



Wallflowers? Caltech undergraduates manage to stage as many as six social affairs a month in each student house.

TYPICAL TECH MAN

In a new survey a new picture emerges

MOST outsiders think of Caltech as a “tough” school, and its students as “grinds.”

As a matter of fact, a lot of Caltech students think the same.

But a recent analysis of undergraduate activities shows that, though Caltech may be tough, its students are tougher. They work hard, all right. But they play pretty hard too. From the accumulated statistics, a new picture of the typical Caltech man is emerging.

Briefly, the picture shows this:

Instead of being grinds, Caltech students take part in almost twice as many extracurricular activities as average students in a typical state university.

Instead of being wallflowers, they stage about twice as many social affairs in their student houses as average students do in their fraternity houses.

Instead of being bookworms, they get into full-scale intercollegiate athletics at about $2\frac{1}{2}$ times the rate of similar students at the average university; fully $\frac{3}{5}$ of Caltech's intercollegiate athletes are honor students.

In fact, about the only part of the old picture that remains the same is the evidence of intellectual attainment: A higher fraction of Caltech men go on to win higher degrees than is found in any other college in the United States; and almost two times as many Caltech

men win membership in honorary scholarship societies as was found in the average university chosen for study.

These findings and others were turned up in the course of a search for facts to put into a projected booklet to be sent to high school students. The results suggest a conclusion that has been indicated in more extensive studies made elsewhere: that there may be some connection between high intelligence and high general activity.

Herewith the facts and figures, with some notes on how they were obtained.

Extracurricular activities

To get a statistical picture of student activities, an analysis was made of the June, 1948, yearbooks of two institutions: Caltech and a typical state university. These yearbooks listed all the significant honors and activities of each student in the graduating class; therefore, it was possible to study the complete four-year record of each man.

It was, of course, recognized that exact comparisons between activities at the two institutions were not in all cases possible. Clearly, no two universities are exactly comparable in every respect. Drama Club may bulk larger on one campus than on another; student body

president may be a less important office here than it is there. The sample chosen, however, was large enough for the irregularities to approximately cancel themselves out.

The results appear on the chart that follows. As used here, a *major activity* is defined as an activity which affects the student body as a whole. A *minor activity* is conceived as affecting a smaller section of the student body—a class or a special-interest group. *Honor societies* are defined here as purely scholastic groups, as Tau Beta Pi and Phi Beta Kappa; in this category there are none of the campus “honorary societies” in which student activities count. *Fraternities*, sororities and social clubs are not considered as “activities.” *Athletics*, both major and minor, are fairly well defined in all colleges.

A COMPARISON OF EXTRACURRICULAR STUDENT ACTIVITIES
Caltech students of the class of 1948
compared with those of the same class in
a typical state university

	State Total Students in class of 1948	State Total E & S majors in class of 1948	Caltech Total Students in class of 1948
Number of students	1690	130	194
A. Percentage in activities			
1. Per cent participating in major activities	12.2%	4.6%	28.4%
2. Per cent participating in minor activities	47.2%	53.8%	85.5%
3. Per cent participating in any activities	49.9%	58.1%	87.7%
4. Per cent not participating in any activity	50.1%	41.9%	12.3%
B. Activities per student (total "participations" divided by number of students)			
1. Number of major activities per student	.20	.05	.55
2. Number of minor activities per student	1.04	.85	2.20
C. Athletics			
1. Per cent participating in intercollegiate athletics	*	9.2%	25.8%
D. Honor students (scholastic only)			
1. Per cent belonging to an honor society	11.4%	12.3%	22.6%
2. Per cent belonging to an honor society and participating in major activities	*	2.3%	7.2%
3. Per cent belonging to an honor society and participating in minor activities.	*	9.2%	20.6%
4. Per cent belonging to an honor society and participating in any activity	9.8%	9.2%	21.1%
5. Per cent belonging to an honor society and not participating in any activity	1.6%	3.1%	1.5%
6. Per cent belonging to an honor society and participating in intercollegiate athletics	*	0%	15.4%

* No accurate figures available for State class as a whole; accurate figures available only for engineering and science men of the class.

Social activities

We have seen that in extracurricular activities and in athletics, Caltech students are more active than students at a typical state university that was chosen for study.

The same kind of point-for-point comparison is not

possible in social activities. But enough facts are available to allow a fair estimate.

Social life can be described under two headings: (a) a place of living and (b) amount of entertainment.

“Place of living” can be described in tabular fashion. The following figures are approximate.

	CALTECH Per cent of total student body	STATE Per cent of total student body
Students living on campus in fraternity houses or equivalent Student Houses	53	8
Students living on campus in dormitories	0	2
Students living off-campus, but belonging to recreation and social club with permanent quarters on campus	18	0
Others	29	90
Total	100%	100%

As might be expected, more students live on campus at Caltech than do at State. More surprising—in view of the “social” reputation enjoyed by the large co-educational state universities—is the discovery that Caltech students appear to have *at least twice as many* parties and social affairs as the students at State.

One type of party is given by State which is not given at Caltech. This is a large, university-sponsored monthly affair, given for the whole student body. It is attended chiefly by the “independent” students, who comprise about 90 per cent of the student body. They usually attend without dates.

This is the only category in which State is unique. In the other categories the two schools can usefully be compared. There are two such categories: (1) large official class or seasonal parties; and (2) private parties.

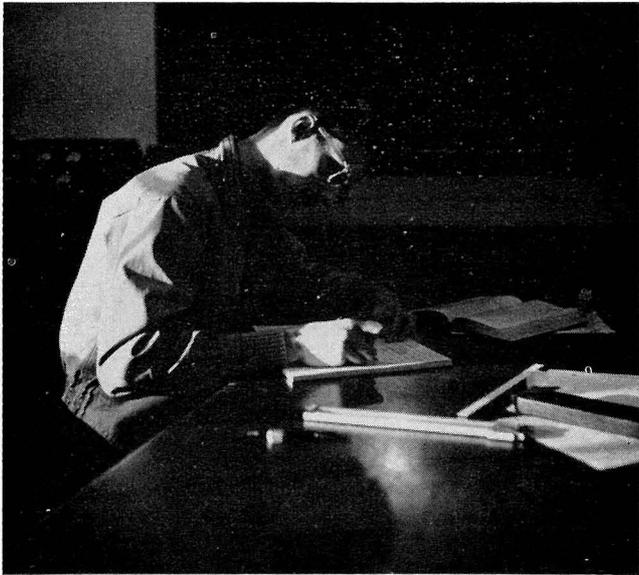
In the large official parties, such as Senior Ball, Junior Prom, etc., Caltech and State stand about equal. It is in the private, house-sponsored parties and dances, which constitute the fundamental social life of all universities, that the two schools differ.

The term “party,” as used here, does not mean an impromptu event, but an organized affair, run by the house, for all its members, with dates. Commonest forms are: a formal, a record dance, a novelty or costume party, a picnic, beach party or snow party. These parties are given at State by the fraternity and sorority houses, and at Caltech by the Student Houses.

Six parties a month

All such parties are registered with the school administration, and hence can be tallied. Such a tally shows that at State, *each fraternity* gives about *three parties a month*. At Caltech, each Student House gives about *six parties a month*. This disparity is heightened when we count the actual numbers of students involved.

At State, only eight per cent of the students live in fraternity houses. At Caltech, 53 per cent live in the Student Houses. The entertainment offered the remaining 90 per cent at State is rather negligible. At Caltech, of the remaining 47 per cent, almost *half* belong to Throop Club, a social club with its own quarters on campus where members meet daily for luncheon. Throop Club gives over three parties a month—as many, in other words, as an average fraternity at State. Thus we see that at Caltech, 73 per cent of the students may



Grinds? Caltech students take part in almost twice as many extracurricular activities as average students in a typical state university. A case in point, right—Ralph Lovberg, president of ASCIT, involved in an extracurricular mudeo.

attend about 45 club parties a year; while at State, 90 per cent of the students are offered (apart from the class dances) only about nine non-date, all-university parties per year.

The greater numbers of parties at Caltech do not cost more. Instead, they cost considerably less. At Caltech, where the Student Houses give about six parties a month, each student pays a social assessment of \$4 per quarter; or \$12 per year. At State, where the fraternity houses give about three parties per month, each student pays an average social assessment of \$10 per month, or \$90 per year.

The Steelman Report

The study reported on these pages indicates that students at Caltech have at the very least as varied and active a life as those at a state university. In spite of this, further figures show that the scholastic level of our students holds higher than at most places. One suggestion of this fact is found in the high proportion of honor students here at Caltech. Another suggestion, not precisely along the same line but nevertheless related, is contained in the number of undergraduates who go ahead to win higher degrees. A nationwide study of this field was made by the National Research Council, and the findings were reported as follows in the so-called Steelman Report.

"Institutions Producing Successful Candidates for Ph.D. in Sciences (Data provided by the Office of Scientific Personnel of the National Research Council):

"This study of the collegiate origin of Ph.D.'s in American institutions shows a significant trend as to the effectiveness of the liberal arts college in stimulating an abiding interest of their students in the sciences.

"The institutions are arranged in order of successful Ph.D. candidates per thousand students. Here are the first ten places:



COLLEGIATE ORIGIN OF PH.D.'S

Rank	Institution	Class	Ph.D.'s granted during the period 1936-45	Student population as of 1939-40	Ph.D.'s per 1,000 students
1	California Tech	T	120	921	130
2	Haverford	C	33	321	103
3	Oberlin	C	121	1,313	92
4	Kalamazoo	C	34	384	89
5	Reed	C	43	546	78
6	Swarthmore	C	51	733	70
7	Massachusetts State	C	84	1,208	70
8	Hope	C	35	525	67
9	DePauw	C	91	1,389	65
10	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	T	180	3,100	58

"The number of Ph.D.'s per thousand is reduced to 37 when we reach the forty-fourth rank. Of these 44 institutions 39 are colleges, 3 are universities (Chicago, Cornell, Princeton) and 2 are technical schools (California Tech; Massachusetts Institute of Technology)."

The above is a verbatim quotation. Members of the Class of '40 will probably recognize that the student population figure quoted includes graduate students as well as undergraduates, whereas figures for such schools as Kalamazoo and Reed are undoubtedly for undergraduates only. The index is still of value, however, as a relative indication.