

PATHFINDER

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Youth's Plight

"Youth constitute a third of all unemployed persons in America."

"One eighth of first admissions for mental treatment to state hospitals in 1933 were between the ages of 15 and 24."

Such pessimistic items were typical of a report published last week by the Youth Commission of the American Council of Education. With a grant of \$500,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation in 1935, the Council, a group of nearly 300 educators, established the Commission "to study the problems concerning the care and education of American youth from the age of 12 upward."

Headed by Dr. Homer P. Rainey, the Commission found that 40 per cent of all employable youth in the nation have been unable to find jobs and that even among youth who had jobs, conditions were far from ideal.

In addition, sex problems were found to be "especially perplexing" to youth. The report listed four results of "a continuing relaxation of the older moral and religious taboos upon intimacy before marriage":

- 1) More demonstration of affection between boys and girls of a spontaneous nature.

- 2) Less soul struggle on the part of the morally timid, who feel freer to do as they please.

- 3) More widespread acceptance (particularly among girls) of the "naturalness" of petting.

- 4) Less extreme petting on first or early acquaintance but more "steady dating" with fewer inhibitions of sex intimacy following long acquaintance.

Furthermore, the report said, economic difficulties have produced many corresponding troubles in youth's effort to adapt itself to modern society. Thus, failure to find jobs prevented or postponed more than a million marriages and produced friction and unhappiness in homes where youths were forced to depend on their parents for support when they no longer wanted to. Religion has proved of small consolation to modern youth, but "the lack of interest . . . is due more to an absence of vitality in organized religions than to the attitudes of youth."