Non-College College



Would welcome less emphasis on money

Non-College College



work a deeply rooted desire to do a good job and a hunger for work that will satisfy some of their deepest cravings--for community, for fellowship, for participation, for challenge, for self-fulfillment, for freedom, for equality.

Alternatives to College or Work

A boy or girl graduating from high school today has two alternatives--to go to work (and for some this can mean enlisting in the armed forces) or go on to college, either a two-year or a four-year college. For some, there is not even this alternative, due to money problems, intellectual limitations, family needs, etc.

The question arises as to whether these alternatives can be made less rigid and more flexible. Is there an opportunity for new institutions that would be more responsive to the needs of young people?

In this connection we pretested five concepts that posed alternatives to the present work versus college choice.

Plan I: A start-your-own-business program featuring training and interest-free loans.

Plan II: New types of technical schools offering certified training for skills needed in expanding industries.

Plan III: A career-planning year exposing the individual to many different fields and job opportunities and featuring new forms of career counseling.

Plan IV: New types of apprenticeship programs in industry, the arts, the unions or service organizations where the individual is paid minimum wages while he learns new skills.

Plan V: A six-year job-and-college program where the individual works steadily at the job and receives a college degree for both work and formal courses at a nearby college.

Asked how they would react to each of these alternatives if they were graduating from high school today, here is how the blue collar workers responded:

-76 per cent said they would give serious thought to a career-planning year.

-71 per cent would give serious consideration to the six-year combined work and go-to-college program.

-68 per cent expressed interest in the new types of technical schools.

-66 per cent were interested in the new types of apprenticeship programs.

-55 per cent reacted favorably to the start-your-own-business program.

Interestingly, college students share the blue collar workers' enthusiasm for the career-planning year and the six-year work-college program, but are somewhat less interested in

the start-your-own-business program or in the new types of technical schools. The chart at the right (attached) shows the response of the total young adult population to these five concepts.

Whether, indeed, today's young adults would take advantage of such programs and alternatives if they were available is open to question. Our own interpretation is that the desire for taking advantage of these new opportunities, if they existed, is strongly buttressed by the value structure and emerging cultural patterns of a "new" generation of Americans.

Minority Youth

Not surprisingly, it is minority youth who feel most left out. Only a small percentage go on to college: drop-outs from high school are twice as numerous among black and other minority youth than among their white peers. Among minority youth, the prevailing view is that this is a sick society (55%) and not democratic (76%). They are disheartened by what they feel is rampant racism. They are having problems making ends meet and unlike their white peers are doubtful about their future ability to make money as well.

Minority youth are caught in an acute dilemma by the New Values. On the one hand, they endorse the freer, more open kind of relationships and life styles promoted by the New Values; on the other hand, they are personally more concerned than other young people with education, work and money.

Unhappy Veterans

Approximately seven per cent of the noncollege youth in the survey (15% of the males) reported having served in Vietnam, and the study finds significant contrasts between the attitudes and values of these veterans and those of noncollege youth in general. Broadly speaking, the veterans present a picture of a group of young Americans who are markedly less optimistic about themselves and their society.

Some of the greatest contrasts are evident in the area of personal evaluations and outlooks. For instance, only half of the Vietnam veterans say that "things are going well" in their personal lives compared to three-quarters of their peers. Only 46 per cent of the veterans feel they are able to make ends meet financially, compared to 62 per cent of all noncollege youth. And nearly twice as many veterans say they fell like "second-class citizens" (25% versus 14%).

Several less subjective indicators bear out or add to the picture of veterans' frustration or low self-evaluation. Twice as many veterans as noncollege youth in general were unemployed at the time of the survey (33% versus 17%). Alcohol and drug use was twice as high among the veterans: a full 45 per cent of the veterans said they had drunk a lot over the previous weekend (only 20% of all noncollege youth said so) and 17 per cent said they had gotten high on drugs (versus 8% of others).

And twice as many veterans--a full third of them--place themselves at the extremes of the political spectrum, with 19 per cent identifying themselves as conservatives (versus 12% overall) and 15 per cent calling themselves radicals compared to only four per cent overall.

As a striking comment on the frustrations of the Vietnam War felt by those closest to it, one out of four young veterans thinks we lost the war, compared to only one out of eleven of noncollege youth in general, and veterans are even less likely than their peers to feel the war ended with honor (7% compared to 13% overall). Yet, ironically, more veterans support various justifications for going to war again: to counteract aggression (68% of veterans, 55% overall), to contain communist (54% versus 48%) to protect allies (59% versus 45%).

Women and Women's Liberation

The study findings contain a wealth of information about the attitudes of young people toward Women's Lib ideas. The findings show that these ideas have had their warmest reception on the nation's campuses. This is not surprising since there is a close connection between the ideas of the Women's Movement with its stress on self-fulfillment for women and the core concepts of the New Values.

The findings show that a majority of young people today believe that women should receive equal pay for equal work, that women should be free to take the initiative in matters of sex, that men and women share the same essential human nature (in striking contrast to Freud's dictum that anatomy is destiny), and that women's relationships to other women are just as important as their relationship to men. On the other hand, a majority reject the idea that women can do almost any job as well as a man can, and that women do not need men to be happy. Young adults are equally divided on whether women are just as logical as men and whether the old saw about the woman's place in the home is, or is not, nonsense.

Measures of a Man

Another indication of how Women's Liberation ideas have affected American youth can be seen in the de-emphasis by a majority of young people of some traditional notions of masculinity. But this is by no means a total deemphasis. On the one hand, they give little support to the idea that men should be physically strong or handy around the house; on the other, they feel a man should be a good provider and hold strong moral views. The chart attached indicates levels of support for various attitudes about masculine qualities.

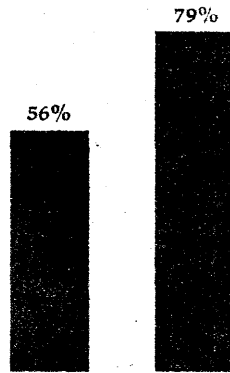
College vs. Noncollege Women

Perhaps the key point about Women's Lib ideas in relation to today's youth is that these ideas have created a wide schism between women in college and women who do not have a college education. Women college students eagerly embrace the new values

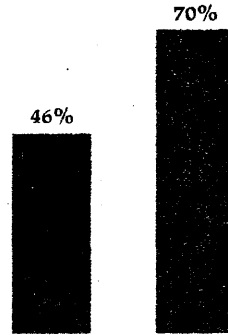
**Differing Values
of College
and Noncollege
Women
-1973**

College Women
(left) ■
Noncollege Women
(right) ■

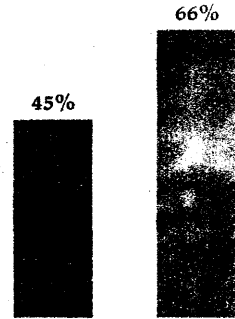
Very important
that a man be
a good provider



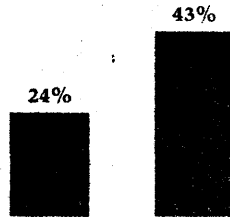
Very important that
a man put his family
before anything else



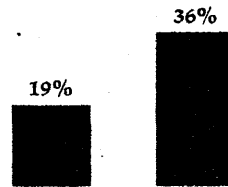
Very important that
a man show women
courtesy and respect



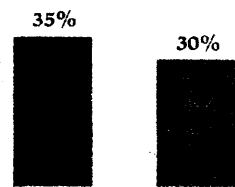
Very important for men to
keep their feelings under
control at all times



Very important that
a man makes the decisions
in the family

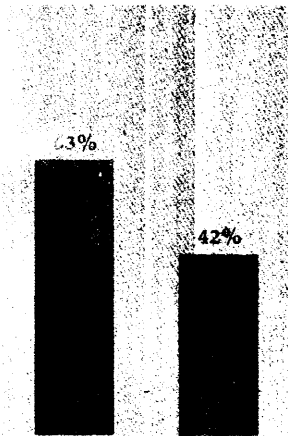


Very important that
a man be willing to do
household chores

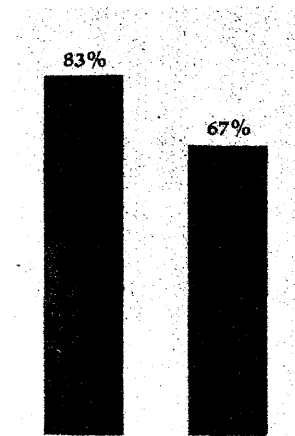


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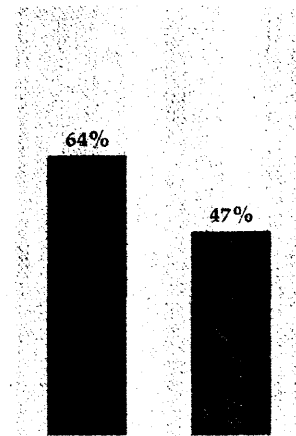
Believe that women are discriminated against



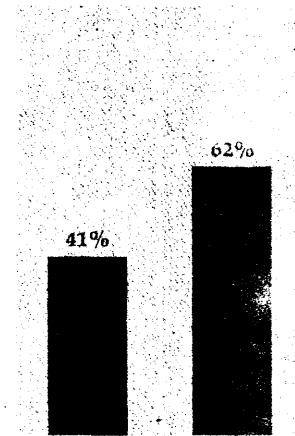
Women should be free to take the initiative in sex



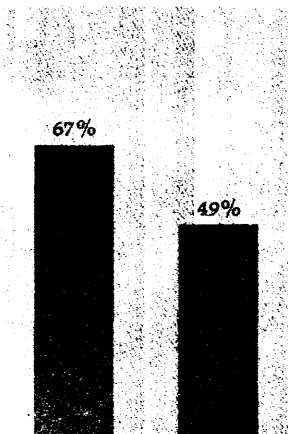
"Women's place is in the home" is nonsense



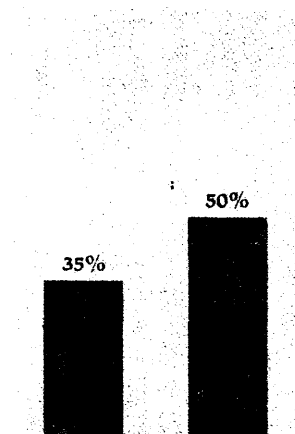
Having children without formal marriage is morally wrong



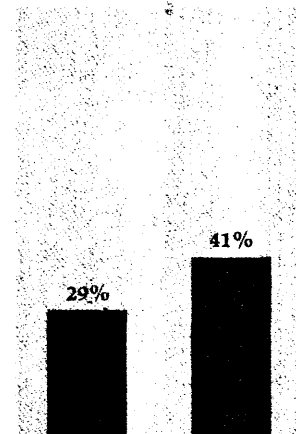
Women are as important to women as men to women



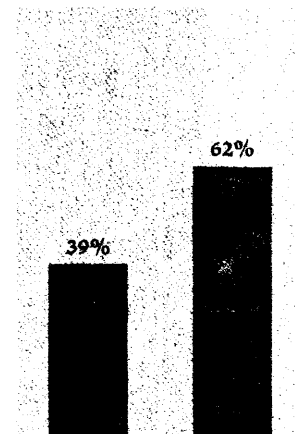
Having children is a very important value

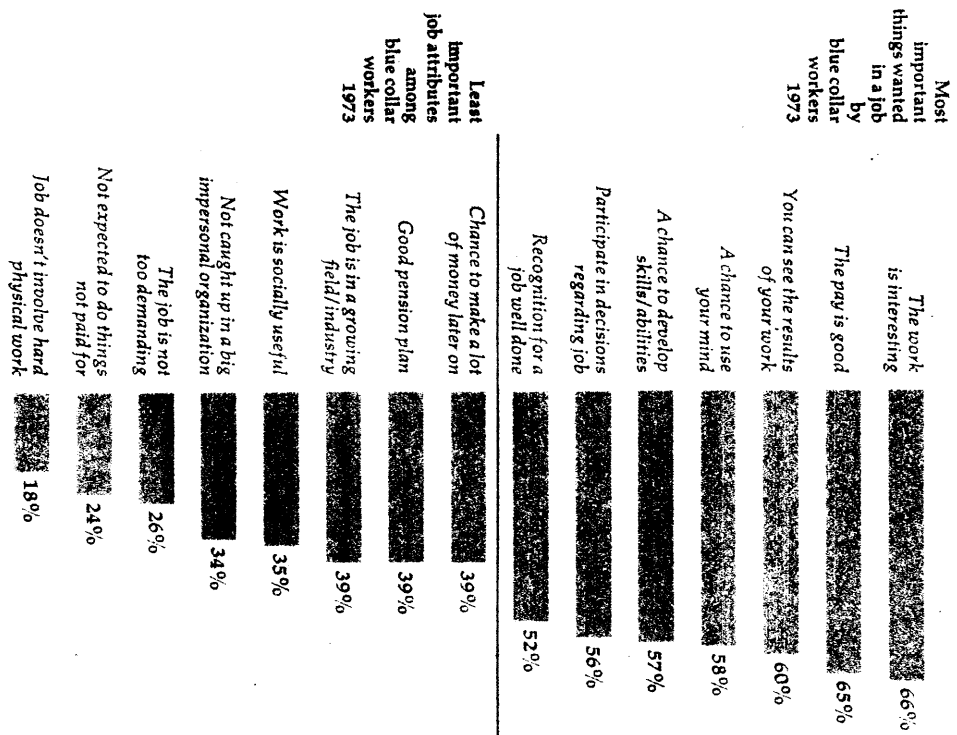


Casual premarital sex relations are morally wrong

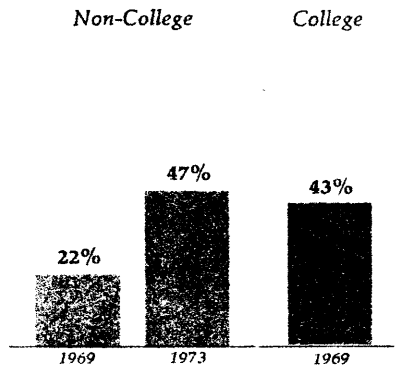


Living a clean moral life is a very important value

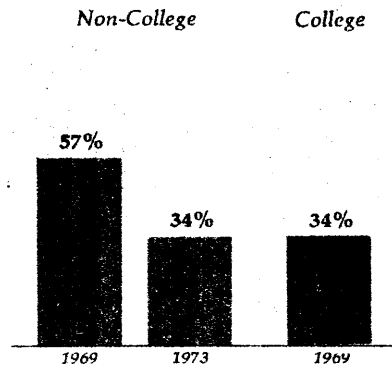




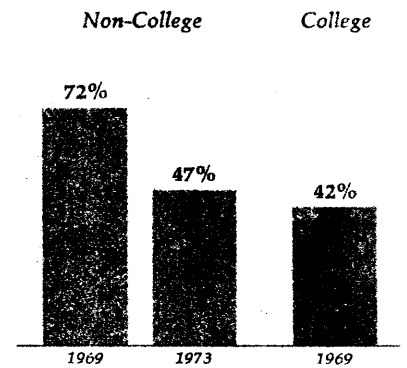
Would welcome more acceptance of sexual freedom



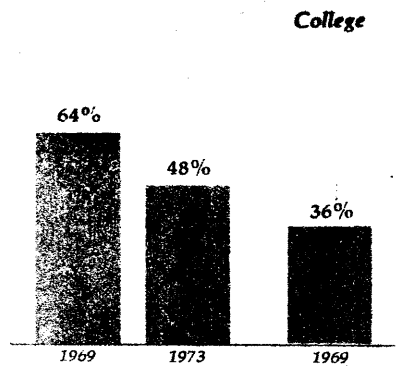
Casual premarital sexual relations are morally wrong



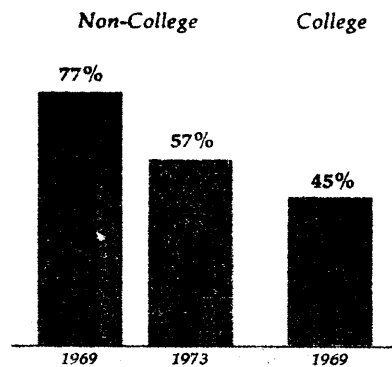
Relations between consenting homosexuals are morally wrong



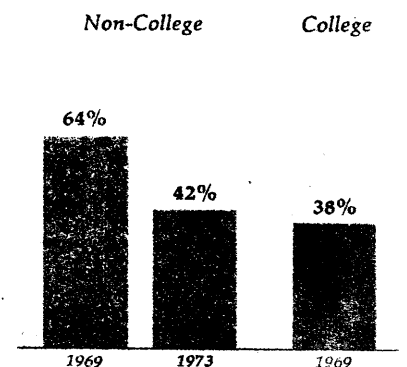
Having an abortion is morally wrong



Living a clean moral life is a very important value



Religion is a very important value



associated with Women's Lib, in part because they see their way clear to combining marriage with a self-fulfilling career. But to the young women who lack a college education, work is not a self-fulfilling career but a job to help make ends meet. Like their male counterparts, blue collar working women have the least satisfying jobs and the least opportunity to get better ones. So they find it difficult to identify with their college sisters who stress self-realization through a career. Marriage on the other hand, to the majority of young noncollege women still means devoting their lives to the role of housewife and mother. For these women, the Women's Lib stress on self-fulfillment through career and work and the doubts Women's Lib casts on a woman's ability to achieve her full potential through motherhood and wifehood pose a serious threat to self-esteem and to traditional beliefs. The following charts illustrate the enormity of the gap between the college and noncollege women on a wide range of beliefs associated with the New Values and the ideas promulgated by the Women's Movement. (Charts attached.)

Political Skeptics

"Special Interests" Run the Nation

The most subtle and difficult implications of the findings are those that relate to politics and political viewpoints. The surface facts are easy to summarize. The vast majority of young people today, approximately three out of four college and noncollege young adults, express considerable satisfaction with the way their personal life is going. They say they are enjoying life, they feel they have good opportunities for the future, they want more education, and two out of three say they are able to make ends meet. A large majority say they have no insuperable problem in accepting the conventional life styles offered by the society, expressing their belief that our society as it exists today is essentially healthy and its problems manageable.

At the same time, more than six out of ten young adults today believe that the society is democratic in name only. They believe that "special interests" run the political machinery of the nation, with little true participation by the mass of American citizens. Four out of five are critical of the nation's foreign policy, and predict that involvements similar to Vietnam are inevitable. Fewer than one out of five (9% of college students and 15% of noncollege youth) feel that we ended the Vietnam War with honor. (The majority believe either that we could have achieved the same end result earlier or that we brought dishonor on the nation.) More than 90 per cent of all young people hold that business is too concerned with its own profits, and insufficiently concerned with serving the public. Criticism of business and political parties has grown by leaps and bounds in the past few years, especially among noncollege youth. In 1969, 44 per cent of the noncollege group believed that our political parties needed fundamental change. Today 64 per cent hold this belief. In 1969, 24 per cent of noncollege youth believed that big business required fundamental reform. Today that proportion has almost doubled to 45 per cent. It is not surprising therefore, that the "special interests" that the majority of young

people see as dominating the political process turn out to be big business and politicians concerned with their own welfare rather than with the interests of the public. Despite the feelings of personal well-being, we find a widespread skepticism about the political process. Fewer than half of the noncollege population voted in the last election, their votes split equally between Mr. McGovern and Mr. Nixon. Three out of four college students said they voted in the last election, with Mr. McGovern given a four to three edge over Nixon in the campus vote. By more than two to one margins, young people align themselves with the Democratic Party over the Republican Party. Almost half of college youth (45%) say they are Democrats while 21 per cent claim allegiance to the Republican Party. Among noncollege youth, 49 per cent are Democrats and 24 per cent are Republicans. Twice as many college youth as noncollege (23% to 12%) characterize themselves as being actively interested and involved in political matters. In the college population, more than half of all students describe themselves as being one or another shade of liberal (53%), 21 per cent are completely middle of the road, 21 per cent are conservative and 5 per cent are radical. The pattern among the noncollege population is similar, but with more conservatives and fewer liberals.

A Great State of Flux

On controversial political issues, the noncollege majority are decidedly more conservative than their college cohorts. More of them favor the death penalty for certain crimes (52% to 44%), more of them favor life sentences for drug pushers (45% to 30%), fewer of them favor legalizing marijuana (47% to 60%), and fewer of them favor granting amnesty to draft evaders (42% to 52%).

But here, too, on the political front, as in the area of social and moral values, the gap within the generation between college students and the noncollege majority has narrowed. College students have become somewhat more conservative over the past few years and pay more credence to the importance of law and order while the noncollege group has in certain respects become somewhat less conservative.

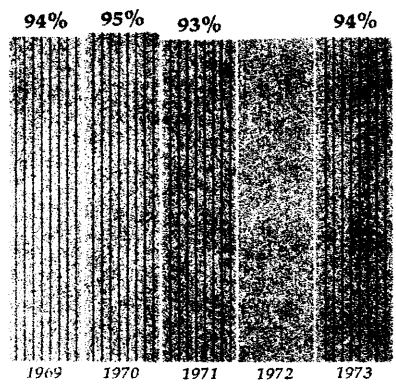
Other research conducted by the Yankelovich organization shows that the political center in the nation as a whole has shifted toward a greater conservatism. (Studies conducted for Time Magazine, 1973). The same generalization cannot be applied to the nation's young people. Their political views appear to be in a greater state of flux, with no clear-cut direction as yet or center of gravity.

Bill of New Rights

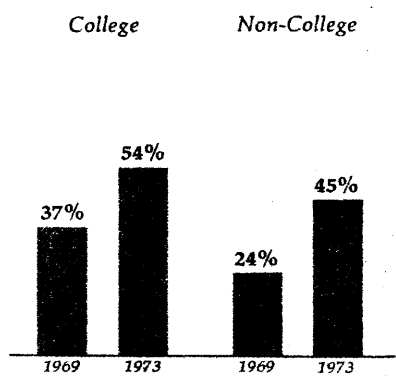
Meantime, a potentially sizable factor in the politics of American youth is the broad new agenda of social rights they are developing. In the past, social security, medical insurance, medicaid, unemployment insurance all started out as "wants" and have now become institutionalized as "rights." Similarly today,

Entitled to
as a
Social Right

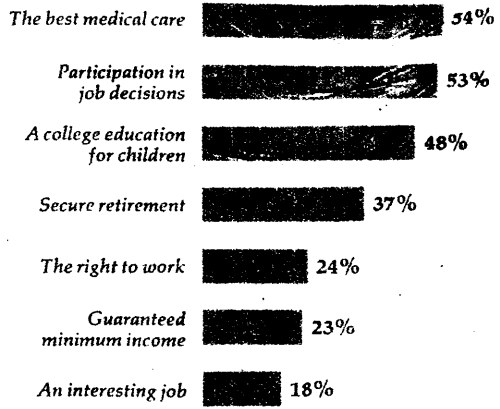
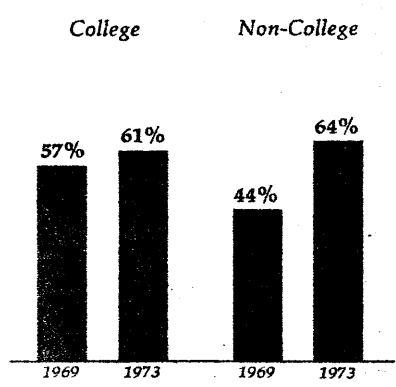
Business is too concerned
with profits and not
with public responsibility



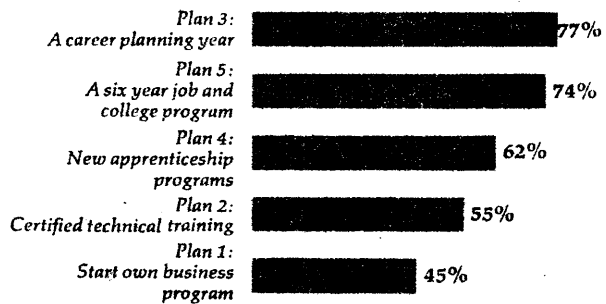
Big business
needs reform
or elimination



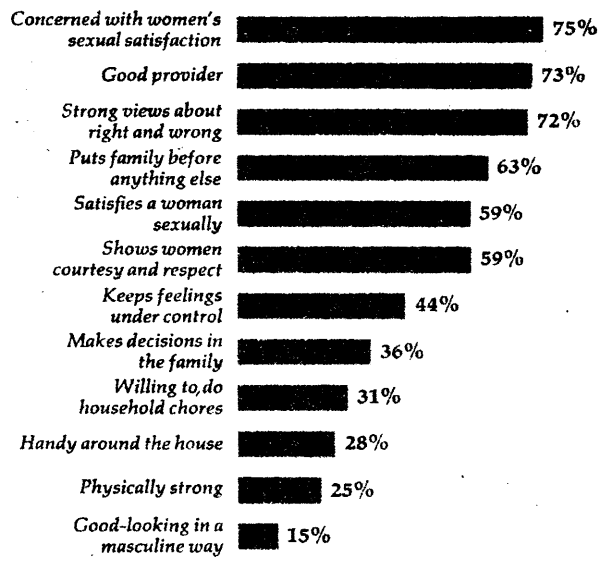
Political parties
need reform
or elimination



Levels of acceptance of new alternatives Total youth - 1973



Profile of meaning of masculinity Total youth - 1973



both noncollege and college youth indicate that they are in the process of converting certain desires into a set of presumed rights, including the following:

- To be able to send children to college whether or not they can afford to do so.
- To participate in decisions that affect their work.
- To enjoy a secure retirement.
- To have access to the best medical care whether they can afford it or not.

One can only speculate what this new assertion of social rights among young people will mean in the way of social change in the future. For the concept of social right has always exerted a strong force in our society, and in recent years, a number of institutional forms have sprung up that have shortened the time span between the individual's sense of entitlement and political action. In the 1960's, a variety of social movements came into being--the Civil Rights Movement, the Consumer Movement, the Women's Movement, the Ecology Movement, etc. These movements have served to articulate, define, and shape a full agenda of new social rights. An important question today is what young people will do with an expanded bill of rights so closely tied into the New Values. (The chart attached indicates various newly asserted "rights" and tells for each the percentage of young people who feel Americans are entitled to this particular "right.")

Uncertain Future

Perhaps the most important political question for the future relates to the outcome of the efforts by the non-college majority to satisfy their new values and expectations within the structure of existing institutions. The great bulk of the nation's young people are not politicized in the same sense in which working class youth in South American and European countries are. Their hopes are high, their outlook is sanguine and for the most part is private, personal and non-political. But they have now begun to develop more critical views of the society (similar to their college counterparts) and its institutions. In addition, research shows that beneath the surface of contentment expressed by non-college youth are to be found a number of small signs of growing resentment against groups who appear, in their eyes, to be getting something for nothing, who do not live by the rules they have so willingly accepted (e.g. welfare recipients, students and minority groups).

If America's work, education and political institutions prove to be flexible and responsive--and a sizable majority of America's youth think our society is indeed flexible enough to handle its challenges--we can look forward to a period of social stability, moderation in politics and perhaps even a resurgence of traditional American optimism about the future. If, however, these institutions prove rigid and unresponsive and our political leadership shows insensitivity to the changing needs and values of our youth, then the underlying potential for discontent will become all too real and we will face a period of instability and demagoguery.