

MSU-O-Variations On 'Symposium'

ROCHESTER, MICH.—Students at Michigan State University-Oakland are living up to Chancellor D. B. Varner's promise that the nation's newest university is going to produce true intellectuals, even if they have to improvise and meet in a cafe or Birmingham restaurant.

Far from cutting classes, nearly 100 of the university's charter class of 650 freshmen gave up Saturday night dates to go to class.

AND MOST of them paid \$3.50 apiece for the privilege. The occasion was a standing-room-only dinner-and-discussion to prepare for this week's final examinations in the Western Civilization course.

The novel extra class period, which lasted from 8:45 until well after midnight, was the students' idea. And at the end of the affair in a Birmingham restaurant, many of the students came up to the professor, Dr. William Kluback, to thank him for "a wonderful evening." Some of them asked him if such pleasant things happened in all universities.

The affair had started out to be a small venture for the 32 members of Dr. Kluback's late afternoon class who discovered a month ago that the caprice of the school calendar doomed them to lose the last class period before the quarter's final exams. They suggested a Saturday night dinner meeting to replace it.

OTHER FRESHMEN heard about it and soon 85 had asked to come, forcing Dr. Kluback to move the affair from a small restaurant near the campus to a larger one 12 miles away in Birmingham.

Seventy students chose to come for the \$3.50 dinner, half a dozen of them bringing their husbands or wives. Two dozen more came in after the roast beef, salad and dessert, for the discussion period

which started just before 10 p.m. Altogether there were more than 100 professor has in all his classes. And many of them had driven farther, to pay for a Saturday night class they drive to the campus on 1,600-acre Alfred G. Wilson estate between Pontiac and Rochester.

IN THE candle-lit atmosphere of white drapery, mahogany furniture and wall-to-wall carpeting, coats in party dresses and earrings, carefully groomed hair and high heels spent over two hours asking questions and taking copious notes.

The men were equally well-scrubbed and equally absorbed. The student newspaper's photographer, for example, came with his date to record the event and, after finishing three shots, both he and date found sitting space and stayed out the evening.

In a scene in which the parafits were followed by Plato and the coffee by Copernicus, Dr. Kluback said a setting was the logical one. "This is an elegant and aristocratic way to study for a final exam," he said. "And that is as it should be, for education is an elegant and aristocratic privilege."

THE MSU buildings themselves are without any such elegance. They have rugey, carpeting, draperies or curtains, and the smallest chancellors' office anywhere ten feet by twelve. They provide a Spartan setting for an Athenian concept of a tough, liberal arts education, to produce tough-minded, critical thinkers.

The students took fullest advantage of the new opportunity. They asked, as Dr. Kluback observed, "the vastest questions." One was to "trace the attitudes of the philosophers on the individual's relation to the state, from Plato on." Another was to "outline the outlook of the Middle Ages, economically, politically and theologically."

Others asked him to trace the rise of the capitalist system, the development of the parliamentary system, the growth of science and to outline the difference between classical and Christian thought and the reasons for them.

THIRTY-THREE year-old Dr. Kluback, who has just finished writing his sixth book on modern philosophers, called a halt at midnight, drained by the effort. A dozen or more students and some of the spouses, moved up to his table to thank him or to continue the discussion just a little bit longer.

At twelve-thirty, he got away, prouder of his students, he said, than if he had had the presidents of Harvard and half a dozen other universities in his audience.

MSU, a new departure in state universities, is reversing an 80-year job training emphasis in higher education to return to the liberal arts ideal. Every student, no matter what his special interests may be, must take at least half his work in liberal arts. The university also is seeking new ways of making the student responsible for his own education and the professor dispensable, by independent study, group discussion and other more active substitutes for the lecture system.



Sonar-Man

KEY WEST, FLA.—Graduated recently from an 18-week course in basic sonar at the Fleet Sonar school here, was George S. Drake, sonarman, USCG, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Hughes of 146 Wadsworth Lane, Bloomfield township.

Keeps 'em Rolling
FORT EUSTIS, Va.—Army Lt. Col. Warren K. Pratt, son of Mrs. Louise R. Pratt, 622 Bloomfield court, Birmingham, recently was assigned to the U. S. Army Transportation Training command at Fort Eustis, Va. He is a graduate of Baldwin High school.

GI's Still at It—Help Europe's Orphans

BERLIN—Pfc. David Masterton, 22, of the U. S. Army's Berlin command, is utilizing his off-duty hours repairing toys and assisting in preparations for the Christmas entertainment of orphaned children in the Berlin area. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. David Masterton, 1091 Madison, Birmingham. Each unit of the command annually sponsors at least one orphanage. Masterton, a radio operator in the Army Garrison's 592d Signal company, entered the Army in December 1957, completed basic training at Fort Knox, Ky., and arrived overseas last July. He is a 1956 graduate of Birmingham high school.

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