

# PUTTING THE MICROSCOPE ON THE AVERAGE ALUMNUS

That favorite American pastime of recent years, the statistical poll, was recently adopted by the alumni publications of five Pacific Coast universities as part of a comprehensive survey to determine the status of the college graduate in today's world. The University of Southern California, for example, according to an article in the November issue of its *Alumni Review*, sent questionnaires to 1,200 graduates selected in a random manner from an alumni directory; while Stanford, California (Berkeley), University of Oregon, and Oregon State College sent similar questionnaires to random lists of their respective graduates.

Some pertinent statistics gleaned from the questionnaire returns are presented herewith in the belief that Tech Alumni will be interested in the positions of their average contemporaries from other schools. Most of the data pertain to U.S.C.

The Trojan alumnus headed the list when average incomes were figured, with a net of \$5,709 a year. The Stanford average was 5,520, nearly \$200 below the Trojan's, while California's was \$4,544, the University of Oregon's \$4,122, and Oregon State College's \$3,313.

But more about this Mr. Average Trojan Alumnus —

He's 38.8 years of age and he's probably married; 78.2 per cent are. He was married 3.2 years after he graduated from the Halls of Troy and now is either a professional man (23.2 per cent) or an executive (34.4 per cent).

As to progeny, the Oregon graduates average 2.1 children, while S.C. is way down in the 1.6 class, behind Cal and Stanford (1.9 each). Oregon State grads have but 1.1 children each.

The survey showed that 46.4 per cent of those answering the questionnaire own their own home with the average value being \$11,103. And this average value isn't boosted by a few extremely high priced houses either, for 29 per cent of the houses were right in that \$10,000 to \$20,000 range.

A tribute either to the high-powered salesmanship of insurance men, or to the far sightedness of thoughtful alumni, is the high percentage—88.5 per cent—of those carrying life insurance. The average value of the policy is \$12,383 and the probabilities are that it was taken out with the New York Life, Prudential, Metropolitan or Equitable.

This highly mythical alumnus has a checking account (96.6 per cent), a savings account (76.1 per cent), and a safe deposit box (50.5 per cent) at either the Bank of America or the Security-First National Bank.

He is pretty much average in the matter of automobiles, for the 1.2 automobiles he drives—no doubt with great difficulty, for that .2 vehicle might provide complications—is either a Ford, Buick, Chevrolet, or Plymouth, in that order.

And—here's something surprising—it is a new automobile, national defense, high cost of living and such, notwithstanding. Of eighteen makes listed, there were more 1941 models owned than those of any other one year, except for Hudson, La Salle and Pierce Arrow, all way down in the total list.

The average monthly gasoline bill for these 1.2 automobiles

totals up to \$19.85, paid probably to Standard (40.3 per cent, Union (28.1 per cent), Shell (19.0 per cent), or Texaco (16.7 per cent).

Despite the widely prevalent bite of the amateur movie bug, apparently the accompanying heavy bite on the pocketbook keeps the alumnus away from the motion picture hobby. Only 29.6 per cent indulge. By those who do, an average \$194.00 was spent for equipment.

This Trojan Alumnus owns at least one radio, and it is a Philco (38.7 per cent) or an R.C.A. Victor (14.5 per cent), of either the console type (50.1 per cent) or the table model (40.3 per cent). The alumnus' own Crossley rating would put news broadcasts at the top with 128, followed by Information Please, 63, and Jack Benny, 61.

Figures, by now have probably become a bit tiresome, so here are a few generalizations to relax your weary brain. Our "guinea pig" wears glasses, has never been unemployed since graduation, prefers swimming as a sport, reads his alumni magazine regularly (adv.), is not influenced by radio commercials, buys without discrimination from either chain or independent stores.

He may, or may not have a pet around the house (Yes, 50.1 per cent; No, 49.9 per cent), but if he does, and it is a dog, it will be a cocker spaniel. If it is a cat, it is of the alley variety.

Obviously, because he owns his own home he is, perforce, an amateur gardener. He'd have to be, what with 1,164 square feet of planting space to take care of. Last year he spent \$17.89 on seed, bulbs and shrubs, and \$9.53 on fertilizer.

For his snails he uses Snarol, for insects Black Leaf No. 40. He definitely does not have a vegetable garden (a loud chorus of Nays to the tune of 91.8 per cent). Nor does he have a wheelbarrow, but maybe he still has a shovel so that he can qualify for WPA when he tries spending that \$5,709 we insist he earns.

As to national affairs, the average alumnus believes in President Roosevelt's foreign policy (This was before the outbreak of war), favors "pay-as-you-go" Federal defense financing, and Federal price fixing.

*Editor's Note:* From time to time, Tech Alumni have expressed desires to have some sort of a questionnaire study made to determine the achievements of themselves and their schoolmates. Several years ago, it will be remembered, a survey was made of the field of employment and average annual income in relation to the year of graduation and college major for Tech graduates. And the Placement Bureau under the direction of Dr. Donald S. Clark '29, has kept detailed statistics on employment for several years. But other than these, no statistics have been compiled. It is obvious that a survey, even on a poll basis, would require considerable expenditure, and much work in tabulating results; but if enough interest is expressed in a survey such as discussed in the accompanying article, the Alumni Association would consider conducting such a project, to be carried out in time to be reported in the June issue of the *Alumni Review*. Send comments to the Editor.