



The Heat on Higher Education

In case you've been in Tibet or on the Triaband Islands the past year, you may not be aware that the colleges and universities of the United States have of late been the targets of a considerable number of journalistic and literary Molotov cocktails. In a day in which ministers and priests talk back to bishops and Joe Namath and his Jets desecrate the sanctity of the National Football League, it is not so surprising that the institutions of higher education are getting theirs, too. The way we educate our young people in academia has come under fire from a host of critics, including the young people in academia and some of their disaffected teachers and administrators, as well as non-participant Cassandras. Many of the universities' structures and methods are out-of-date, the critics say, and the colleges desperately need overhauling in the form of innovative programs, reorganized curricula, different emphases, and even new kinds of teachers. Higher education has been ignoring the undergraduate, they say, in its preoccupation with research in its alliance with industry and government and with its graduate programs. One of the recent articles critical of higher education appeared in the August issue of Harper's magazine. Its author, John Fischer, a noted editor and journalist, is an alumnus of the University. His article is on pages 8-11 and deals largely with a book about American higher education, *The Academic Revolution*, by Christopher Jencks and David Riesman. SOONER MAGAZINE asked several members of the liberal arts faculty (against whom most of the criticism is leveled) and a number of students to respond to Fischer's article. (Only four out of ten students in what was intended to be a representative spectrum submitted replies.) These appear on pages 11-28. The next issue of SOONER MAGAZINE will include an article about what the University of Oklahoma is doing and plans to do, chiefly through the Hollomon Plan (SM May, Nov.; SN Dec.), about the pressures of change and the tremors of discontent that are challenging our colleges and universities. We also invite your responses.